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F I R S T

R E P O R T

FROM THE

SELECT COMMITTEE

ON

BLEACHING AND DYEING WORKS;

TOGETHER WITH THE

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

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*Ordered, by The House of Commons, to be Printed,
6 July 1857.*

Veneris, 15^o die Maii, 1857.

Ordered, THAT a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the circumstances connected with the Employment of Women and Young Persons in the Bleaching and Dyeing Establishments in England, Scotland and Ireland, and to consider how far it may be necessary or expedient to extend to those Establishments Provisions regulating such Employment; and to report their Observations thereupon to The House.

Lunæ, 18^o die Maii, 1857.

Committee nominated of—

Mr. Butt.
Lord John Manners.
Viscount Goderich.
Mr. Kirk.
Mr. Baxter.
Mr. Massey.
Mr. Fergus.

Mr. Clark.
Mr. Cheetham.
Lord Naas.
Mr. Cobbett.
Mr. Wise.
Mr. Turner.
Mr. Packe.

Ordered, THAT the Committee have Power to send for Persons, Papers and Records.

Ordered, THAT Five be the Quorum of the Committee.

Mercurii, 20^o die Maii, 1857.

Ordered, THAT Mr. Davison be added to the Committee.

Jovis, 25^o die Junii, 1857.

Ordered, THAT Viscount Goderich be discharged from further attendance, and that Mr. Crook be added thereto.

Ordered, THAT Mr. Fergus be discharged from further attendance, and that Mr. Dagleish be added thereto.

Lunæ, 6^o die Julii, 1857.

Ordered, THAT the Committee have power to report the Minutes of Evidence taken before them, from time to time to The House.

FIRST REPORT.

THE SELECT COMMITTEE appointed to inquire into the Circumstances connected with the Employment of Women and Children in the BLEACHING and DYEING ESTABLISHMENTS in England, Scotland and Ireland, and to consider how far it may be necessary or expedient to extend to these Establishments Provisions regulating such Employment, and to Report their Observations thereupon to The House; and who were also empowered to Report from time to time the MINUTES OF EVIDENCE taken before them :—

HAVE taken Evidence upon a portion of the matters to them referred, and have agreed to Report the same to The House.

6 July 1857.

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MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

Veneris, 5^o die Junii, 1857.

MEMBERS PRESENT.

Mr. Baxter. Mr. Cobbett. Mr. Davison. Viscount Goderich.		Lord John Manners. Mr. Massey. Mr. Packe. Mr. Turner.
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LORD JOHN MANNERS, IN THE CHAIR.

Hugh Seymour Tremenheere, Esq., called in; and Examined.

1. *Chairman.*] I BELIEVE you were the Commissioner appointed in 1854 to examine and report upon the Bleaching and Dyeing Works?—I was. *H. S. Tremenheere, Esq.*

2. Your report bears date the 7th of June 1855; that is above two years ago? —Just two years ago. 5 June 1857.

3. Have you, subsequently to that report, paid attention to the subject referred to in that report?—Not in the least. My time has been occupied in official duties of a totally different kind.

4. No fresh evidence has been brought before you either in favour of or against the recommendations that you made in 1855?—None at all.

5. And, so far as you are aware, the reasons which induced you to make that report still remain in force?—I presume so, though I can give no opinion upon that point, as I have had no means of learning.

6. Has your attention been called to the Bill which, subsequently to the date of that report, was proposed in Parliament?—I have seen that Bill, but, as I had fully discharged the duty which was imposed upon me as a commissioner, I have not felt it necessary to consider the Bill with a view to form any opinion as to its provisions.

7. Are there any further observations which you would wish to make upon the subject referred to this Committee?—I do not feel competent to add a word to what I stated in my report; and, inasmuch as two years have elapsed since my attention was called to those circumstances, I think it very probable that many things have passed from my recollection on which my own judgment was founded at that time.

8. *Mr. Turner.*] Have you taken no notice whatever of the proceedings of the bleachers since the time when you obtained the evidence upon which you founded that report?—None whatever.

9. Are you not aware that great improvements have taken place in the construction of the bleach-works since that date?—I have not the least idea of it.

10. We are not to consider that your evidence extends beyond the year 1855? —Clearly not since the termination of my inquiry, which was, I think, about the end of March 1855.

11. Then your means of knowledge does extend to the year 1855?—Up to that time.

12. But not beyond that?—No.

13. *Viscount Goderich.*] Do you consider that you have had full opportunity of inquiring into the subject?—I think I have; I certainly exceeded the amount of inquiry which several of the bleach-masters pointed out to me as necessary to form an opinion upon it.

H. S. Tremenheere,
Esq.

5 June 1857.

14. I need not ask you whether the recommendations which you made in this report are those which you thought, upon consideration of the facts which had been brought before you, were such as should be adopted by the Legislature?—That was so.

15. Mr. Davison.] Had you known anything of the bleaching department before you were appointed to inquire into it?—Nothing whatever; the appointment was conferred upon me by Lord Palmerston, without solicitation on my part, and without my being aware of his Lordship's intention; I had never seen a bleach-work before I entered upon the inquiry, and I did not know the nature of it.

16. How long were you occupied in your general inquiry upon bleach-works in each particular case?—I am not able to state precisely.

17. Did you spend as much as one day on each work?—A few hours, more or less.

18. That was all you spent in investigating any one work?—Yes.

19. Viscount Goderich.] Were not the facts that you had to inquire into, the length of hours, the result of the length of hours upon the health of the persons employed, and the temperature?—Yes; and the general appearance of the works and workpeople. I also took evidence from a considerable number of workmen as to their own feelings and experience.

20. Were you not as well able to judge of these facts by staying a few hours as if you had stayed a day?—In some of the works I stayed a short time, because the number of hands was few; in others I stayed longer.

21. Mr. Davison.] Did you investigate from the evidence of persons employed the length of time that they were occupied?—Yes.

22. How many witnesses did you examine at each of those concerns?—As many as I thought were sufficient to give me a satisfactory explanation upon it. I then invariably read over what they had said to somebody in authority on the spot, and asked whether it was a correct statement.

23. Mr. Cobbett.] By "somebody in authority," you mean the overseer or master bleacher?—When the master was on the spot I, of course, always first of all inquired for him; when he was not there, I inquired for the person under him; I inquired for the superior person on the spot at the time. I did not think it desirable to give notice of my intention to visit any bleach-work, and, therefore, very often when I came the master was not present; but I obtained the best evidence that I could at the moment.

24. Did you examine particularly the working people whom you found there?—Yes.

25. Did they generally express a desire that there should be legislation upon the subject of bleaching-works?—Certainly.

26. Did they complain that the hours of their work were excessive?—In a great majority of instances they did, as appears by the evidence published in my report.

27. Mr. Turner.] Did not that complaint refer to every occasional overwork?—Yes.

28. When there was great pressure of business in the works?—Yes.

29. Do you understand the nature of the bleaching business, and how uncertain it is as to constant employment?—Yes; that was a part of the evidence I took.

30. Mr. Cobbett.] Do you remember some of the places you visited in Lancashire?—It is stated in my report.

31. Did you go to Bolton?—Certainly.

32. Did you go to Bury?—Yes; there is a list of the places I visited in my report.

33. How did you ascertain where there were bleach-works for you to examine?—Perhaps it would save time if I were briefly to state to the Committee the course I took in conducting this examination, confining myself to England. As I knew nothing whatever about the question when I came to Lancashire, I sent for a committee of the operatives who had been promoting this inquiry, and I assembled at Bolton on several occasions some 10 to 14 of those working men. Since they were, as it were, plaintiffs in the inquiry, I thought it no more than right and proper that I should hear their case first. I made them state to me their views, and I endeavoured to check the statements of one by inquiring of the others whether they concurred in those statements. When I had heard some amount of evidence, I then wrote it down and read it over to them; in that way I collected the evidence which occupies the first 11 pages of evidence appended to the report.

H. S. Tremenhoe,
Esq.

5 June 1857.

34. Is that the way you collected the evidence which is given in substance in the first 11 pages of your report?—Yes; of course there is a great deal more which I obtained at the different bleach-works; but from those witnesses who had been getting up the case on behalf of the operatives I obtained a general outline of their views, and also a list of the different bleach-works which it was desirable for me to visit, in order to verify the facts they stated. I then had the evidence of these delegates and committee-men printed, and I submitted it to some of the masters, especially, in the first instance, to Mr. Ainsworth, who is the chairman of the committee of the masters, and begged him to communicate it to the other members of the committee, in order that they might make their remarks upon it, and inform me how far they concurred in it. I do not think that I could have adopted any fairer course to both parties; and I may say, in my own justification, that during the examination of those working men, I did not put a single leading question to them, but endeavoured to draw out of them, as well as I could, what they meant to say. Of course I put down what they did mean to say in better language than they could have used themselves; but my belief is, that I have only communicated to the public the substance of their own observations and complaints. Then, after communicating their evidence to the masters, I had frequent interviews with many of the masters, and I proceeded then to visit the different works. The masters named to me 10 or a dozen, and I visited 17.

35. Viscount *Goderich*.] Seventeen works in Lancashire and Cheshire?—Seventeen works in Lancashire and Cheshire. I beg permission to read these sentences from my report: "A list of the bleaching and finishing works in Lancashire and Cheshire was furnished to me by the chairman of the Bleachers' Association, Mr. J. H. Ainsworth, which will be found at p. 19 of the Evidence; it is not a complete list, but contains the names of 35 establishments. I was informed by Mr. Ainsworth, and other gentlemen, that in order to obtain the general facts applicable to the whole trade, it would be sufficient for me to visit 10 or a dozen of those establishments; I visited, and took evidence at 17, nine of the rest being small works, employing from 50 to under 100 hands, and I also visited 10 others not upon that list, in the neighbourhood of Manchester." The communications which I had with Mr. Ainsworth, and other gentlemen, on behalf of the masters, resulted in their discussing with me, as I have mentioned in my report, what sort of restrictions might with safety be placed upon the employment of females and boys.

36. Mr. *Davison*.] Was your examination confined to workpeople, or did you examine and take evidence of masters as well?—Several masters.

37. Mr. *Turner*.] Will you give a list of the works that were visited by yourself, and on which you formed your judgment?—I can, from memory, mention to you a considerable number, but not the whole of the places; Mr. Ainsworth, Messrs. Ridgways, Messrs. Hardcastle, Messrs. Ridgway, Bridson & Company, Messrs. Blare & Sumner, Mill-hill, Bolton. The evidence taken in those works will sufficiently show what I have done. In my report I attach to each piece of evidence the name of the work at which it was taken; I can tell the Committee, by going through the evidence, distinctly every one. At page 46 Messrs. Ridgway's work is referred to, Messrs. Slater's, and Mr. Owell's, Mr. Sedden, of Bright-beach works, and Messrs. Hollins & Co., of Tothill-bridge.

38. Mr. *Davison*.] Out of those 17 places that you visited, how many of the masters did you examine?—I cannot say accurately from memory, but they are mentioned in the report. I thought that I examined a sufficient number of them.

39. Mr. *Cobbett*.] Will you let the Committee know the precise number of works that you visited, and the precise number of masters that you examined?—I will.

40. In examining those 17 works did you go through every one of them?—I went into the works and examined witnesses in each, sufficient as I believed to satisfy me as to the nature of the case.

41. And to justify your recommendation to the Government?—I think so; and I think, upon the whole, the recommendations there made are justified by the evidence I collected.

42. Did you find that the workpeople concurred with one another in all those works in their evidence and wishes?—I think that the great preponderance of the evidence was to the same effect; I took the evidence very much as it came, and I thought that by taking people whom I had never seen before, sometimes one after the other, sometimes fixing upon witnesses here and there, if I found a general concurrence, I was justified in assuming that the story I had heard from the committee-men was true.

H. S. Tremenleere,
Esq.

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43. Did I rightly understand you to say that you began by assembling the committee-men or delegates of the workpeople?—Yes.
44. Were those working bleachers?—Yes.
45. They were men, I suppose?—Yes.
46. Did they direct your attention to the different works in the kingdom?—They did.
47. And I suppose you gathered from them what was the nature of the inquiry to be made?—Certainly.
48. In going through the establishments, did you notice whether there were principally men employed or young people, and in what proportions?—No, I did not take notice of the precise proportions.
49. Did you see whether there were any young people and females?—Yes.
50. A considerable number?—Yes.
51. How young should you suppose they were, generally?—I cannot, at this time recall to my mind what the proportion of the very young people was; but certainly I found in most of the works several very young children.
52. Viscount *Goderich*.] Did you find them as young as eight?—I cannot state from memory, at this moment, whether there was any as young as eight; but if I saw any particularly young, I naturally examined them to ascertain the effect of the employment upon them.
53. Mr. *Cobbett*.] What was the nature of their complaint principally?—That they were wearied by the long hours in the works.
54. Did they complain that it affected their health?—Many of them did.
55. Did you observe any who appeared to be suffering?—Certainly; a considerable number of them had an appearance that indicated their having been subject to overwork.
56. Did the workpeople generally concur in a desire to have some legislative interference in the matter?—Yes.
57. After examining the workpeople, you then had a conference, as I understand, with the masters?—I had.
58. Did you find that the masters themselves objected to all legislative interference, or that their objection was only as to the mode and extent of it?—That was it.
59. Then both the masters and the workpeople, as I understand, were agreed in opinion that there ought to be some legislative interference?—They were.
60. Did the masters think that that necessity arose from the long hours of work?—Exactly.
61. Did you examine any other class of persons; did you see any medical men?—I saw two or three medical men at Bolton, but I felt it unnecessary to examine personally many of them, because of a petition which had been signed very extensively by the medical men of Bolton, and also of Manchester and Salford, which petitions I have printed in my report.
62. At what page is that?—The petition of the clergy and medical men of Bolton is given at page 12 of the evidence, and that of the clergy and medical men of Manchester and Salford at page 100. The latter is headed as follows: “To the Honourable the Commons of Great Britain and Ireland in Parliament assembled, the humble Petition of the undersigned Clergymen and Members of the Medical Profession of the borough of Manchester and Salford, in the county of Lancaster.”
63. Was there a petition from Bolton also?—Yes.
64. It was in consequence of seeing those petitions that you thought it unnecessary to examine medical men?—Yes.
65. Did you examine any?—I examined two or three at Bolton.
66. Mr. *Turner*.] Is not this petition chiefly signed by clergymen?—There are several medical men who have signed it.
67. Mr. *Cobbett*.] Did the medical men give you any statement with regard to any particular complaints brought on the bleachers by their long hours of work?—They did.
68. Did they describe them?—They mentioned that several complaints were brought on by long hours of work.
69. Did they think it necessary that there should be legislative interference to shorten the hours of work?—They did.
70. Did you examine any clergymen in Lancashire or Cheshire with regard to the condition of the bleachers?—I do not think I did; I thought that the petition

so extensively signed by clergymen and medical men sufficiently expressed their general opinion upon that subject. *H. S. Tremblett, Esq.*

71. Did you ever hear the operative bleachers contrast their condition with the condition of factory hands, who are protected by legislative interference?—Yes, and they expressed a desire to be equally protected.

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72. In what respect did they think that the factory hands were better off than they were?—They thought that they were in some works so constantly liable to work very long hours, and frequently at different times, that they wished to have the same protection as the factory hands; the 10 hours' Bill, in fact.

73. Did they say anything with regard to the impossibility of gaining any instruction?—Yes; it was one of their prominent complaints that the long hours that they worked were a considerable obstacle to their general mental improvement.

74. Did they tell you of any attempts that they had made to form libraries, at Bolton, in particular?—Yes.

75. Did they tell you that they had succeeded or failed?—That they had failed.

76. Did they tell you about any factory hands who had formed libraries which had succeeded?—Yes, I think they did.

77. *Mr. Turner.*] Did they tell you of the factory hands having formed libraries themselves?—I think so; but I cannot pledge myself from recollection at this distance of time to these particulars.

78. *Mr. Cobbett.*] Did they tell you anything of bazaars established for selling needlework made by factory women?—The evidence of Mr. Henry Waring, a bleacher, who took a very active part in this inquiry, is to the effect in several portions of it, that the efforts made by the people in the bleaching-works to establish libraries, and otherwise to improve themselves, failed in consequence of the long hours of work.

79. *Mr. Packe.*] Did I rightly understand you to say that the total number of works visited was 27?—The total number visited was 27.

80. Including the 17 in Lancashire and Cheshire?—The total number in Lancashire and Cheshire; 17 of those on the list given me by Mr. Ainsworth, and 10 not upon that list, in the immediate neighbourhood of Manchester.

81. *Mr. Cobbett.*] Did you go through the establishments, and see all the different processes that were performed?—Yes.

82. Did you see that it was impossible to leave off certain works; for instance, that if they had begun the process of drying or bleaching it was impossible to leave off until they had concluded the process?—That was the statement of several of the masters to me. I made distinct inquiries of the men, and I also had the particular processes described to me in the different works, and they assured me that, by a little management, it would be perfectly possible to arrange the works, within very small limits, so as to be able to stop at a particular time.

83. Did you speak on that subject with people who understood the work?—Yes, with persons very competent to speak. I have given the evidence of persons who have had long experience in the trade. But on these points I can only repeat their statements. I am not able to say anything on my own authority, and the Committee will be better informed by calling some of those persons before them.

84. *Mr. Davison.*] Had not the complaints which were made by the work-people had reference alone to in-door employment alone?—Principally to in-door employments; principally to the finishing.

85. In the rooms?—In the rooms; in the finishing rooms in particular.

86. Is not there a considerable portion of the work in the bleaching works which is carried on outside altogether?—Not outside altogether; it is carried on in cool places.

87. *Mr. Baxter.*] Do I rightly understand you to tell the Committee that there is no open-air bleaching in Lancashire and Cheshire?—No; it is entirely abandoned, as I understand.

88. *Mr. Turner.*] Are the Committee to understand from your evidence that the women and young persons in those establishments are overworked?—Yes.

89. What is your impression as to the number of hours a day that they are worked?—I do not think it is possible to say, with any precision, the total amount of hours worked by the young persons in the bleach-works in Lancashire.

H. S. Tremenhare,
Esq.

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There are no means of ascertaining that fact with accuracy; but the purport of the whole of their evidence was, that they were very much overworked.

90. You have expressed your own opinion to that effect; will you state to the Committee upon what that opinion is founded?—If the question refers to the exact number of hours worked, I cannot give it. My opinion was founded on the evidence printed in my report. Paragraph 254 of the evidence shows the necessity of examining narrowly with the books before you, any statement as to the average number of hours worked within a given time, prepared by a manager of a work.

91. Do the unreasonably extended hours that they are occasionally worked occur constantly?—The evidence, I believe, shows that the occasions when they work overwork, to a greater or lesser extent, are very frequent; sometimes for months together.

92. Could you tell the number of hours per day at which you consider a constant or very extended working goes on?—I do not think I am justified in laying down any particular rule as to that. I might have been able to give a clearer answer two years ago; but at present I should not like to pledge myself to say whether, in those works where the overwork is general, it amounts to two, three or four hours beyond the 10; but my general impression is, that it is within those limits.

93. What do you fix as the standard amount of work?—Ten hours.

94. Do you say that that amount is frequently exceeded?—Frequently.

95. Did you inquire whether occasionally the employers of labour were so short of work as not to employ them even for 10 hours?—Sometimes that will happen, and that is one of the arguments used by the masters against legislation.

96. Is it the fact that they are occasionally very short of work?—It is the fact, I believe, that they are occasionally very short of work.

97. Of course, at that period, they have a considerable portion of the 10 hours at their own disposal?—Yes.

98. Do you think that upon the average they work much more than 10 hours a day, taking all the year round?—At some of the works I have no doubt that if you took the average of the year you would find that they did not work 10 hours.

99. But occasionally they work 12 or 13?—Yes, and occasionally a great deal more than that.

100. What is the reason that they occasionally work these excessive hours?—From the occasional demands for their labour.

101. Why is the trade so very fluctuating in its demands?—The masters allege that it arises from the demands made upon them by the Manchester merchants to furnish the goods.

102. Why are the Manchester merchants so unreasonable as to require that extra exertion occasionally?—The masters are of opinion that the Manchester merchants oblige them to do it necessarily.

103. That the Manchester merchants cannot avoid occasionally putting them to that pressure?—Yes.

104. From whence arises that necessity upon the merchant?—From the demand upon him to supply his customers either in the home or the foreign market.

105. Do you suppose that the Manchester merchant can control the foreign or the home demand, or that he can fix whether he shall supply his goods more or less rapidly?—Certainly not; but the whole question of the danger or facility of legislation arises upon that very point, whether an adjustment can be made that will prevent the necessity of those extraordinary demands upon the labour of the hands in the bleach-works.

106. Then allow me to ask you, as you have had considerable experience of these bleach-works, whether you are of opinion that it would be a wise course for the Legislature to say that when there is no demand the bleacher shall work the full hours, and when there is a considerable demand to meet the foreign market he shall be prevented from extraordinary exertion to meet that demand?—The result of the evidence which I obtained at Manchester among the merchants, was strongly to impress in my mind the fact that neither for the home nor for the foreign market was it necessary that these sudden demands should be made upon the bleachers.

107. Mr. Packe.] Do I rightly understand you to say, from your examinations of medical faculty, that it appeared that it was by long hours of work that diseases were brought on?—Yes.

108. Did you gather from them that those diseases were at all owing to the atmosphere

atmosphere of the rooms in which the works were carried on?—To some extent doubtless it was so, because the temperature is very high in some of the rooms. H. S. Tremenhore,
Esq.

109. Did you understand at all that there was anything noxious in the materials used in bleaching?—No, I believe not. 5 June 1857.

110. Mr. Turner.] Did not you say that the appearance of many of those work-people indicated sickness?—Yes.

111. What nature of complaint did they seem to be particularly afflicted with?—I am not competent to state the nature of their complaints; I was impressed with the fact that a considerable number of them had an unhealthy look.

112. It is often said that the people engaged in those works are subject to particular complaints or diseases; did you from the inquiry you made find out what particular diseases affected those people?—I can quite understand that young females subject to those occasional pressures of work for days and weeks together, might be seriously injured in their health at a particular time of their lives, and I understand that that is the case.

113. That injury does not arise from any particular danger attending the bleaching operations, but from overwork generally?—From overwork.

114. Is not the same thing complained of by the needlewomen in London; do not they complain that they are affected in the same way by over-confinement and close atmosphere?—It is not so much the over-confinement as being so constantly upon their legs during the time they are employed that injures them.

115. In what processes is that required?—In the various processes connected with what is called finishing the goods.

116. Are many of the young people employed in the finishing department?—Principally in that department. I believe that practical men will confirm what I have stated upon the subject.

117. Chairman.] I see, upon referring to page 8 of your report, you say that the disease of which people and young children complain most is "sore feet;" is not that so?—That is one complaint.

118. Does that refer to those who are employed in "hooking"?—Yes; being constantly upon their legs, and engaged in rapid movements, they complain of sore feet and swelled ankles.

119. Is the Committee to understand that that arises from the continuous hours of labour to which they are subject for months together?—Exactly.

120. Is it your opinion that that complaint would be produced by the system of 10 hours' work spread continuously over the year, so much as by the system of long hours for several months of the year, and seven, eight, or nine hours during the remaining portion of the year?—Clearly it is more likely to be produced by occasional very long hours.

121. It is not your opinion as regards the working people, that a certain number of hours spread over the whole year is the same as a great number of hours for a portion of the year, followed by a smaller number of hours for the remaining portion?—What the young people suffer from is the practice of working a considerable number of hours for a portion of the year; if that portion is a large one, as is the case in many works, it is of little avail that for the rest of the year they do not work even 10 hours. Excessive hours, even for a short portion of the year, may be, and I believe from the evidence often is, very injurious to the health of the young people.

122. Mr. Turner.] Do you think it is possible that the bleach-works can be regularly employed for 10 hours a day as a mill or a factory can?—I think that many witnesses may be called before the Committee more competent than I am to give definite information upon that point. All I pretended to do during my inquiry was to do my best to satisfy my own mind that it was possible to make a considerable approach to it as regards the greatest number of bleaching-works; I can give no further information upon that point than I have given in my report.

123. We can understand that in a factory where the raw material is always in the hands of the owner of the factory it can be kept regularly employed during certain hours; but, considering that (as you have already said) the merchants do not supply, and cannot supply the bleachers with work regularly, and their raw material is therefore uncertain, how do you arrange that they should have employment 10 hours a day regularly?—As I understood, the opinion of the masters was this, that the merchants had no option in the matter; that they were obliged by a sudden call upon them to make a sudden call on the bleachers. In answer

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to that, it is said that whereas formerly both the foreign and the home markets were season markets, and therefore required their supplies to be got ready by a certain time, now, from the facilities of communication both at home and with the Continent, that is less and less the case; and that, therefore, by a little foresight among the merchants and a little arrangement among the bleachers, the work might be more evenly distributed.

124. Is that your own opinion, or is it what you have heard?—That is my own opinion, formed from the opinions of some very experienced merchants, and gathered also from the conversations I had with competent persons, and inquiries that I made at the time.

125. Viscount *Goderich*.] I believe you examined the merchants at Manchester?—I did.

126. Can you give the names of the gentlemen you examined?—Messrs. Barbour & Fleming, Messrs. Pender & Cowen, Mr. Scott, partner in the firm of Jones, Brother & Co.; Mr. Leisler, a partner of the firm of Dufay & Co., Mr. Leopold Reiss, Mr. J. Slagg, Mr. A. S. Thornton, Mr. Kling, of the firm of Reus & Kling, Mr. Mather, of the establishment of Messrs. Bannerman, and Messrs. Schunk & Souchay, as conversant with the continental trade.

127. What opinion did those gentlemen give you upon the subject?—The master bleachers had referred me to 14 principal merchants in Manchester; two or three more were named to me who were connected with the home trade; but I had examined so many of the gentlemen connected with the home trade, that I did not think it necessary to examine more; but I took the evidence of 14 merchants, and out of those 14, 10 did not support the views of the masters, and 4 did.

128. Were those the 14 gentlemen whom you were recommended to go to by the masters themselves?—Yes.

129. Are you satisfied with the proof that they do not concur with the masters?—Yes; they do not.

130. Were they persons largely engaged in the trade, and competent to give an opinion?—They were among the most important merchants in Manchester. The four that did not concur were certainly quite equal in standing, if not superior to some of the rest; but in receiving information from different gentlemen, one is naturally inclined to weigh rather than to number their opinions, and it is not difficult to judge whether a gentleman has given a full consideration to a subject, and is likely to look at it from an unbiassed point of view or not; and therefore I felt satisfied that I could rely very strongly upon the evidence given me by those 10 out of the 14 merchants.

131. Do you think the weight of the evidence was in favour of the opinion of the 10 gentlemen?—Certainly, very greatly so, I should say.

132. Mr. *Turner*.] In your report you say, "Those names will be at once recognised, as comprising nearly the whole of the principal mercantile firms in Manchester, the nature of whose business causes them to be in frequent communication with the bleachers, and acquainted with the peculiarities of their trade." Are you sufficiently acquainted with the mercantile firms of Manchester to know that to be the fact?—I state that upon the authority of the masters who named the merchants to me; I knew nothing of either the one or the other when I went down; it is no judgment of my own; I took it entirely from the information of the master bleachers.

133. Viscount *Goderich*.] Will you tell the Committee who were the gentlemen who advised you to apply to those merchants?—Mr. Hardcastle was the gentleman who gave me the list I have given to the Committee, and I am pretty sure that I asked several other gentlemen whether there were any others whom it would be desirable for me to consult.

134. Mr. *Massey*.] Did I rightly understand you to say that there was a general concurrence of opinion among the masters that some legislative provision was necessary?—Yes.

135. Was that opinion given upon the occasion of your submitting the statement of the workpeople to them?—It was upon the occasion of my submitting the printed statement of the workpeople.

136. Did the masters generally express any opinion as to whether that statement was exaggerated, or substantially accurate?—They expressed a general concurrence in its accuracy; they of course objected to certain misapprehensions on the part of the workmen. The evidence was returned to me, as appears by the evidence of the

the masters themselves, without any important exceptions being taken to its accuracy. *H. S. Tremenheere, Esq.*

137. Did you understand that the opinions of the masters with reference to the necessity of legislation referred to the necessity in respect to the extreme pressure upon the women and children physically, or morally?—Both.

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138. Was that particular point brought to the attention of the merchants who were asked to revise the opinion of the masters?—Certainly.

139. Did they express a difference of opinion upon this particular point to that of the masters?—Not generally; the great majority of them concurred in it.

140. I need hardly ask you whether the merchants had the same opportunities of observation as to those matters as the masters?—Not quite the same; but still, gentlemen living in the neighbourhood, and very much mixed up with all the employments of that part of the country, would be competent to form a general opinion.

141. Were those statements of the workpeople given to you in the presence of their overlookers or their masters, or by themselves?—I thought it very improbable that the workpeople would tell me the whole truth if I first of all asked them the question in the presence of their masters; every person must be aware that there is a great apprehension on the mind of a workman when he has to make a statement of that kind; and in fact, several of the men whom I wished to have called before me, in consequence of what I heard from the members of the working committee, refused to come, feeling that if their evidence came to the knowledge of their masters they would be discharged; my course, therefore, in taking the evidence of the workpeople, was to ask them to tell me their story in plain words, and after I had taken it down and read it over to them, I then submitted it to some person at the moment, in authority, to see if it was true.

142. Did any of the workpeople come forward to say that they did not concur in the complaints of the other workmen?—No. The whole of the operatives in that district were aware at the time that this inquiry was going on, inasmuch as it was mentioned in the local papers; on all sides it excited general interest, and I had frequent messages on their part to know when I was coming to examine particular works.

143. Though you had no particular knowledge of the bleaching-works at the time when you went down upon this inquiry, had not you had an extensive acquaintance with factories?—Not with factories; my duties related to inquiries into the state of the mining population.

144. Do you know the print-works?—Only by private inquiry, sufficient to enable me to satisfy my mind that it would be desirable to extend the principle of the education clauses of the Print Works Act to boys working in the mines and collieries.

145. In what part of the report do you go into that question with regard to the discussion between the merchants and the bleachers?—In the report, it is at page ix; from ix to xii.

146. The difficulty in that respect was first told to you by the master bleachers, was not it?—Yes.

147. They suggested that there would be a difficulty in regulating the number of hours' work by law, in consequence of the irregularity of the work that they were obliged to engage in?—Exactly.

148. Then did they state to you that they were engaged by the merchants?—Yes.

149. Then they referred you to the merchants?—Yes.

150. And they named to you a number of merchants whom you have named to the Committee?—Yes.

151. And when you did go to those merchants, you found that the majority of them stated that there was no such difficulty, in point of fact?—That the difficulty was greatly exaggerated, and might be overcome by a little arrangement, in a great majority of instances.

152. At page ix of your report you say, "It became necessary for me, therefore, to seek the opinions of the principal Manchester merchants upon this point, and accordingly Mr. Ainsworth, Mr. Harcastle, Mr. Ridgway Bridson and Mr. Bealey, who, with Messrs. Blair & Summer, are deemed generally to represent the bleaching and finishing trade of that part of the country, named to me 14 of the principal mercantile firms of Manchester whom they wished me to consult upon the subject." Was it their recommendation that led you to go to those firms in

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Manchester in order to ascertain from them why it was that they caused the bleachers to perform this irregular work?—Precisely.

153. And you found upon referring to those merchants at Manchester that a very little trouble indeed would render it needless that there should be those irregularities?—That was their opinion.

154. Mr. *Turner*.] Who is that trouble to be taken by?—By the bleachers and by the merchants. The bleachers would tell the merchants that they could not execute those orders in the same rapid manner that they have hitherto been accustomed to do, if the law prevented it. The bleacher would say to the merchant, I cannot execute these orders so suddenly as formerly; you must give me more time.

155. Did the master bleachers, or any of them, complain that work was thrust upon them in such quantities to be finished in so short a time that they themselves would have liked to be relieved from it?—Certainly: it was the general complaint; they said that they did not wish it; it was disadvantageous to them; that the goods finished in that rapid manner were not so well finished as they would be if they had more time; that was also stated by several of the merchants; and moreover the merchants informed me that it was only as regards fine goods that those “pushes,” as they are called, were most general and most difficult to be avoided, and that that constituted a very small portion of the total amount of the goods which were finished in Lancashire and Cheshire; and that as regards the common goods, the shirtings and so forth, both the home and the foreign trade was becoming less and less a season trade, and that a little forethought would enable the merchant to regulate his demands upon the bleachers so as to enable the bleachers to spread their portion of the work more regularly over the year.

156. Mr. *Davison*.] Must not the difficulty be felt by the merchant as well as by the bleacher?—The answer to that was, that upon some previous occasion it was thought that it would be impossible to induce the merchants of Manchester to shorten the hours at which their goods were delivered, so as to avoid the necessity of employing their men in certain processes in after hours; but a little resolution has enabled them to do that.

157. Are you aware that much of this pressure arises from the sailing of vessels at particular times and at particular seasons of the year; when there is likely to be a wind in one direction, and another, it is very desirable to get the vessel off to sea?—I think it is apparent from the evidence of the ten merchants whom I have referred to, that admitting this to be the case to a certain extent, it could only apply to a comparatively small portion of the whole trade of the year, and that if one cargo was too late for one season, a particular bleacher or a particular merchant might suffer to that extent, but that the total aggregate trade of the country would not be affected by that.

158. Are you aware that a vessel very often has on board for a certain market an assorted cargo of various descriptions of goods, some of them depending upon the bleacher delivering in time, and that if that vessel goes to that market without the whole of that assorted cargo, the value of that cargo would be deteriorated? That the Manchester merchants took those circumstances into consideration in the opinion that they gave me; but they did not attribute any great weight to it in reference to the great transactions of the year.

159. Would you think it desirable that the vessel should go to sea with an unassorted cargo, not suited for the market to which it is going, rather than a little extra exertion should be used by the bleacher to get his portion of the cargo ready in time for the sailing of the vessel?—It is a question for the Legislature to determine whether the amount of physical suffering and moral disadvantage to the community arising from that habit is sufficient to justify an interference with it.

160. Do you consider that the Manchester merchant can regulate the order coming in to him for goods?—He cannot.

161. Orders come in at unexpected periods, and sometimes in unlimited quantities?—Yes.

162. If that be so, and he applies to a bleacher to have that work executed, must not that irregularity still exist?—The answer to that is, that at present the merchants are inclined to apply to one or two particular bleachers; but if the hours were regulated so as to prevent those particular bleachers from executing that amount of work within the given time, the merchants would have to apply to three or four. As regards common goods,—the great proportion of the whole trade,—

trade,—the evidence is clear that no difficulty could arise; as regards a certain portion of the fine goods requiring a particular stamp or a particular treatment, a difficulty might arise; but I understood from the merchants that they were not so limited to any particular bleachers even of fine goods as to be likely to feel any great disadvantage from the change of circumstances, except in cases which might be considered as exceptional.

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163. Mr. *Baxter.*] I understood you to say that you had found 10 merchants who were anxious to relieve those operations of business at particular times?—Yes.

164. Did you find any masters concur with the 10 merchants that by a particular arrangement the evil might be remedied?—There were some of the masters who concurred in that view; and it was obvious, in going through the district, that capital was being laid out in new works, and new machinery was being erected; and I believe that practical men, and the operatives who gave evidence before me, were clearly of opinion that this improved machinery and increase of buildings would go very far towards enabling a greater amount of work to be done, especially by bleachers of fine goods, in a certain time, if legislation took place.

165. Are you of opinion that hitherto the supply of the bleaching works has not been sufficient to meet the demand?—I am not prepared to say that; I merely mention the fact that, according to my own observation at the time, I found that new works were being erected and additions were being made to old ones, and new machinery was being put in, the result of which I understood from the operatives to be, to enable the bleach-masters to execute a greater amount of work within a given time, supposing they were driven by legislation to make the alteration.

166. Mr. *Turner.*] Could they execute their work at the same cost?—That was a question more for them than for me; I merely mention what my observation has been.

167. Viscount *Goderich.*] Is the result of your inquiry this, that a length of hours, such as 12 or 14, in the temperature of those bleach-works, continued for a month, or some period of that description, would be likely to be injurious to the health of women and young persons?—I should think there could be no question about it. I know it is asserted by several of the masters that the general appearance of the people in the bleach-works is healthy; as far as the men are concerned, and particularly those engaged in the bleaching part of the process and not in the finishing, that is very true; and also as regards the females in those departments, more so than in the others; but I think it must be obvious that long hours will produce an effect, and also, that supposing any boys or females to be incapacitated from work in consequence of those long hours, there are others to be had to take their place; so that in going over the bleach-works and noticing only those that appear to be ill, you are obliged necessarily to leave out of view those who have had their health injured, and who are no longer able to continue at the work. I remember that it was a common expression among them, that if a girl or a boy left the bleach-work it was said, "Oh, they are not up to this hard work, or this kind of work;" and therefore the healthy appearance of the people employed, especially the adults, in the bleach-works, if it is a fact, is no proof that long hours do not have a very prejudicial effect upon a good many others.

168. Then in your opinion it will not remove your objection to long hours if it were to be shown that the average throughout the year is not more than nine or ten hours?—Clearly not.

169. Mr. *Packe.*] Was it only in Bolton that you examined medical gentlemen?—It was only in Bolton.

170. Were there no medical gentlemen examined in Manchester?—No; the Manchester petition I thought might be safely taken as a satisfactory indication of their opinion, and I did not wish to encumber my report with unnecessary evidence.

171. Mr. *Turner.*] Do you wish to lead the Committee to suppose that the generality of the men and the women whom you saw were healthy looking?—In one portion of the work they were; the generality of the adults were so in the bleaching part.

172. Were they generally healthy looking, or were they not?—I must repeat my previous answer, that in the portion of the works consisting of the bleaching, which is a good deal in the air (not in the open air, but in airy buildings), the appearance of the people was generally healthy; but in the finishing departments,

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in some of which they are exposed to a high temperature and in others to constant movement, I think I may say decidedly, that the general appearance of the young people was not healthy.

173. You mean the children?—Yes, and the young women.

174. Did not you also say, that you felt that many had left from their constitutions not being able to stand the work?—Certainly; that was the evidence given to me by many people. The opinions of Dr. Garstang, who has been in medical practice at Bolton for 13 years, and of Mr. Robertson who has practised there for 30 years, are distinctly to that point. (Evidence, p. 12.)

175. Did you see the evidence of that?—I had no opportunity of seeing it myself; I inferred it from the statements of persons on the spot.

176. Are there not, in all classes of society, weakly constitutions that cannot stand a great amount of work?—I do not believe that there are many classes that have to go through such hard work occasionally as among the young in the bleaching-works many are called upon to do.

177. Viscount *Goderich*.] Do you, or do you not, consider that in consequence of the heat the injurious effects of these works is increased?—I should presume that it must be so, because the physical exhaustion must be so much greater.

178. Can you state to the Committee what is the average temperature of the bleaching stoves in England?—The temperature ranges from 90° to 120° (pp. 1. 9.); it is in some places higher (p. 10.).

179. Does not it result, from your evidence, that the heat of the stoves in England is considerably lower than it is in Scotland and Ireland?—Yes.

180. *Chairman*.] You were asked whether the adults that you saw did not seem to be healthy; did you propose, in your recommendation, to interfere with the labour of adult males?—Certainly not.

181. Did not you say that the appearance of many of the children indicated ill health?—Yes; the appearance of those who were employed in the finishing department.

182-3. Is it not for this that legislation is intended?—Yes.

184. Viscount *Goderich*.] Have not your remarks hitherto been confined to the counties of Lancashire and Cheshire?—Yes.

185. What is your opinion as to the nature of the employment in the woollen dyeing works?—That the number of boys and females employed in those works is not great, and the employment is a healthy one. They do not work habitually beyond the usual hours, which are from 6 to 6, with generally two hours for meals.

186. Would you consider the employment in those works to be more healthy than those in Lancashire and Cheshire?—Yes.

187. Would it not result from the statements you have just made that there was not the same necessity for any legislation with regard to them as there was with reference to the other works to which you have alluded?—That is the result of my inquiry. There is not the same necessity; but I state also (p. xxxvi), that if the Legislature should deem it expedient to include them in a general measure; there would be no great difficulty in the way of their conforming to it.

188. Have you made inquiries of the same description in those districts as you have in Lancashire and Cheshire?—Yes, precisely.

189. And you obtained the same amount and description of evidence in the same way?—Yes.

190. Mr. *Cobbett*.] Have you had any opportunity of making any particular comparison between the operatives employed in the bleach-works and the operatives employed in the cotton-mills?—No; I am very little conversant with the manufacturing districts.

191. You said that the operatives leave the bleach-works occasionally in consequence of ill-health; did many instances come within your own observation?—I did not state it as a matter of my own observation; I said I had no opportunity of observing it, but I stated it merely on the evidence of persons whom I called before me.

192. You say that the adults in those works are generally healthy; did you inquire of many of them how long they had worked in the establishment?—Yes, I did, and several of them informed me that they had worked for many years.

193. At what period of their life had they commenced working; did they learn their trade as young people?—Yes; many of them had been for 10, 15, or 20 years in the works.

194. Were there not some older than that?—I dare say many were older.

195. Did

195. Did those men look healthy?—Yes; but still I beg to apply my answer specially to those men employed in bleaching, and not in the finishing departments. *H. S. Tremenheere, Esq.*

196. In the finishing departments you did not find them healthy?—I am not prepared to say that; many of the men in the finishing departments looked unhealthy, for the reasons I have given before; I said that men with strong constitutions can go through it.

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197. What kind of employment do those people seek, who, from ill health, leave those bleach-works?—I am so little acquainted with this district, that I am not able to answer that question.

198. *Mr. Baxter.*] Are there in Lancashire and Cheshire, as well as in Ireland and Scotland, any processes connected with bleaching and dyeing dependent upon the state of the weather?—None, that I am aware of, all the bleaching operations in Lancashire and Cheshire being conducted, I believe, in houses, and not in the open air.

199. And dependent upon the action of chemical substances?—And dependent upon the action of chemical substances.

200. *Viscount Goderich.*] Have you considered the question whether the education of the children could be provided for by legislation?—Yes.

201. And I find at page xix of your report that you are of opinion that no proceedings of that description will be required; is not that so?—Yes.

202. Will you state to the Committee your reasons for arriving at that conclusion?—Previously to the child arriving to the age of 11, which was the limit that I proposed to take for legislation, he would have had an opportunity of school instruction, which would, in all probability, considering that the growing disposition among the working classes towards education and the greatly increased number and efficiency of schools, have been, to a certain extent, taken advantage of. I say, in my report, to introduce the system of compulsory attendance for children of 11 years of age, which, according to the analogy of the factories, I apprehend could only be of two years' duration, would probably be acknowledged to be inexpedient.

203. Will you tell the Committee at what age children begin to work in the collieries?—At 10 years of age.

204. Did not you think the system of compulsory education to be efficacious with regard to those children?—I then thought, as I do now, that it is very desirable that the principle of the Print Works Act should be applied to boys working in collieries between the ages of 10 and 14.

205. Did not you make a suggestion of that description to the Committee which sat upon Accidents in Coal Mines in 1854?—I did.

206. Why do not you entertain the same opinion with reference to children employed in bleaching works?—Because I take the age of 11 in the bleach-works as the age up to which they should be excluded; and I do not think that, as a general principle, it is desirable to interfere with the freedom of action of the working classes, except when a very strong case of necessity is made out.

207. Are you aware of the effect which the educational clauses of the Factory Act have had upon the districts to which they are applicable?—Only from general information and from conversation with the factory inspectors, who are strongly of opinion that the educational clauses of the Factory Act are gradually producing a very improved condition, both intellectually and morally, among the labouring classes of the factory districts.

208. Is not that the portion of the Factory Act that is considered the least objectionable by all parties?—I understand that that is the case.

209. Therefore if you approve of such a legislation with regard to bleach-works, might you not introduce the clauses which, in the case of other employments, have led to such good results, and have been so little objected to?—I should not object to see them introduced, provided it was found that it could be done without any serious inconveniences, especially if their introduction would carry with it the public opinion of the persons concerned.

210. Did you put any question either to the masters or to the men upon that portion of the subject?—I did, and the general impression on my mind is that they would rather not be interfered with.

211. Did you find any special objection to provisions of that kind?—The impression left upon my mind is, that by excluding children from the works up to the age of 11, the same necessity would not exist as exists in other employments; and that there would be a tendency on the part of the masters to evade the

H. S. Tremenhore, Esq., operation of such clauses, by not taking any children into their works under the age of 13.

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212. May not the Committee fairly consider that you would think it rather an advantage than otherwise if such clauses could be introduced without leading to any great inconvenience?—Certainly.

213. Does not your experience among the working classes of other trades lead you to think that educational clauses of that description are desirable?—Undoubtedly.

214. *Mr. Baxter.*] Are the systems in the bleaching and dyeing works of Renfrewshire and Lanarkshire and the West Coast of Scotland generally very analogous to those in Lancashire and Cheshire?—Very, with this difference, that the temperature in the stoves is very high, and that a very large number of young persons and boys are employed in them.

Martis, 9^o die Junii, 1857.

MEMBERS PRESENT.

Mr. Baxter.
Mr. Butt.
Mr. Cobbett.
Mr. Davison.
Viscount Goderich.

Mr. Kirk.
Lord John Manners.
Lord Naas.
Mr. Turner.
Mr. Wyse.

ISAAC BUTT, ESQ., IN THE CHAIR.

Mr. John Warring, called in; and Examined.

Mr. J. Warring.

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215. *Chairman.*] ARE you employed in bleaching and dyeing works?—I am not just at present, but I have been employed in them for 19 years.

216. How long have you ceased to be employed in them?—About two years: I have been on the operatives' committee; I appear here by the wish of the committee.

217. That is the committee for the short-time movement?—Yes.

218. Where were you employed during those 19 years?—I was employed for 14 years at Mr. Slater's.

219. Where is Mr. Slater's?—At Bolton; after that I went to work at Messrs. Hardcastle's.

220. Is that also in Bolton?—Yes; at Fir Wood Bleach-Works, Bolton.

221. And where else have you been employed?—At Mr. Haywood's a little, at Salford.

222. Where was your last place?—Mr. Cross, at Bolton.

223. How old are you now?—About 33.

224. You entered upon your employment about 11?—Yes.

225. *Mr. Cobbett.*] You say you belong to a committee; what committee is that?—I am on the Operative Bleachers' Committee.

226. Do you mean the committee established for the purpose of securing legislative interference with regard to the hours of labour in bleach-works?—Yes; the operative bleachers never had a committee before.

227. When was this committee established?—I think it was established in May 1853.

228. Was Richard Pearce your secretary?—He was not our first secretary, but we employed him about four months after the agitation commenced.

229. And from that time to this he has been your secretary?—Yes; he is our secretary at the present time.

230. Has Mr. Pearce communicated with the masters, and with different bodies of workmen, and with Members of Parliament, upon this subject, ever since he became secretary?—He has, ever since he commenced to be secretary.

231. And

231. And the committee have been anxious to get the aid of as many Members of Parliament as they could in securing the Bill to shorten the hours of labour?—Yes; during the first portion of the time that the committee met, they were anxious to come to some arrangement without legislative interference; they thought the masters would perhaps be disposed to make a rule to that effect.

232. And therefore they desired to do it without a law?—Therefore we desired to do it without a law at first.

233. What did you do in order to accomplish that end?—We sent a deputation round to the various bleaching masters to ascertain their opinions about it, but they did not come down with anything very satisfactory about it; and, a little while afterwards, we sent a petition to them. I have not one of those petitions with me, but I could obtain one in the course of a day or two. That petition stated that legislative interference, as we thought, ought to be applied to as a last resort; but that we wished to come to some arrangement without it.

234. Did not you say that this was in 1853?—In 1853.

235. You sent a deputation first to the different bleaching establishments in Lancashire and Cheshire?—Yes, we visited them all.

236. Your committee went no further than Lancashire and Cheshire?—Our committee went no further than Lancashire and Cheshire.

237. And then you drew up a petition or memorial to the masters?—Yes.

238. What was the result of that memorial?—The petition was answered only by five bleach masters; the others treated it with silent contempt.

239. The rest did not answer you?—The rest did not answer us.

240. What answer did these five masters give?—They said that they were in favour of legislative interference, provided it could be made agreeable to the whole of the masters.

241. Provided that the whole of the masters agreed to do the same, those five masters had no objection to the shortening of the hours of labour?—Just so.

242. Do you remember what were the names of those five masters?—Mr. Baley was one. There was one of his workmen up in London at the same time.

243. Was Mr. Marsden another?—Mr. Marsden was another. Mr. Seddon was another. Mr. Robert Haywood was another; and I do not remember whether Mr. Bridson or Mr. Morten was the fifth. It was one of the two, but I will not be certain which of the two it was.

244. How many bleaching establishments are there altogether in Lancashire and Cheshire?—I should say there would be about 18. I am not exactly sure of that.

245. Did you send your petition to them all?—We sent our petition to them all.

246. Did any of those who answered you state that they thought that nothing could be done without legislative interference?—Yes; all of them did.

247. All the five?—All the five.

248. Is the Committee to understand that they agreed to alter the hours of work if the rest of the trade would do so; but that they expressed their opinion that nothing would be effected but by legislative interference?—Yes; that was their opinion, as expressed in their letters.

249. Had they any objection to legislative interference?—No; they did not seem to have any by their letters. I had them all read in the committee-room several times.

250. That was the result of your memorial?—Yes.

251. Did they make any efforts at all to shorten the hours of labour?—No; the thing went on as badly as before, and then we sent out another circular. That circular was entirely treated with silent contempt.

252. It was not noticed?—It was not noticed at all.

253. The first petition was in 1853?—Yes.

254. When was this second petition sent out?—A few months after the other.

255. Was it in 1854?—Yes.

256. Have not you been a member of the operatives' committee since its establishment?—I have been a member of the committee from the first day it started. The secretary was not a member for a few months at first. I have not been employed in the bleaching-works for these last two years.

257. You say that the second memorial which was sent out by the same committee to the same masters as the first petition, was not noticed at all?—It was not.

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258. Do you remember whether it stated any facts different from those in the memorial which had been sent out first?—It stated the serious consequences that followed from working excessive time.

259. That was in 1854?—Yes; I think it was in 1854. Then we agreed to come at once to Parliament in the same way as the factory people had done.

260. Shortly after that, I gave notice of a motion for inquiry into the condition of the bleachers?—Yes.

261. After that, I think, you addressed, through your secretary, a memorial to the Members of Parliament, stating your case; was not that so?—Yes; we did.

262. Is this the document which you wrote [*a paper being shown to the Witness*]?—This was the document which was sent to various Members of Parliament.

263. Was that document sent out to Members of Parliament for the purpose of calling upon them to support my motion?—Yes.

[*The same was read, as follows:*]

Bolton, 20 April 1854.

I AM directed by the Bleachers, Scourers, Dyers, and Finishers' Short Time Committee to call your attention to a motion which has been given for the 2d May, by Mr. J. M. Cobbett, for a Committee of the House of Commons to inquire whether there are not causes in existence, sufficient to render it expedient to place bleaching, finishing and dyeing establishments under a similar Act to factories, as regards the labour of females and young persons.

I am also instructed respectfully to request that you will give your support to such motion, in order that Parliament may be satisfied that the grievances of which we complain are real, and such as can only be removed by legislative enactment, or that our allegations are unfounded and our claims invalid. For your information I beg to state, in brief, the following particulars: there are children employed in bleaching and dyeing establishments from the age of eight and upwards; indeed, as in the case of factories, numbers employed are of tender years, whose physical capacities entirely unfit them for excessive toil. There are also numbers of females employed of various ages, from eight upwards. The hours of labour in these establishments are not regulated by any fixed rule; they are governed by the amount of work required to be done in a given time; the consequence is, that it has become quite common to work for 14, 16, 18 and 20 hours per day for several days together, and not unfrequently for several nights and days without intermission, except for meals. To those acquainted with the nature of the work performed in these establishments, it will be easily apparent how such protracted hours of labour must necessarily be opposed to the physical well-being of females and young persons. In some departments the heat of the rooms is maintained at a very high temperature, and in others the continued exhalations from wet clothes produce very injurious effects upon the health. The results also in a moral and intellectual point of view are no less deplorable. So little time can be depended upon by young persons for educational purposes, that their mental culture is next to impossible; they have no opportunities of attending schools, and the various advantages presented by the several literary and educational institutions which happily abound, are to them a sealed book; the result is, that they grow up in ignorance, and pass through life incapable of understanding their duties as citizens, and deprived of those rational and elevating pursuits which possess charms only for the educated. Their religious feelings and sentiments also remain undeveloped, or if awakened at all, in but a very partial and unsatisfactory manner; for it is next to impossible that without the guidance of a cultivated mind the doctrines of Christianity can be comprehended, or the duties which it imposes recognised and appreciated.

When I mention the fact, that the system necessitates the leaving of work by females, in company with the opposite sex, at untimely hours of the night, you will not be at a loss to draw therefrom a correct inference. It is a position in which, I submit, such parties ought not to be placed, for it is most dangerous to the preservation of chastity, and the maintenance of moral rectitude. I could cite instances in which, overcome by the allurements of temptation, females have fallen from their purity, and become afterwards shunned and degraded. But if the Committee of Inquiry be appointed, this and other facts to which I have briefly alluded will be elicited in detail.

I therefore beg, in the name of our committee, that you will do us the favour to vote for Mr. Cobbett's motion. We do not wish Parliament to interfere in our case unless upon ample grounds of justification. It is not protection for adults that we seek, because we believe that it would be impolitic to attempt to regulate the relations between employers and their adult servants by Act of Parliament. We plead for those who are helpless; for those whose tender years and comparative fragile constitutions render them fit objects for the protective guardianship of legal enactment. Most of those now employed in bleaching establishments have been connected with them from early life; the effects of the system are ever present to their minds; they can see them in their stunted intellects, their inferior social position, and in the premature evidences of old age which are creeping over them; and they are wishful, in their love for their offspring, to secure for them a brighter and a better destiny—a destiny more befitting the people of this the first of nations."

I am, &c.

Richard Pearce, Secretary.

Committee Room, Bridge Hotel.

264. It

264. It is stated in that document that the hours of work are very irregular in the bleaching establishments, that many very young persons are employed, and that they are employed frequently 14, 16, or even 20 hours a day; does it frequently happen that they are employed these long hours?—It very often happens.

265. Does that state of things continue for any length of time?—It depends upon the success of the masters; the working in the bleach-works is regulated very much by shifting orders; and it is by the amount of work that the masters regulate their hours.

266. Are there so few masters that they contest with one another for employment, and some get a great deal, and others get little?—Some get a great deal, and others do not get so much.

267. Can you state the number of hours that the people employed in these establishments work?—I may state the number of hours in the works that I have worked at, and my sister is working at the present time.

268. What works are those?—Mr. Slater's.

269. Where is Mr. Slater's establishment?—At Bolton.

270. What hours can you say that your sisters have worked, or any persons, in Mr. Slater's establishment?—I will state what it was at the time Mr. Slater took these works, 20 years since, or rather more; Mr. Slater took these works as a bleacher, and at first the people worked in two sets, night and day, and one set commenced in the day and another set commenced at night; but the women in the finishing part and the boys worked shifting 16 hours and then 8; they had to work in their turn.

271. Do you mean to say that the young persons would work 16 hours and go home for eight hours, and then come again and work 16 hours again?—Yes.

272. That was the state of things at first?—Yes; when Mr. Slater took the works, the finishing rooms and the drying department were not dependent upon machinery; afterwards they were put into one set, and then they commenced at six in the morning, and continued to nine, ten, and very often eleven at night; they did not exactly come at six in the morning; that was not always enforced.

273. Out of that time what had they for meals?—Half an hour at breakfast time, an hour at dinner, and half an hour at tea.

274. That was two hours precisely?—That was two hours; that continued for several years; Mr. Slater was very successful in business at first.

275. Has he gone on up to the present time?—Yes; he has withdrawn from business; but his sons carry it on.

276. How is the establishment going on now?—I wish to state this fact; after Mr. Slater had been there five or six years, he built a new finishing-room, and new mangling-places, and new drying-houses, and he gave over working in two sets night and day, and commenced working all his hands in the daytime; in consequence of laying down so much capital, and building so many places, and extending his works so much, he then commenced working from about six o'clock in the morning to about nine or ten at night, and occasionally all night.

277. When you worked the whole night was there not a different set of hands employed?—No, there was not; it was occasionally that it happened; it might be on Friday night we got "pushers."

278. What is the meaning of that term?—It is the word we use when work is brought in and they say that it must be done by a certain time.

279. Mr. Turner.] It is an urgent case, in which the work must be finished in a short time?—Yes.

280. Mr. Cobbett.] Do you say that occasionally, when these pushers came, Mr. Slater not only worked the whole of the day, but the whole of the night also with the same people?—Yes.

281. Were young people of the age which you have described in that document worked in that manner throughout the night?—Yes, they were worked in that way.

282. Supposing that one of these pushers came, what time was allowed for meals?—They stopped the same for meals as at another time.

283. Would they stop at all in the night?—Yes; they generally stopped at Mr. Slater's at one o'clock at night, while the fireman got his engine fires cleaned out, which was done in about an hour and a half, and then the work went on. During that time the women and the others rested. That happened occasionally, not very often; perhaps once a fortnight.

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284. That was the state of matters after Mr. Slater had extended his machinery?—Yes.

285. Now, go from that time up to the present time; as far as you know, is it the same now?—He continued very successful for a long time, and continued working those times; and then, I should say, about four or five years back, he began to take less, and not being so busy, they had the work come in more in fits and starts, and sometimes they were very slack at Mr. Slater's.

286. When they are slack, what hours do they work?—It would be difficult to say what hours they work. But when they are slack, at a great many of these works, they go about 7 or 8 in the morning, and continue till about 6 or 7 at night.

287. When they are in full work, what hours do they work?—When they are in full work, they work on till 10 or 11.

288. From what time in the morning?—From 6 o'clock in the morning. That is the stated time.

289. Is that the usual time for beginning work?—That is the stated time.

290. Could you tell the Committee what proportion of females there would be in such an establishment as Mr. Slater's?—There would be nearly one-third females, I should think.

291. And out of that number, about how many very young persons would there be?—Something like one-third of those would be under 18.

292. *Chairman.*] Did that work, all day and all night, go on continuously?—They generally fell short a little about Christmas, or a little before Christmas.

293. Supposing them to work from six in the morning to one o'clock at night, would they on the next day have the same amount of work?—Yes, unless occasionally, when they had worked the cloth up.

294. For how many days continuously have you known that excessive work to go on?—There have been extreme cases in which the hands have been there two nights and three days.

295. First take the case of working all day and all night; have you ever known that continued for a second day and a second night?—Yes, and for a third.

296. Do you mean to say, that you have known persons to work uninterruptedly for three days and three nights?—Yes; resting a little at the works; they have not been allowed to go home, but have rested at the works, lying on the tables for a little while, or anywhere where they could get a place to lie down.

297. How long did they rest?—Perhaps an hour or an hour and a half; it might be longer sometimes.

298. Did they go on all night without leaving the works?—Yes.

299. *Mr. Turner.*] Were there children of eight years of age employed in this way?—I will not say that there were children of eight years of age, but there were children and young persons.

300. *Chairman.*] Were there young persons under 18?—Yes.

301. Did you ever know them go on for four days?—Yes; I have known them go on for four days without going home.

302. *Mr. Davison.*] How often did that occur in the course of a year?—There was no fixed rule for it; I never knew it go on very often.

303. Would it occur as often as three or four times in the course of a year?—It might, or it might not; I have known the work continue sometimes for three or four days and nights, and several times for a night and a day, or a night and two days.

304. *Mr. Kirk.*] Have you ever known consecutive employment for four days and four nights to occur twice in any one year?—I will not say that I have.

305. *Mr. Turner.*] On how many occasions have you known such a circumstance to occur?—I have known it several times.

306. Have you known it half a dozen times in your experience?—Yes.

307. That is to say, half a dozen times in 20 years?—Yes.

308. *Chairman.*] Without taking the extreme case of going on for four nights and four days, has it frequently occurred to you to have to work two days and two nights consecutively?—Not so frequently as it used to do; we used to do it very often.

309. Do you mean to say that it has not occurred often?—It has not occurred so very often as it used to do.

310. *Mr. Davison.*] How often, in the course of a year, would consecutive labour

labour for two days and two nights occur?—I have known it to occur three times.

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311. Have you known it to occur four times?—I do not wish to exaggerate, and I will not say any more.

312. *Mr. Wise.*] On those special occasions to which you have alluded, have you heard the men make any complaints of their sufferings?—They were always complaining, but they came to nothing practical to remedy them.

313. Did they complain of the sufferings caused by this wonderful exertion?—Yes; there were many of them sick occasionally for a day or two; they mostly got time to rest, and got over it; they were not subject to any particular disease. Those who could not stand it had to go out and earn their living in other ways.

314. Do you mean to say that for four days and four nights the women remained with their clothes on, and only rested on the tables and benches for an hour or two?—Yes; that was the only rest they had.

315. Did your master see that going on?—The foreman or the master knew it.

316. Do you think that if the master had known it he would have allowed it?—He must have known it, because often the master set them so much work to do at 10 o'clock at night, as he knew must take all night; he has come from Manchester, bringing the orders himself to be done.

317. Do the masters generally reside near their works?—No.

318. *Mr. Kirk.*] Have these very long hours and these successive days and nights of work continued during the last year?—Yes; there are works where they worked for two nights and two days.

319. Do you know of your own knowledge that any of those engaged in this trade have worked for three or four nights in succession within the last year?—No.

320. Have you known it the year before last?—Yes.

321. Do you know that they worked three or four nights in succession in the year before last?—I will not say that they worked three or four nights in succession last year. I have not been working at the bleach-works these last two years; but I can state what has transpired where I have worked, and where my sisters are working at present.

322. Did not you state that your sisters are now working from 6 or 7 in the morning to 6 or 7 at night?—Not just at present.

323. Did not you state that at Mr. Slater's they had been working from 7 or 8 in the morning till 6 or 7 at night?—What I stated was, that Mr. Slater's works have not been subject to be busy continuously as they used to be formerly within these last three or four years; but my sisters are not working there now.

324. Where are your sisters working now?—One is working at Mr. Cross's now; she has not been there long; and the other has left the business altogether.

325. Are not these long hours that you have spoken of, to a great extent gone by?—They have not occurred so often lately as they did before; but I may just state that our secretary had a note from one of Mr. Slater's workpeople last week (I have the note, I think, in my pocket), stating the length of time which they had been working there; they worked all day on Friday, and on Friday night; and on Saturday till five o'clock in the evening.

326. *Mr. Cobbett.*] Did they work continuously during that time?—Yes.

327. When was that?—Last Friday and Saturday.

328. *Mr. Packer.*] About how long is it since you had work for four days and four nights continuously?—It is better than two years since I know that it took place; I will not say that they were working all the time, but they did not go home for that time, and they did not go to bed.

329. Was that within the last two years, or within the last three years?—Within the last three years.

330. Is the Committee to understand, that within the last three years you know of the workpeople being up for four days and four nights successively without going to bed?—Yes.

331. Where was that?—At Mr. Robert Haywood's, at Crescent Mill.

332. Are the works of which you are speaking near Manchester?—Yes.

333. *Mr. Davison.*] Have you known that to have occurred at any other mill within the same period?—I cannot say that I have; I cannot refer to the circumstances of the case exactly.

334. *Mr. Turner.*] Will you tell the Committee when this occurred at Mr. Robert Haywood's?—It is three years since; I was then informed that they had not been home for four days and four nights at a time.

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335. Mr. *Davison*.] Do you speak of that from your own knowledge?—No; I was informed of it by the parties employed in doing it.

336. Was that the last time that you can give in which work has lasted for four days and four nights?—I cannot state the exact time; I have not worked at the bleach-works myself for the last two years, and I do not wish to state any thing beyond that.

337. Have you worked in the bleach-works for 17 years?—Yes.

338. Within those 17 years when did you see an occurrence of that kind take place?—If I had known that I was coming before this Committee I would have been prepared with a great many facts.

339. Will you state to the Committee about what period you can say that such a thing occurred?—During the earlier portions of my time at Mr. Slater's it occurred very often.

340. Has it happened within the last 10 years?—Yes, it has happened within 10 years.

341. How many times have you seen it within 10 years, and in whose mills?—I know that at Mr. Slater's they have worked for two or three days and nights; I have seen that myself.

342. Have you known it to occur more than three times within the last ten years?—Yes; I have worked myself in that way.

343. Mr. *Turner*.] How long ago was that?—Nine or ten years since.

344. Is that the last time that you know such a circumstance to have occurred within your own experience?—Yes; that is the last time that I have seen that enormous quantity of work done.

345. You cannot speak to any other instance, from personal knowledge, at any works?—I cannot speak to any case that has exactly come within my own knowledge.

346. Lord *John Manners*.] You stated, when you were examined by the Commissioner, the fact that you have just mentioned; have you yourself ever worked four days and nights consecutively?—I cannot say that I have; I do not think that I have.

347. *Chairman*.] Can you say that you have worked for 17 or 18 hours at a time?—Yes.

348. Have you done that yourself?—Yes, I have.

349. Will you tell the Committee for how many days that work for 17 or 18 hours a day would continue?—For six or eight months together.

350. Do I rightly understand you to say that for six or eight months together you worked every day for 16 or 18 hours?—Yes, every day.

351. Mr. *Cobbett*.] That is the work that you have done yourself?—That is the work that I have done myself, along with females and boys; they have not exactly been in the same kind of work with me, but along with me.

352. *Chairman*.] Have they worked as long hours as you?—Yes.

353. Have you known women work for 16 or 18 hours a day for eight months consecutively?—I have.

354. Mr. *Davison*.] When was that?—When I was at Mr. Slater's; I can refer to a later period than that, when I was at Mr. Cross's.

355. When was that?—That was two years since.

356. Lord *John Manners*.] You said that women worked these long hours; did children work these long hours also?—Yes.

357. Mr. *Cobbett*.] Did the children lie upon the tables or benches at night when they worked these long hours?—There was no time to lie down in these hours.

358. When they worked throughout the night, did the children fare the same as the young persons?—Yes; the children stopped all night; I have seen them in the packing-rooms.

359. You have been asked a good many questions about the particular times, and the number of times, in which you yourself have known the working to go on throughout the night; can you pledge yourself to any particular occasion that you can mention in any one year when that was done?—I cannot just now.

360. Do you feel certain that you remember the working for three or four nights and days consecutively to have occurred several times?—Yes, I do.

361. In fact you have been a workman and have endured it yourself?—Yes, I have.

362. Have you seen the women and the children lie down during an hour or an

an hour and a half in the night while the engineman was cleaning out his engine to take rest?—Yes. Mr. J. Warring.

363. Can you also say that at times you have worked two days and two nights?—Yes. 9 June 1857.

364. Has that occurred more frequently than consecutive work for four days and four nights?—Yes, certainly.

365. Has it often occurred?—Not often.

366. What is the last time that you remember two or three days and nights together of working?—About six or seven years since.

367. Have these very long hours, and the days and nights of consecutive work, constantly been a subject of complaint amongst the working people?—Always.

368. Have they often tried to induce the masters to lessen the hours, or to get legislative interference to prevent them?—No, I never heard much about legislative interference before the passing of the Factory Act.

369. Was not the Ten Hours Act passed in 1847?—Yes.

370. Was there any desire expressed to get the bleaching works included in the operation of the Factory Act?—The workpeople often talked about it when they were having their meals together.

371. It was the subject of conversation among them?—Yes.

372. Have not you a good many factory people in Bolton whose work is regulated by the Factory Act?—Yes, a good many.

373. Did you consider them to be much better off than yourselves on account of their having their hours of labour restricted?—Yes.

374. And do you wish to be put upon the same footing with them?—Exactly upon the same footing.

375. Have they greater opportunities of attending libraries and getting instruction than you have?—Yes, decidedly.

376. Do you find any difference in that respect between you and the factory people?—Yes, the factory people have free access to all the institutions, the public libraries, the theatres and so on; they can go anywhere they choose.

377. Do they subscribe to the libraries and institutions of that kind?—Yes, a great number of them attend the night lectures at mechanics' institutions, and so on, and get books from the library.

378. Do the bleachers do that?—No.

379. Has there been any attempt made to get the bleachers to subscribe to a library?—They have got up a kind of schools in connexion with their works.

380. And have they succeeded, or, after having been set on foot, have they failed?—I have known them to fail, and I have never known them carried on long.

381. Is not it a fact that you subscribe for a considerable number of different times, and that these institutions have invariably failed because you could not attend on account of the long hours of work?—Yes; we subscribed 2 s. 6 d. apiece at Mr. Slater's, once, towards building a kind of Athenæum, and the committee managing that building could not agree as to the mode in which it was to be conducted; and Mr. Slater handed over the money to the Mechanics' Institution at Bolton, and gave his workpeople tickets. It was 17 l. altogether.

382. Lord *John Manners*.] Were the workpeople able to use these tickets?—No; I had a ticket, but I was working every night all that time, and I gave it to a coachmaker at Bolton.

383. *Chairman*.] Do you know of your own knowledge, within the last five years, of any bleaching-works going on on Sunday?—Yes.

384. Where have you seen work going on on Sunday?—At Mr. Cross's.

385. Lord *John Manners*.] Were your sisters working there?—Yes.

386. *Chairman*.] How recently have you known that?—It is certainly two years since I knew it to happen.

387. Have you known it within the last two years?—Yes.

388. Do you know the great lever works at Bolton?—Yes.

389. Have you ever seen those works going on on Sunday?—I have never been down there on Sunday, and I do not know. But I saw a man going down there on Saturday night, and he said that he had to work on Sunday morning.

390. Can you state that you met a man going down to work at 10 o'clock on Saturday night, and that he told you what he was going to do?—Yes; he said that he was going to work at that time.

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391. Did he tell you how long he was going to work?—He said that it would be 8 or 9 o'clock in the morning before he finished.

392. Up to what time was it common to work on Sundays?—It used to be very common some time since; but it has not been so common these last eight or or nine years.

393. Lord *John Manners*.] Since your sisters have been at Mr. Cross's, has there been work there on Sunday?—No; not that I am aware of.

394. Mr. *Turner*.] Have not you been employed by the Operative Bleachers' Association for the last two years?—No.

395. What have you been doing?—I have been employed in looking after this Bill, and in doing a little at Bolton; and I have been employed at a foundry for six months; but I have never left the committee. I have had to get several jobs occasionally. I have been in a foundry, and I have been on the railway.

396. May I inquire what wages you receive?—When I am engaged with the Bill, the operatives pay me; but when I am working they don't pay me.

397. Have not you a regular salary in connexion with the operatives?—No.

398. Do you get your living as a foundry-man?—That is not my business. I consider bleaching my business; but I have worked about six months since I was up here last at a foundry.

399. Do you find the foundry occupation more healthy than bleaching?—No.

400. Why did you leave the occupation to which you were brought up?—It is my occupation to come up here at the request of the operatives.

401. Has that been the means of taking you out of your occupation?—I cannot say that; I have not been able to get a situation since that time at the bleach-works.

402. Have you attempted it?—Yes, I have, at nearly all the bleach-works round about Bolton.

403. Mr. *Cobbett*.] Has that been the case with others of the operatives besides yourself who have come up here?—Yes.

404. Have they all been dismissed?—Every one of them that has come up here, and they have never been able to get situations again; one was employed for a week or two at Mr. Bridson's; he was out of work, and he is now gone to America.

405. What is his name?—Richard Parpington; the committee gave him 10 *l.*, and he went and fitted himself up with a calender, and so on, and he is managing business.

406. Mr. *Wise*.] Have the employers ever assigned any reason for not giving you work?—They only told me that I was not wanted any more.

407. Mr. *Turner*.] What hours do you work at the foundry?—From 6 in the morning to 6 at night, and 1 o'clock on Saturday, with meal times, of course.

408. May I ask you what wages you get?—I have 14 *s.* a week, but some of them have 25 *s.*, 26 *s.* or 30 *s.*

409. Lord *John Manners*.] You only work ten hours a day there?—We only work ten hours a day.

410. Mr. *Turner*.] Do not most of the facts that you have stated apply to Mr. Slater's works only?—No, it was the same at Mr. Cross's while I was there; but they have been slack at Mr. Cross's these last twelve months in one department, and the other department is very busy.

411. Have not they been rather slack of work at Mr. Slater's during the last two years?—They have.

412. What is the reason of their putting up so much new machinery if they are slack?—I am not prepared to say what is the reason that Mr. Slater has become slack, but I have heard that it is on account of his manager leaving him and going to another place, and that reduces a portion of their work.

413. Is it the fact that they have extended their machinery?—Yes, and several men have been put out of employment in consequence of it. May I be allowed to state what Mr. Slater stated to me on Saturday, that the Bill would do him no harm; that it would do him good. He did not request me to state that here, and he did not say that I must not; he said that he would not come up here to oppose the Bill.

414. Although you have not been working yourself, you must, from your connexion with the committee, be intimate with the operations of work at the present time; can you state whether the hours and the oppressive labour in the works are as severe as they were at the time of which you are speaking, nine years ago?—They are almost exactly the same.

415. Has

415. Has there been a large increase of bleach-works of late years?—No, I cannot say that there have been any new works erected, but the old ones have been much improved by machinery in some parts.

416. Have not the products that require bleaching been much increased of late years?—I do not pretend to say that.

417. Do not you know that there has been an immense increase in the cotton manufacture?—There have been a great many new cotton factories built since the passing of the Factory Act; there are seven in erection now at Bolton; but as for the quantity of cloth that comes from the new works now, as compared with the old works, I am not prepared to say.

418. If there has been no increase in the bleach-works, but a great increase in the production of cloth, will not there be much more work at the different bleaching-works?—Ever since I have known what bleaching was, some works have been short, while others were making this length of time. For instance, when Mr. Slater was making this length of time, there were the Burnden works not doing anything.

419. Will not there always be those differences depending on the management and skill of the different masters?—Yes; but the custom does not always stop at one place. It is as customary for a merchant or manufacturer to change his bleacher as it is for us to change our shoemaker or tailor. I have known several manufacturers move from one place to another; that is brought out, I think, by the evidence of Mr. Slagg, of Manchester. If one bleacher cannot do the work they will be obliged to send to another.

420. Mr. Kirk.] Were you in Ireland in the year 1853?—Yes, I was.

421. Were you at Keady?—I was.

422. Did you take with you to Ireland a number of placards of different coloured papers containing your letter?—I did.

423. Did you distribute them there among the workpeople?—Yes.

424. You called them together?—Yes; the reason why we did this, was because two or three men had sent letters to us about this movement, and had requested to have the Bill extended to them; and a man had come over from Ireland to our committee.

425. Where did he come from?—From the North; from Banbridge.

426. What was his name?—Mr. Kean; he came into our committee-room; we did not know him.

427. Did you make a speech to the people at Keady?—I merely said we were applying to Parliament for a Ten-hours Bill, and we had heard by letters that had come over from them that the Irish were desirous that the law should be extended to them; that we had got a system to allow workmen to utter their complaints; and that we had drawn up a letter upon the subject, and that various Members of Parliament, who had some knowledge of the Irish bleachers in Ireland, recommended strongly that Ireland should be in the Bill; but that in the first year Ireland was not in the Bill when it came into Parliament; and that it was made an objection to the Bill that Ireland was not in it.

428. Who objected to that?—Some of the Scotch bleach-masters.

429. The Scotch bleach-masters objected to the Bill because Ireland was not in it?—Yes.

430. What did you say to the people at the meeting which you held?—We came simply to ask their opinion as to whether they wished that they should be in the Bill or not; and they expressed a strong opinion at the meeting that they wished to be in the Bill.

431. Did not you tell them in your speech that they would get more wages for less labour?—No; but I did say this, that the factory people were afraid at the time of the passing of the Factory Act that the operatives were going to lose a day's wages a week. I said that that had proved not to be the case, and that the operatives were getting more now than they were getting then; and I believed that that would be the case with the bleaching business; and I am of the same opinion yet.

432. Would not a plain answer to my question have been, that you led the people to believe that they would get more wages for less labour?—I told them what I have now said; but it is not a question of wages with us. We do not mind losing the extra wages if we can get a limit put to the hours of labour.

433. Did you ascertain how many women were employed in the bleach-works at Keady?—There were very few.

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434. Did you ascertain how many females and young persons were employed in those works?—I believe it is not customary in Ireland for them to commence working so soon as they do in England.

435. Do you know at what age they begin to work in Ireland?—I am told that very few begin to work before they are 13 years of age.

436. Is it not the fact that there are no girls and no boys under 13 years of age in that establishment?—Yes; but at one of the works there were nearly 300 women working in one room.

437. To confine yourself to Keady; there are a number of bleach-mills upon the same river, are there not?—Yes; I saw several.

438. Did you make any inquiry as to the position of the workpeople there, or did you simply come to agitate them?—We did not come to agitate them.

439. Did you make any inquiries as to the nature of their employment, and the extent of it?—Yes; I believe they are not subject to working the length of time in Ireland that they work in England.

440. What length of time do they work?—They told us of one place where the men work nine days a week.

441. At Keady how long did they work?—I can tell you what one man said to me; he said that one occasion he commenced at 12 o'clock on Sunday night, and he worked till 12 again, some portions of them, nearly all, except those employed upon one or two sets of goods.

442. At what time did the persons who work upon the field begin in the morning?—The persons working in the field told us that they were working something about factory hours, and that they did not mind about them; but they thought they were necessary in the beetling.

443. Did you find, moreover, whether there were two set of hands employed?—There are in your works; but that is not a model for all Ireland.

444. Do you know anything of the nature of the employment of beetling engines?—Not in Ireland.

445. Do you know that the greater proportion of the workpeople who attend the beetling engines are adults?—I do not know the state of things in Ireland.

446. Do you know that it is perfectly practicable to work the beetling engines without employing anything but adult labour?—I can only say that I believe they employ only adult labour in the beetling establishments in most of the bleaching-works in England, and I should think it is the same in Ireland.

447. Did you learn when you were there that the parents used moral constraint with the masters, and obliged them to take their sons to labour with them?—No, I did not hear anything of that kind.

448. Was there nobody at all that told you that he would a great deal rather have a son working along with him than not?—No, there was not; I never made any inquiries about that.

449. Has not the evidence which you have given hitherto been entirely with regard to the cotton bleach-works?—Yes.

450. Have you had any experience of the linen bleach-works?—None whatever.

451. Are you aware, as far as your knowledge goes, that linen cannot be bleached in the same manner as cotton?—Yes, I am perfectly aware of that, because we have had odd pieces of linen, two or three pieces at a time, and I know how they have bleached it; we have bleached it on the grass.

452. Must not linen be bleached on the grass?—Yes.

453. In fact, the operation of carrying the linen out to the field, and laying it out upon the grass, and lifting it from the field and spreading it, form the greater part of the labour of a linen bleach-field; is not that so?—Yes; there was one man who told me that they could perfectly dispense with boys in the field if they thought fit.

454. Were there any boys in the linen bleach-fields?—Yes, I saw some.

455. Were not they employed in picking up pins, and things of that sort?—Yes.

456. Does not it follow that as the principal proportion of the employment in a linen bleach-field is out of doors, persons engaged in them could only work seven or eight hours a day in winter?—I should think it would be so.

457. They could only begin in the morning at about seven; they must give up about half-past four?—I should think so.

458. And therefore, if a Bill was passed compelling them to work from six to

six, it could not be obeyed?—Not as far as adults are concerned; they might dispense with women and young persons; we are not interfering with the fields at all, nor with adult labour; we are not interfering with adult labour in the fields, or anywhere else; the young persons might leave off in the fields, or anywhere else.

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459. Would that concern the parties that got this Bill up?—Yes.

460. The words of the clause are these: "The word bleaching-work, wherever it occurs in this Act, shall be taken to mean any inclosure, room, house, building, shed or other premises, which could be, or is used for the purposes of carrying on the trade or business of bleaching or dyeing." Does not that include the field works?—I think the Bill says that in cases of emergency that they shall be allowed to work upon out-door processes.

461. Mr. *Cobbett*.] You did not draw the Bill?—No, I think the Earl of Shaftesbury drew the Bill.

462. Mr. *Baxter*.] When you said that you did not intend to interfere with the bleach-fields at all, you meant that you did not mean to interfere with adult labour in the fields?—Yes; I did not mean to interfere with adult labour in the fields. I just wish to state, that I do not see what the fields have to do with the subject, because as I understand the Honourable Member to say, there will be no women or boys employed, and we are not interfering with adult labour; and it appears to me that it is almost all adult labour in the fields.

463. When you were there did not you make inquiries as to the length of time that the people worked?—I believe that from what I heard there, the people working in the fields would not object to working long hours in the summer time. When we were coming back from there one day, I saw that they were all cleared away when we passed there, and it was not much past 7 o'clock at night.

464. Did you make any inquiries as to the length of time that my workpeople worked for me?—No, we did not.

465. Mr. *Baxter*.] You said that the operatives employed in these bleach-fields, in the north of Ireland, were not caring much about the Bill; does that remark also apply to the linen bleach-fields on the coast of Scotland?—I suppose so; I did not think much about the Bill.

466. Does the same remark apply to the south-east coast of Scotland, where the work is very similar to the work in Ireland?—I never have been there, and I know nothing about it; when the Scotch case comes on I dare say they will be able to state their case.

467. Was there any feeling among the operatives employed in the linen bleach-fields on the east coast of Scotland in favour of such a Bill, until they had been communicated with by parties from the manufacturing districts of England?—I do not know much about the east coast of Scotland; I can speak as to the west, but I do not know anything about the east.

468. Do not you know that the processes used in those works are analogous to those used in Ireland?—I do not know anything at all about them.

469. Mr. *Turner*.] Is not there a considerable quantity of machinery in course of introduction into the bleach-works generally?—Yes; I think they commenced at the time that this agitation did.

470. Will not they, in your opinion, tend very much to divide the hours of labour; will not it facilitate the manner in which the manufacturer accomplishes his work?—My experience of this sort of machinery is this: machinery was introduced at Messrs. Eden & Throat's five years since, and they dismissed half their men; but it enabled them to do the bleaching very cheap and very well, as far as the bleaching is concerned; but as to the finishing, they just went on at the same length of time; I have had a sister working there, and she stated that she had not been from work before 10 or 11 o'clock at night perhaps more than a dozen times in six or eight months.

471. Do not you think that the introduction of machinery does tend to equalise the hours of labour:—Not in the slightest degree in the finishing department; it has only tended to put the hands out of work; there are a great number of workpeople out of work through it; they still continue the length of time, but it throws the hands out of employment.

472. Did not you state that you were working in a foundry now?—Yes.

473. Have you given up the bleaching business?—No, I have not given it up, if I can get a situation.

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474. For how many months in the year do you work in the foundry?—I have worked there for something about six months.

475. Do you really work at the foundry half your time now?—I have no situation at all now.

476. Do I rightly understand you to say that you do not receive anything in the way of wages except the pay which you receive from your committee?—I have not done anything since a fortnight before Christmas; I came out of work a fortnight before Christmas; I was taken on at a push when I went back to London, and they kept me on for six months; the manager told me the master had ordered him to send me away, and he said that he had kept me on longer than the master was willing. There was no work going on in three rooms when I went away.

477. The fact of your having given up bleaching and working does not seem to have deteriorated your physical appearance?—I have not had any work since a fortnight before Christmas, except that I worked at the railway for a fortnight, and I have not got a penny during that time.

478. Except what you get from the delegates' club?—They pay me when I come up here; I cannot live in London, and pay 1 s. 6 d. a night for my bed, for nothing.

479. *Chairman.*] Is the Committee to understand that while you are here upon the business of the association, the operatives pay your expenses in London?—Yes; they have wished to employ me to do work for them, but I have refused to be employed in that way; I have given it up.

480. *Mr. Kirk.*] I see that you gave evidence in four distinct cases before Mr. Tremenheere; you first gave direct testimony, which is contained at page 2, and then you gave further testimony, which is contained at pages 9, 10 and 44; will you state to the Committee why you gave evidence four times?—Mr. Tremenheere expressed to the Committee a wish to see some of us after he had taken the evidence of the masters, in order that he might read it over to us to see that it was correct, and give us the privilege of correcting anything that was wrong in it, just as he had read our evidence to them. Those that were working were afraid that they might be injured if they had too much to do with Mr. Tremenheere, and I was the one who volunteered to go to hear the evidence of the masters, and to correct it.

481. Are we to understand that when you used the words "I have seen the evidence of the masters," you meant to say that you had heard it?—Yes; I believe that Mr. Tremenheere made a mistake there; I think I said that I had heard it.

482. You simply heard it?—Yes; Mr. Tremenheere read it over to me.

483. How did it happen that your answers were given with such circumstances of particularity as they are at page 44 of the report?—I just answered the questions that Mr. Tremenheere asked me, and I referred him to the various documents in existence, the memorial to Lord Palmerston, and to the masters, and so forth. That is the form in which he has put my evidence, but he asked me questions.

484. How did you happen to recollect all these circumstances, so as to be able to make observations upon the evidence of one and the other, without having the documents before you?—A man who has worked in the bleach-works all his lifetime is able to answer any questions that any man may ask him about it; and if he has been connected with the committee, he can answer the questions as to how it has been conducted; that is all I did.

485. There are in your evidence observations about Mr. Blurz's evidence and Mr. Crass's evidence, and the evidence at page 35, and so forth; how were you able to make those observations merely from hearing the evidence read?—I had my pencil and paper in my hand when Mr. Tremenheere was reading it over, and I made a note of the things that I wished to make a remark upon. I feel very much interested in this movement, from what I have seen of the consequences of long hours during the time I have been in the business; and I am very anxious for the passing of the Bill, and that was the reason that I was as acute as I could possibly be in it, because I thought that much depended upon our managing it well.

486. Is it still your opinion, as stated in your evidence, that you could make a person a good worker in the bleaching in a very short time?—That is Mr. Slater's opinion; it is not my opinion at all; I stated what was told to me by one of the masters in the bleaching business.

487. Is it the fact that Mr. Tremenheere did not give you any of the evidence which he had taken to read or to examine; but you simply took notes from what he

he read?—That was all; but I stopped him while he read, and asked him to read portions of it over again sometimes. I was a day with him with the secretary in Manchester. He had given the masters a longer time than that to consider our evidence, and to make their remarks upon it; but he stated that the masters made no remarks, beyond charging one or two of the men with exaggeration, and things of that sort; he did the same with the masters as with us. He sent the masters our evidence to read, and requested them to examine it, and see if it was correct; and if it was not correct, to write to him about it.

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488. Were you, or any of your committee, with Mr. Tremenheere before he commenced his investigation, or during the time that he made it?—Neither I nor any of the operatives at Bolton had ever seen Mr. Tremenheere before he commenced this investigation.

489. Did any of the committee point out to him the bleach-works that he was to go to?—He requested that we would furnish him with a list of the bleach-works in the neighbourhood, and our secretary did do so.

490. Did you furnish him with a list of the whole of the bleach-works, or only of certain ones?—I believe we passed over one or two by mistake. I think we omitted Mr. Slater's.

491. Was not Mr. Slater's the establishment in which there had been very excessive work?—Yes; it was missed by an oversight.

492. Did your committee request Mr. Tremenheere not to examine any of the workpeople in the Irish bleach-fields?—No.

493. Did nothing of the kind take place?—Not that I know of.

494. *Chairman.*] Do you know of any such request being made?—No.

495. *Mr. Kirk.*] Did not Mr. Tremenheere simply examine the workpeople of those places which the Bolton Operatives' Committee pointed out to him?—We just gave him a list of the bleaching-houses in the neighbourhood.

496. *Lord John Manners.*] Did you say anything to him about Ireland, one way or the other?—No.

497. *Chairman.*] Did he ask you for a list of the bleaching-works near Bolton?—Yes; and he asked who was the secretary of the Short Time Association at Manchester, connected with the finishing and bleaching-works there, and we just gave him the secretary's address and a list of the bleaching-works.

498. In the evidence which you gave before Mr. Tremenheere, you said this: "One of the great reasons of the long hours in the finishing departments is, that the bleaching machinery has been improved faster than the finishing, so that as much cloth can be bleached in 10 hours as it would take 16 to finish." Is that correct?—Yes, it is correct.

499. Has there been any improvement in the finishing department since you gave that evidence, which is now some years ago?—Not in the times of work; they do not work shorter hours.

500. You say, "But many bleachers have already improved their finishing machinery, and those that have not might get through the finishing in 10 hours, if they would take on more hands, or improve their machinery." Is it your opinion that if there was the same improvement in the finishing machinery that has been made in the bleaching machinery the masters could meet the requisitions of the Ten Hours Bill, without any inconvenience?—I think they could do it now, with a little management, just by the employment of an additional female or two; and the Committee will see that Mr. Morris, the foreman of Mr. Ainsworth, is of the same opinion. Mr. Bridson, of Bolton, I think, is almost of the same opinion. The Committee will see by the evidence that he thinks that by laying out a little money in improvements, they could do the work.

501. Do I rightly understand you to say, that by the recent improvements in the bleaching machinery, what you call a push order, which would formerly have taken a week, could now be done in three or four days?—During these last six or seven years they can bleach a shipping order for any amount of cloth quite as well in four or five days as they could have done it in seven or eight. If the Committee choose, I will tell them the reason of it.

502. Is there any doubt that if similar attention were turned to the improvement of the finishing machinery it would have a similar result?—It would have a similar result if they were to employ a few more women in the finishing department; then they could keep straight with the bleachers; at present the state of things is, that they are able to work 10 hours in the bleaching department, and to give the other departments 17 hours' work; I think that by a little arrangement

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of the finishing department it might be done in 10 hours equally with the bleaching department.

503. Lord *John Manners*.] As to the occasion when you went over to Ireland, do I rightly understand you to say that an application came from Ireland to you in the first instance?—Yes; a man came over to us, and when he got back he stated that the operatives in Ireland were anxious for a Bill equally with the English operatives; and then we told him that if that were the case they must petition Parliament and send petitions over; and several petitions were sent over from various works by this man to our committee, and were presented to Parliament.

504. Your committee did not first communicate with the Irish operatives, but the Irish operatives addressed you in the first instance?—They wrote to us in the first instance.

505. *Chairman*.] Is it not the fact that the Bill which was first introduced, and which passed the House of Lords, did not extend to Ireland?—Yes.

506. Was it after that that these Irish operatives came over to you?—Yes.

507. Mr. *Baxter*.] Was any such application made from the linen bleach-works of Scotland, either by deputy or by letter?—No.

508. Could any have been made without your being aware of it?—No, it could not; because I have been aware of all that has taken place in the committee.

509. *Chairman*.] Do you remember when Lord Shaftesbury introduced the Bill in the House of Lords?—Yes.

510. Then it came into the House of Commons?—Yes.

511. Was it subsequently to that that you had communication with Ireland?—Yes.

512. Did they come and complain of being omitted in the Bill?—They wished to be in the Bill.

513. Mr. *Kirk*.] Who is the treasurer of the short-time committee fund?—The secretary and treasurer are both one; the landlord of the house where our committee met was the treasurer; but when he left the house we entrusted the secretary with the funds.

514. Who is it that disburses the money that is collected by your committee?—Mr. Pearce, the secretary.

515. You spoke a little time back of a man named Kean; was he employed to get up petitions from Ireland to the House of Commons?—I believe our committee paid him a little sum of money for the trouble that he had been put to, on account of his stating that the Irish had so little that they could not afford to pay him, and we thought that it would be right to help him in that way.

516. Is it true that you paid him 1 s. a name for every name he got to the petition?—It is decidedly false.

517. Was it so reported?—I never heard it.

518. Did you pay him a certain sum of money for getting up the petition?—No.

519. Was he employed to get signatures to petitions by the Bolton Short Time Committee?—We paid him his expenses; but he stated that he was getting up a petition at the wish of the Irish operatives.

520. Mr. *Cobbett*.] Is Mr. Kean an Irishman, or an Englishman?—He is an Irish bleacher.

521. Where does he work?—Somewhere about Banbridge.

522. Did he come to you, or did you go to him?—We never saw him until he came into the committee-room.

523. Where did he come to you?—He came into our committee-room at Bolton.

524. Mr. *Kirk*.] How much did you actually pay Richard Kean?—I cannot say exactly; I could tell by reference to the reports.

525. Is there any person who can tell us exactly what he was paid, and for what services he received that money?—He received the money for his trouble in getting up the petition; I think there never was a petition that came to the Houses of Parliament in which some parties were not paid for attending to it. In the case of the Corn Law Petitions a man at Bolton had 5 s. a day for standing in the street with them.

526. Mr. *Cobbett*.] Are you referring to the Anti-Corn Law League Petition?—Yes; he was paid for standing at a table with it.

527. *Chairman*.]

527. *Chairman.*] Do you mean to say that there cannot be a petition to the House of Commons without some persons taking trouble about it?—There cannot be a petition to the House of Commons without some persons taking trouble about it. But our petitions did not cost us a halfpenny, except the paper and the printing, because our people came to sign them.

528. Did not Mr. Kean represent himself as having taken a great deal of trouble in forwarding the short-time movement in Ireland?—Yes, that was it.

529. Did he further represent that the Irish operatives were not able to pay him?—Yes.

530. And therefore you paid him something on account of his expenses?—Yes, we did.

531. Was anything paid to him for getting up petitions to Parliament?—No, nothing at all.

532. *Mr. Davison.*] Did you know that that was the practice with any other petitions?—No; in the case of the Corn Law Petition they employed a party to look after it, and stand at the table with it. Mr. Kean was a poor working man, and could not lose his time.

533. *Lord Naas.*] How was your committee first brought into communication with this man?—We did not know anything at all about him till he came into the committee-room.

534. Did he offer his services to you?—He said that the Irish were wishing for a Bill, but that they had not the means to look after it.

535. Did he say that he would undertake to get up a petition if you employed him?—Yes, if we paid his expenses.

536. Did you pay him anything beyond his expenses?—No; simply his expenses.

537. About what sum was paid to him?—Something like 5*l.* or 6*l.*, I dare say.

538. *Viscount Goderich.*] Could not your treasurer tell the Committee exactly what you paid him?—Yes.

John Marshall Robinson, Esq., called in; and Examined.

539. *Chairman.*] YOU are a practising Surgeon, I believe, in Bolton?—Yes, I am.

540. How long have you been practising in Bolton?—For 34 years.

541. Have you had any opportunity of becoming acquainted with the families of the persons employed in bleaching-works in Bolton?—Yes; I have attended a great number of them, but I do not know that I can mention anything special in connexion with them.

542. Have you had an opportunity of forming an opinion as to whether the hours of work at present pursued in the bleaching-works are injurious or not?—The work itself is very healthy, but long-protracted labour is injurious.

543. From your professional experience in attending the families of persons who are employed in the bleaching-works, do you think that their health suffers from the hours of work at present used?—I cannot specify cases; but I think I have met with some cases of acute disease brought on by exposure and long-continued labour; but I have known nothing of the working of the bleach-works. I do not know anything of the hours of work of my own knowledge. I may say that I have heard parents complain that their children have been very much fatigued and broken down by them; but I do not know it of my own knowledge.

544. Have you frequently heard those complaints?—I am not prepared to speak positively about it; but I think that, taking a series of years, I may say that I have heard them frequently. Taking my practice of 34 years, I may say frequently; but, at the present time, I do not suppose I have had any complaints at all within the last three or four years.

545. Do you remember a petition being presented to the House of Commons some time since from Bolton in favour of the Short Time Bill?—Yes.

546. Did you sign it?—Yes, I did.

547. It is "the petition of the undersigned clergymen and members of the medical profession of the borough of Bolton, in the county of Lancaster," and it alleges that "your petitioners have long known with regret that it is customary in the several bleaching, finishing and dyeing establishments in the United Kingdom, for females and young persons to labour for 14, 16, 18 and 20 hours a day,

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and frequently for days and nights consecutively, without intermission, except for meals;" is that your experience now?—I believe that such has been the case formerly; I suppose it was so 20 years ago; but I believe also that improvements have taken place in machinery which facilitate the works, so that great improvements have taken place in the works.

548. Do you know or believe that at present these practices are persevered in?—I cannot speak of my own knowledge; when I signed the petition I went upon the reports of the parents who happened to call upon me professionally, and therefore I believed it.

549. Do you believe that it has continued, or that it has ceased?—I believe that the hours of labour are injurious to young people; those hours of labour would be injurious to any person.

550. Do you believe that they are now customary?—I think they are not so common as they used to be before the improvements in machinery which I have referred to.

551. Do you think they exist at all?—I do not know; I believe they exist occasionally, when there are, as a witness has said, some bleach-works where there are what they call "pushes," that is to say, large orders, which have to be completed in a short space of time, they cannot do it without working a part, if not all the night, and the works are not carried on without the employment of people of both sexes, and of different ages. I have no doubt upon my own mind of that, because I have occasionally passed through the works; but, of course, I do not speak any further.

552. I believe you have been a medical inspector of factories?—Yes.

553. Do you remember the state of the factories and the factory children before the Factory Act passed?—Yes.

554. What is your opinion as to the result of the Factory Act?—I think it exceedingly beneficial; the rising generation of the factory operatives will be the most educated of any class that we have, because, before coming to 13, they must go to a school where the master or the mistress is approved of by the inspectors; they cannot work full time till they are 13.

555. As far as you can form an opinion, do you consider that the extension of a similar provision to the bleach-works would be beneficial?—That is my view of the case. I confine myself entirely to children from 8 to 13; and I think that the educational clause, if it were to be carried out in combination with a provision for their not working too long, would be beneficial; we have a great improvement in the physical condition of the factory operatives; there are no bow-kneed or distorted figures as there used to be.

556. Do you think there has been an improvement latterly in the hours of work at the bleach-works?—Yes.

557. Before that improvement took place was there any perceptible difference between the persons employed in the bleaching-works and the factory operatives?—The bleachers were far more healthy than the factory operatives.

558. Do you think that now the factory operatives look the better of the two?—I think they are the more intelligent.

559. Has that change been produced under the influence of the Factory Act?—I am doubtful whether I can make a physical comparison, because the bleachers, most of them, live in the country, and have benefit of inhaling the pure air.

560. What length of hours do you think that a young person under 13 could be able to work without injury to her health?—I do not think they ought to work more than 10 hours, deducting from that two hours for having their meals; I think that 10 hours is quite enough for young persons from 8 to 13.

561. Lord John Manners.] Do you apply the same remark to women; how long do you think that women, with a due regard to their circumstances, can work?—After girls have passed the age of 18 they can endure more physical labour, but they are not, many of them, quite perfectly developed until they are 17 or 18 years of age, and these long hours of work interfere with the anatomy and physiology of the frame.

562. You were examined before Mr. Tremenheere, and you stated, in answer to a question from him, that you had had frequent opportunities of being acquainted with the workers in bleach-works and their families. How did you get your opportunities?—As medical attendant.

563. Have you come across both children and young females employed in the bleach-works?—Yes.

564. Have

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564. Have you ever noticed that they appeared to be unhealthy in any way?—No, they are not mostly unhealthy; I think that there is a tendency, from over fatigue and sudden exposure to cold in the night, to fever, typhus fever, and sometimes inflammation of the lungs.

565. Have you ever known the complaint which is called "sore feet"?—Perhaps there is a little swelling about the ankles occasionally, from standing so very long as they sometimes do; but when they work night and day for two or three nights consecutively, they have the opportunity, when waiting for their turn, of resting. If I understand the bleaching correctly, the cloth goes through several processes, each of these processes being done by one set of hands; and when one portion is bleached, or has passed through the drying-room, or anywhere else, they can wait until their process comes on again; but instances have been reported to me of swollen feet, which have been attributed by the parents to over-work.

566. Mr. *Päcke*.] Is there anything unhealthy in the employment of bleach-works?—I think it is more wholesome work than any other occupation.

567. Mr. *Davison*.] If women and young people were kept working for four or five days together, would it not be enough to give them swollen feet?—Yes, but that is an extraordinary occurrence. In some parts of the bleaching process the temperature is obliged to be exceedingly high, and that is injurious to those who are working in it.

568. Lord *John Manners*.] Is it not the fact, that where the temperature is so high, the people are not employed those occasional long hours which have been mentioned?—I fancy that it is amongst the finishers, as they are called, that the long hours prevail, and they of course require a warm atmosphere; but my observation applied to the stoving, where the temperature must be very high.

569. Mr. *Davison*.] Are you prepared to say, of your own knowledge, that the children and young persons employed in the bleaching-works are, as a class, unhealthy?—No, the occupation itself is not unhealthy; the only objection I have is, to the length of time that children between eight and 13 are employed.

570. Mr. *Kirk*.] When parents complained to you about the long hours which their children were obliged to work, did not it occur to you to ask them why they sent their children at such a tender age to work?—They are obliged to send them; they must do something for their own livelihood; a great many parents are kept by their children working in the bleach-works and in the factories; it is a very common thing for the children and large families to get to work, and for the father and mother to keep at home; they are quite aristocratical among workpeople; they have a large income.

571. Do you mean to say, that the parents send their children to work, in order that they themselves may not labour?—They would not send their children to work in order that they themselves may not labour, but it is a very difficult matter, I suppose, for a weaver, who will earn 18*s.* or 20*s.* a week, to keep five or six children; of course when they get able to work they are anxious for them to earn something; at first they earn very little; I have known them earn as little as 1*s.* 6*d.* a week, but they quickly get up to 2*s.* 6*d.*, 8*s.*, 10*s.*, and so on.

572. On the other side of the Channel we do not, generally, take in any children, either male or female, until they are, at least, 13 years old; is that difference in consequence of the superior industry of the English, or in consequence of the cupidity of the parents?—Every one must put their own construction upon it; I cannot answer that question; it may arise from both causes.

573. Would it not be an improvement if no parent could send his child to any employment until he was 13 years of age?—If you speak of the child, I should say that it would be a very great improvement. But it is better to have half a loaf than none at all; and there are a great many of them that are dependent, in a measure, on the labour of their children for a livelihood.

574. Do not you, as a medical man, believe that it would be the most important benefit that the working classes could obtain, if they were not to be required to labour till they were 13 years of age?—My medical opinion, independently of other matters, is that if they did not labour at all until after they were 13, they would be a great deal better off, and a stronger generation would rise up. But that is simply a medical opinion, isolated from the rest of the case.

575. Considering also the amount of information that they would necessarily derive now that cheap schools are spread over the whole country, would it not be a most important improvement in the education of the workmen, if they were sent to school at that time?—If I confine my answer to that one question,

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of what is best for the children, I should decidedly say that it is better for them not to work at all till they are 13, and to have play, but to go to school. But if it is competent for me to go a little further, I should say that I think, as regards children in that part of the country, that if they are not at work they are doing something which is worse, because the parent will not send them to school.

576. Do you mean to give it in evidence before this Committee that English parents are so indifferent to the mental cultivation of their children that they will not send them to school?—I mean to say that I know, as Medical Inspector of Factories, that we have great difficulty in getting parents to send their children to school.

577. That is in a case where there is a school for the children, and they are obliged to send them to school?—Yes; they cannot help their going to school, but they play truant. They must go to school while they work, or else they cannot go to work at all; but we frequently find that they are allowed to play truant. It is decidedly proved that their parents will not do it without a necessity, and we find that there are many who do not go to the factory that are never sent to school by their parents. I do not know a single instance where children who come into the factories at eight years of age have been in the habit of going to school, except to the infant schools which are spreading amongst us, and are becoming very efficient and very useful. But that is a recent thing.

578. Is the Committee to understand that children which are sent to the factories, or to the bleach-works, or to any other employment at eight or nine years of age, have actually not been sent by their parents to school?—It is so in some cases.

579. Are those cases numerous?—I should say that they are numerous; hundreds of children are in that case.

580. Do you refer to children in the neighbourhood of Bolton?—Yes.

581. Did you say that the people having sent their children to work at this tender age, have complained to you that they were overworked?—I cannot speak from my knowledge as to how young they are received in the bleach-works, but they are not received in the factories till they are eight years of age.

582. Do not you think that they should not be received till they are 13?—As a medical opinion I should say so; but I know the impossibility of carrying out what is proper for the rising generation.

583. Would you have any hesitation in saying that they ought not, under any circumstances, to be employed before the age of 11?—I should say that the same amount of occupation in the bleach-works would not be more onerous, or more confining, or more injurious than in the factories, and they seem to take no harm there; provided they can only work half a day at the bleach-works, as they do at the factories, I should recommend their being allowed to work at the same age.

584. *Mr. Cobbett.*] Do not they work six hours a day at the factories?—Yes.

585. *Mr. Kirk.*] Are you aware, from your residence in Bolton, that the employment at the factories is of a far more continuous nature than the employment at the bleach-works?—Yes, but the work in the factories is very different from what it used to be; improvement of the machinery and the improvement in the construction of the buildings, and the improved system of ventilation, have made it much more healthy and pleasant than it used to be, so that you must not suppose that they are continually kept on the stretch; they have time to play, and time to look through the windows, and so forth.

586. Do you conceive that in the employment of a young person, whether male or female, in the cotton spinning, or the cotton carding, or the cotton rolling rooms, there is an insensible inhalation of certain particles, or certain substances floating in the atmosphere, which is injurious to health?—Decidedly so, but I am speaking comparatively; you cannot have the rooms so perfectly ventilated as to do away with that altogether.

587. Is that the case in bleaching-works to the same extent?—I do not suppose that there is so much of it; but as regards the bleach-works, I cannot speak so much from experience as I can with regard to the factories; I have not been into them so often.

588. Have you had much experience of, or acquaintance with the dye-works?—No.

589. Are there many dye-works in the neighbourhood of Bolton?—I think there are three or four.

590. Are

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590. Are they of a very extensive character?—I do not know their extent; I should think that Mr. Ainsworth and Mr. Harcastle had each of them extensive works, but I do not know to what extent.

591. Have you had any experience, medically, of the children employed in print-works?—No; nothing further than that I have been occasionally called in to them as patients; it does not strike my memory just now that that was at all in connexion with their employment at the print-works. I have had all classes of patients, and I do not remember anything in particular in connexion with the print-works or the dye-works.

592. Are they more or less healthy than others employed in the factories?—I cannot give a direct answer upon that point.

593. Does it occur to you, judging from your practice, that they are less healthy?—No; it is proverbial that the old bleachers were the strongest men in Lancashire.

594. Do you recollect anything particular about the health of the people employed in the print-works?—I cannot remember, because I cannot isolate them from the rest.

595. Mr. Turner.] Will you allow me to ask you whether you know any labouring occupation or any professional employment that is not occasionally subject to hours beyond the average?—I believe that is so; the factories are the only exception.

596. Do you think that the principle of working certain hours and then stopping the employment, could be universally extended to all professions and occupations?—That is a question that I cannot answer; I can only say, as a medical man, that such a thing would be beneficial to the operatives; but whether such an interference would be for the interest of the masters it is not for me to say.

597. Would it be beneficial to you as a professional man to say that you should only work certain hours?—I could not do it.

598. Would it not be injurious to your patients?—It would be impossible for me to select my hours of work; I should like it very much if I could.

599. The object of this inquiry is to ascertain whether masters are not overworking the young persons and children employed in their works; do you think that the whole of the blame attaches to the masters, or that part of the blame attaches to the parents of the children and young persons who send them to work?—I do not feel disposed to blame either of those parties; I think that great blame attaches, if I am correctly informed (not being a bleacher myself I can only form my opinion from hearsay), to the merchants who do not send their orders until some vessel is going to sail, and then the work must be completed by a certain day, in order to do which the hands must be employed day and night. Then the question is, whether legislation would improve that, and whether the merchants, understanding that, would send out their orders regularly; in such a case the operatives might cease work regularly on Saturday night, and rest on Sunday; I do not see why proper hours, of a certain length, should not be adopted in bleaching. I am not giving an opinion upon it, but I am merely telling the Committee the reason why I think it might be done. I only speak in this case professionally as to the physical condition of the children; but if I am asked to give an opinion upon the general question, I should say that I think that the work might be carried on, but I could not go any further. The same objections were made before the Factory Act was passed.

600. Do you think you have seen considerable improvement in the factory hands since the Factory Act was passed?—Decidedly.

601. It has brought them up to the standard of the bleaching operatives, which were very much below?—Yes.

602. Now do you think they are equally healthy with the bleaching operatives?—Yes, and what I consider a matter of higher estimation, I think that they will be the best educated class that we have in a few years; their physical condition is decidedly improved.

603. Do you think that they are now physically better than they were formerly?—Yes.

604. You could not wish for any great improvement?—No.

605. And that has only just come up to the standard of the bleaching operatives; are they superior, even now, to the bleaching population?—I should say physically that they are not superior, because if you have a boy or girl breaking

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down in the bleach-works, there may be some constitutional taint in the child, and it is natural for the parent to attribute it to overwork; if there is a tendency to disease, overwork would be sure to evidence it.

606. May not you infer that if the factory operatives have not been brought up beyond the standard of the bleaching population by the limitation of their labour, and if you would not suggest any further limitation in their hours of labour, the bleaching population do not require legislative interference?—I decidedly say that 10 or 12 hours is quite enough for children; adults may work longer, of course, but 10 or 12 hours' work in every 24 hours is, in my estimation, quite as much as any child in any work should do; I am not speaking especially of bleaching; the same would apply to any other work.

607. What do you mean by the word "children"?—Those between 8 and 13.

608. Mr. Davison.] Have you known any instances in your locality of works being carried on on a Sunday?—I cannot speak of my own knowledge to that.

609. Have you heard of it?—I have heard of it.

610. Do you believe it?—I have heard it, and I have heard it assigned as a reason, that certain pieces of cloth were in such a stage of the process that if they were left untouched they would be rotted; I do not know what it is.

611. Do you confine that remark to any one mill, or is it a general remark?—No; it is a general impression I have from conversation.

612. Lord John Manners.] You have been asked if the condition of the people employed in bleach-works was not only quite equal, but superior to the condition of the people employed in the factory; did I rightly understand you to say that it was so?—Yes, physically.

613. Did your answer apply to their intellectual and moral state as well as to their physical?—No; merely to their physical condition.

614. In the year 1855 you signed a petition to Parliament, praying that legislative interference might be applied to the labours of young people employed in dye and bleach-works; are you still of opinion that it would be desirable?—Yes, I am.

615. Mr. Cobbett.] In your evidence before Mr. Tremenheere, your words are these: "I am decidedly of opinion that a limitation of the hours of labour is very much to be desired for the females and boys employed in them," (that is the bleach-works) "inasmuch as many injurious consequences, both physical and moral, arise to both from their long hours of work;" is that your opinion still?—I am of that opinion now.

616. Did not you sign a petition to Parliament in 1854?—I think I signed such a petition.

617. Did not that petition pray the House to pass some Act to limit the hours of labour of females and young persons who are working at bleach-works?—Yes.

618. You state in that petition that you "have long known, with regret, that it is customary in the several bleaching, finishing, and dyeing establishments in the United Kingdom, for females and young persons to labour for 14, 16, 18 and 20 hours a day, and frequently for days and nights consecutively without intermission, except for meals." Do you remember reading that petition before you signed it?—Yes, I do; and so far I will explain, that I did not speak personally from having gone into the works, but from the evidence of the parties who drew up the petition.

619. Do you know it from public rumour?—I know it from public rumour, that is all.

620. Do not you live in the neighbourhood of Bolton?—I do.

621. Is not your business principally in Bolton and the neighbourhood?—Yes.

622. I believe this matter has been constantly the subject of conversation with all classes that you have met with?—It is an understood thing.

623. Do you not, therefore, without having actually yourself pursued the inquiry so far as to be able to state, from your own knowledge, that the working people have worked for consecutive nights and days, receive the assertion as a notorious fact?—Yes, I have heard so, and I believe it to be the case.

624. Your practice being principally in Bolton, among all those people, has your own practice led you to suppose that what you have heard as a general rumour was correct?—It has led me to suppose it to be correct.

625. Mr. Davison.] Does not the difference between your evidence to-day, and that which you stated in the memorial, consist in this, that in the memorial you stated

stated that you knew what you did not know?—I do not know what you refer to; I have been giving a direct answer to questions put to me as to my belief at the present day.

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626. You state now, that from the reports you have heard, and from the belief which you entertain, you are of opinion that your statement is correct; but do not you, in your memorial, state your knowledge of the facts?—I make a distinction between my belief and my own knowledge.

627. Are not the words of your memorial these, that you “have long known with regret”?—Yes, but then that is derived from a general impression.

628. *Chairman.*] You know, probably, that there is such a place as America?—I only know it from report.

629. Do you feel any hesitation in saying that you know it?—I know it; it is an expression of belief.

630. *Mr. Davison.*] If a man stated to you that when he was going to the House of Commons he saw a person knocked down, you would not say that you knew it?—No, that is a different thing.

631. *Chairman.*] When you signed that petition were you not certain that what it stated was true?—Yes.

632. Do you think so now?—I think so now.

633. *Mr. Cobbett.*] Did not you state just now that the Factory Acts had so far improved the factory people as to have brought them up to the condition of the bleachers?—Yes.

634. Did I rightly understand you to say that the bleachers were originally a very healthy class of people?—Yes.

635. Was not that when grass bleaching was carried on?—Yes.

636. Did not the process of grass bleaching consist in spreading the goods out on the grass?—It did.

637. Has not the process been discontinued for the last 15 or 20 years?—I should say that there has been very little of that done for the last quarter of a century.

638. Are you a native of Bolton?—No, I am a Yorkshireman.

639. How long have you lived at Bolton?—Forty-one years; I have practised on my own account 34.

640. Do you know what the mode of bleaching was formerly?—Yes, to a certain extent.

641. Are you sure that grass bleaching was not carried on up to within 20 years?—I could not speak of that.

642. Did the people whom you have spoken of as being so robust and healthy work in the open air?—Yes, and I believe under cover; they were a robust healthy set, and were always characterised as strong men; but if they were ill at all it was generally a very acute disease, and they sank very rapidly; they required strong treatment, and if they did not send for medical assistance at once, very frequently it was too late. It was generally disease of the lungs or inflammation.

643. *Mr. Wise.*] Do they suffer from bronchitis?—Yes, what is called pneumonia and inflammation of a portion of the lungs; and I believe they sank very rapidly.

644. *Chairman.*] Did that arise from any peculiarity in the bleaching employment?—It was generally from exposure to a current of cold air, from the way in which they were employed at the time in open sheds, in the midst of steam and wet, with large wheels revolving in the water and splashing over them, and on passing from that into the open air, with bare arms and necks, if there was snow upon the ground it might injure them; they were very strong, but if they were struck with disease, they fell off very quickly.

645. *Mr. Packe.*] Did I rightly understand you to say that dyeing establishments are different from bleaching-works?—I think that all dyers are also bleachers; but the dyeing works are distinct from the others.

646. You have said that bleaching is a healthy employment, does that apply also to dyeing?—I think it does to a certain extent.

647. Is the dyeing equally healthy with the bleaching?—I do not know that any special disease has come under my care in connexion with that work.

648. *Mr. Davison.*] Is it not your opinion that the limitation of the work should be confined to 12 hours?—Yes, for children.

649. Whether the workpeople are exposed to currents of air or to damp is quite independent

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independent of the limitation of work, and must continue so long as the process is carried on in a particular manner; is not that so?—Yes; it must be decided by the master.

650. The work must be continued according to a particular process, without reference to the duration of the hours of work?—Yes.

651. Mr. Turner.] In the course of your profession, have you had considerable experience of sick clubs, and their operation?—Yes.

652. Are the recipients of relief in sick clubs more numerous in the bleaching population than in the factory population?—I should say that there were a great many more factory operatives than bleach workers; *pro rata*, I should say that they are about equal.

653. What are the number of accidents in mills as compared in bleach-works?—I do not suppose that there are quite so many in the bleach-works, but when they do meet with an accident, it is often a fatal one; I have only known very few; if they should get between the cylinders there is very little safety for them, but the accidents in mills, considering the number of people employed, are exceedingly few now, and 99 out of 100 arise entirely out of their own carelessness, but I do not know anything about accidents in bleach-works officially.

654. Chairman.] You used this expression, that, if you were correctly informed, the necessity for these long hours was produced commonly by "pushers"; does your information extend up to the present time?—Yes.

655. Does that practice prevail still when those cases arise?—My impression is that a very great improvement has taken place in bleaching machinery, facilitating and expediting the process in every possible way, and calling for much less manual labour for the operatives; but still, if my impression is correct, they work as long.

656. Mr. Cobbett.] Do you think that we should have a stronger race of people if they were not allowed to work till they were 13 years of age?—I say that in a physical point of view, and in a moral point of view, if the cultivation of the mind and the strengthening of the body were to go on quietly up to that time, it would be better; but I think I guarded myself in the first instance by saying, that I believe in the manufacturing districts you cannot do it.

657. Did I rightly understand you to say, that if the children abstained from work altogether till they were 13 years of age, it would produce for us a strong race of people?—Yes, if you can secure their going to school.

658. Does bodily strength require much school?—No; but we must recollect that the children are living in cellars and alleys, and so forth, and if you can get them out into the country you would raise a strong race of men.

659. Chairman.] Considering the mode in which the children live, do you think it would be better for them to be employed in some way than to be left at home?—A great deal.

660. Would it not be preferable, in point of physical strength, if they can get fresh air in the country?—That is one point that I wish to mention; the poor Irish who are admitted in the factory, who are obliged to live in cellars and dirty alleys, are obliged to become sweet and clean. And I should suppose that if they are sent to a school where the masters and mistresses are better educated, and every week they had to send up a return of the children who went to school, the school, generally speaking, being an airy structure, it is certainly better than being at home.

661. Do you think it would be better for the children themselves, that there should be a law passed prohibiting them from going to work before they were 13?—No; *ceteris paribus*, I think it is better to let them go to work part of the time.

662. Do you think that the manufacturing population would be in a condition to support their children if they were prohibited from making any use of their labour?—I do not know what they would do; I am certain they are not.

663. Mr. Cobbett.] You have stated just now, that there is a great difficulty in getting the children to go to school at all. Do the parents object to their going?—Yes.

664. Are not the children that work half time in a factory obliged to go to school by law?—Yes.

665. Did not you say that, as a consequence of that, you thought that the rising generation of the factory working people would be the best educated class that you have in your neighbourhood?—Yes.

666. What do you mean when you say that the parents object to sending their children to school?—Many of them, at that age, have not received the benefits of education

education, and they do not appreciate it; they are idle and slovenly, and perhaps intemperate, and they care nothing at all but for getting money through their children for the indulgence of their own passions; and that is the reason that the rising generation will be an improved race. They will be better educated. That does not apply to the grown-up people.

667. Do you speak of the factory class now, when you say that they are idle, intemperate, and slovenly?—I was not speaking of the factory class generally, but I believe that among all classes there are such people.

668. Is that your observation in the neighbourhood?—That is my observation in the neighbourhood. You asked me the reason why they do not send their children to school, and I say that that is the reason.

669. Does that remark apply to parents who are working in factories?—Yes.

670. Is not it the fact, that the parents have greater opportunities of making money by their children in the factories, than parents who live away from the factories, and that it is more the habit of their parents to make money by their children?—I can hardly turn my memory to any part of the neighbourhood of Bolton where there are not factories or other works of some description, foundries, paper works, and so on; they are distributed along the stream in every population round about the town, and I cannot find you a distinct class unoccupied anywhere.

671. You think it is in order that they may get money by their children that they send them so young to school?—I think, as regards the factory operatives, they cannot do it, and as regards bleachers I do not know.

672. Did I rightly understand you to say, that you attach the greatest value to the education clauses in the Factory Bill?—I do.

673. And upon this principle, that you think it of great importance to induce a parent to have his child educated, making it a condition of his being allowed to make anything of his earnings?—Yes.

674. And you give us 13 years of age as the termination of childhood: take the case of a girl between 13 and 18; would you think it desirable to put a restriction upon her hours of labour?—No, I fancy that it will be quite sufficient to carry it as far as the Factory Act goes; and that only limits them to between 8 and 13. We do not admit them till they are eight, and we do not allow them to work full time till they are 13; the medical visitor must be convinced that they are 13 before he allows them to work full time; after that time they work full hours.

675. In point of fact do they work in factories more than 10 hours, although the legislative restriction only extends to persons below 13?—No, I think not. Perhaps the Committee will allow me to state, that the Factory Act applies to girls above 16 and 18, and in fact women altogether, but not to the motive power. It does not restrict the motive power, so that every man above 18 may work all night if he thinks proper; the law does not interfere with him. But we place all children under 13 under the officers, and all women and young persons.

676. Would not you consider it necessary to have a restriction on the hours of labour up to 18?—Yes; in the Factory Act that restriction applies to all females, and to both sexes from 8 to 13.

677. Would not you consider the same restriction necessary in the bleaching-works?—Yes; I do.

678. Mr. Kirk.] What do you mean by the same restriction?—The restriction as regards females. You cannot interfere with adult males at all.

679. With regard to males from 13 years of age to 18, would you conceive it indispensably requisite that there should be a restriction as to the length of time they should work?—They should not work more than 12 hours until they are of that age, and then they are competent to decide for themselves.

680. Lord John Manners.] Are you acquainted with the provisions of the Bills which from time to time have been brought into the House of Commons to regulate the hours of labour in the bleach-works?—No; I am assuming that they are assimilated to the Factory Acts.

681. What would be your opinion of a provision prohibiting all children under the age of 11 from working in bleaching and dyeing works?—I think, if you could combine, along with the going to school, a provision for them as to working short hours, beginning work at eight years of age would not be injurious at all. I am rather of opinion that you should allow their going to work at eight years of age, because the child would gain education by the educational clauses.

682. Would you prefer that the children hereafter to be employed in bleach-

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works should be subjected to what are called the education clauses of the Factory Act?—Yes; I would allow no work without education going on simultaneously, day by day.

683. Mr. *Turner*.] Would you compel the parents to provide education for the children?—The Act, I think, would provide that, as it has been done in the Factory Acts. I fancy that there would be clauses pointing out how it should be done. In all these opinions which I have given, I have not at all taken into account the facility of conducting the business. I do not know whether it can be done in that way or not, but I do not see why it should not.

684. Lord *John Manners*.] Supposing, in consequence of the nature of the processes carried on in the bleaching-works, it is thought to be inconvenient to establish the education clauses of the Factory Act, will it then be, in your opinion, advisable to prohibit entirely the working of children under the age of 11?—Decidedly, and unless you could have a clause for the education of children from 8 to 13, I should advise not employing them at all till that age; but I should prefer the one with education to the other without.

685. *Chairman*.] I find in your evidence before Mr. Tremenheere, this statement; “The adults are generally a healthy class of men,” (speaking of the bleacher), “but it is notorious that none but persons of strong constitutions can long stand those hours; since the introduction of machinery in the bleaching process, which has been going on for some years, the bleachers are no longer so clearly distinguished from the other classes as they used to be in point of strength and vigour; they are now more under cover.” Do you still think that the bleachers are not now as vigorous and as healthy as they used to be?—I do not think that the adult males are quite so vigorous as they used to be; they were so prominently distinguished from all other adults, whether they were packers or not.

686. That was generally the case?—Yes.

687. Has not that been attributed to their working in the cold weather?—Yes.

688. Since the introduction of machinery and of chemical processes, and the working under cover, do you think that very great distinction has ceased?—Yes.

689. They are not so robust and healthy as they used to be?—No, I do not think they are; by the term “comparative rate,” I mean that whereas the standard of health among healthy operatives has been raised very much, the comparative standard in the appearance of the bleachers has been, I think, lowered; therefore they are not so distinguished as they used to be.

690. Is it the fact, that since machinery and chemical processes in bleaching have been substituted for open-air work, the bleachers are not so healthy and vigorous as they used to be?—No, they are not; they do not appear so.

Thomas Blackledge Garstang, Esq., M. D., called in; and Examined.

T. B. Garstang,
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691. *Chairman*.] YOU have been in practice for some time at Bolton?—Yes, 15 or 16 years.

692. Have you during that time been in the habit of attending families of persons employed in the bleaching-works?—Frequently.

693. Have you had an opportunity of becoming acquainted with the hours of work for which young people are employed in bleaching-works?—I have.

694. Can you state to the Committee your impressions as to what those hours of work are?—I think they are decidedly injurious.

695. How long are they?—I have known young women frequently employed 16 or 18 hours a day; of course my experience among the adult male population is not to be mentioned, or else much more for extreme cases than that might be alluded to.

696. What are the hours of work amongst the adult male population?—Frequently 20 and 22 hours a day for a week together.

697. As to young women, how long have you known them to be worked?—Seventeen or eighteen hours a day frequently.

698. How long would that last consecutively?—For a week or 10 days together.

699. How often would that occur?—It occurs at frequent intervals, sometimes after two or three weeks, sometimes at longer intervals, according to the push of work.

700. Have

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700. Have you known it occur at intervals of a week?—Frequently.
701. I think you mentioned the case to Mr. Tremenheere of two young men whom you had attended, who had been at the works for 16 hours a day for 5 or 6 months consecutively?—Yes, I did.
702. Do you remember that instance now particularly?—I do.
703. Have you known any other instances of the same kind?—Yes; I accidentally came in contact with a man on Sunday; his age is 36, and he is a packer in one of the works in Bolton. He worked from half-past five o'clock on Monday morning till 10 minutes past three on Tuesday morning; he went again at nine o'clock on Tuesday morning, and worked till 12 on Wednesday morning; he went there at half-past five, and worked until half-past four on the Thursday morning; he went again at 11 on Thursday morning, and worked till five on Friday morning.
704. Mr. Davison.] Was this his own statement to you?—This was his own statement to me.
705. Mr. Kirk.] Was that in a bleaching-work?—That was in a bleaching-work.
706. In what department?—He is a packer.
707. Chairman.] Can you tell the Committee the name of that man, or have you any objection?—I have an objection to it, because it might have a prejudicial influence upon the poor man; I beg to decline to do so.
708. Have you any objection to mention the name of his employer?—Yes, I have.
709. Do you mean to say that there is, on the part of the working people, any reluctance to afford information upon matters of that kind?—A very great reluctance, and they are very suspicious if any person makes an inquiry, lest their information should come to the proprietor of the works, and thereby they might be dismissed.
710. Do you think that that apprehension prevails among the workers employed in the bleach-works?—Very extensively.
711. Do you think, as far as you can form an opinion, that that apprehension is well founded?—I do.
712. Do you still object to give to the Committee the name of the employer?—I do not know that there is any serious objection to giving the name of the employer; it is Mr. Bridson.
713. Mr. Turner.] Does not a man of that description, who can work so many hours continuously, receive very large wages?—I know nothing about wages.
714. Does he work for ordinary wages?—I believe that they work very unwillingly during those hours, and it is only as a matter of necessity that they do so.
715. Being an adult, was he not master of his own conduct?—This man that I speak of was 26 years old, but he was a mere shadow of a man.
716. Would a mere shadow of a man be able to sustain that continued work day after day?—I think that that continuous labour had no doubt had a very prejudicial effect upon his health, and no doubt it was with great difficulty that he sustained the long hours of labour that he was subject to.
717. Could not that man, if he left the manufacturer who employed him, get work elsewhere?—It might be a matter of some difficulty.
718. Chairman.] Do you think that any persons employed in bleaching-works could refuse to work those long hours?—They could, but it must be at the penalty of dismissal.
719. Do you think that a person so dismissed could obtain employment elsewhere without submitting again to those long hours?—I think that he could with great difficulty obtain employment.
720. Do you think that the working people generally, as far as you know their opinions, are anxious for legislation upon that subject?—Extremely so.
721. Do you know anything of the opinions of the masters with reference to legislation?—I have had no conversation with the masters upon the subject.
722. Have you known many instances of young women under 18 years of age working those long hours?—I have.
723. Would you say that it was a common practice?—Yes.
724. Is it also common with boys of the same age?—Yes, but I think that the greater proportion are girls, stitchers and so forth.
725. May I ask you whether you know that it is their habit to keep young women all night in the bleaching-works?—I believe it is.
726. Have you known that frequently to occur?—Yes, I have.

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727. At what hour do they ordinarily return home?—I think the hours are very various, it just depends upon the time at which their labour closes.

728. Do they often return home at midnight?—Occasionally at one, two and three o'clock in the morning.

729. Have you an opportunity of informing the Committee whether, in a moral point of view, evil results follow from these late hours?—I recollect two instances in which women have had illegitimate children; that might be attributable to that cause.

730. Do you think that the hours to which you have deposed as being common, are prejudicial to health?—Decidedly so.

731. Mr. *Kirk*.] In what way are they prejudicial?—More especially to the adult male population, as they are much more extensively employed in the works. I think the hours of labour for the adult male population are very extreme indeed in many cases. I was told only the other night, of a man who never was at home for three weeks; he was at a bleaching establishment in the neighbourhood of Bolton for three weeks, and he never was at home; but I believe that that is a solitary or a rare instance.

732. Did you see this man whom you heard of, on Sunday, professionally?—I accidentally came in contact with him in attending another patient; he was in a very infirm state of health, and I took the trouble to examine him, knowing the errand on which I was coming. When I made this enquiry, he was at the time in an extremely infirm state of health, and I attribute it entirely to excessive labour and exhaustion.

733. Mr. *Wise*.] When they go to work for this long period, do they take their meals with them?—Yes, they take their meals with them, or have them sent to them.

734. Do you think that the exhaustion to which they are subject has a tendency to increase the use of stimulants among the operatives?—I should think so; I do not think that as a class they are a dissipated or a drunken class.

735. Has that extreme exhaustion a tendency to create a necessity for the use of stimulants?—I think not; in the works it is not permitted; and I think, as a class they are an exceedingly sober class; I have not observed any cases of necessity.

736. Mr. *Baxter*.] Do not you concur with Mr. Robinson in thinking that bleaching is generally an exceedingly healthy occupation?—I believe it is an exceedingly healthy occupation.

737. Does not your own experience, as regards complaints, differ from that of Mr. Robinson, who stated that there had been no complaints within the last few years?—I think Mr. Robinson intended his observations to apply simply to the labour of women and children.

738. You have stated that you knew cases of women being overworked lately?—I have known them work 17 and 18 hours a day.

739. Does that apply to the last few years?—Yes, within the last twelve months.

740. Does not your experience differ from his in that respect?—I have seen cases of acute disease that I attributed to exposure to inclement weather during the winter nights, when they are coming home frequently at 2 and 3 o'clock in the morning; delicate young women are often out at that time; I have frequently been called in to cases where I have attributed the cause of that disease to exposure to inclement weather and long hours.

741. Mr. *Wise*.] Are not some of the persons very young?—Yes.

742. Exposure from coming out of a very hot room into a cold atmosphere will have the effect of causing inflammation of the lungs; is that a common disease among the bleachers?—It is not at all an uncommon affliction; but the adult males are chiefly employed in the finishing-rooms, where the temperature rises from 90 to 100 and 110 degrees.

743. Mr. *Baxter*.] You have said that the health of the adult males is most affected because they work the longest; are you an advocate for legislative interference with the hours of work of the adult males?—I am, most decidedly.

744. Mr. *Cobbett*.] Then you would restrict the labour of adult males as well as that of every other person?—I think it is quite necessary, and although the arrangement in the factories does not affect the adult male, he indirectly enjoys the advantage of it.

745. Mr. *Baxter*.] Do you believe that the same result would take place with the bleach-works, that if the labour of women and children were limited in the bleach-

bleach-works, thereby the labour of the men would be limited?—I think that there would be a great chance of that, because they are much more numerous than the young women and children.

746. Mr. *Packe*.] Are you of opinion that the work in the dyeing establishments is equally healthy with that in the bleaching?—I think it is quite; the dye-works in the neighbourhood of Bolton are, I think, confined to simple colours.

747. Are there any noxious ingredients in dyeing that make it more unhealthy than the bleaching?—I think not.

748. Mr. *Turner*.] Do you wish, not only that the Legislature should interfere with the labour of women and young persons, but that it should regulate the hours of the labour of the adult men?—I think the adult men will be the greatest gainers by that.

749. Do you think it right of the Legislature to compel them to adopt certain hours?—I believe that the men wish it, and that it would be advisable.

750. Mr. *Kirk*.] Would it not be equally advisable to regulate the labour of the adults in fields?—I think it would be advisable that no man should work more than 10 or 12 hours a day.

751. Would it not be equally necessary to regulate the labour of females in domestic service, the maids-of-all work, for instance?—I think it is most advisable that no individual should be subject to working more than 10, 11, or 12 hours a day.

752. Is it your opinion that, no matter what the exigencies of the occasion may be, no persons should be employed more than 10 or 12 hours a day, and those within stated limits?—No arduous labour (such labour as individuals are subject to in bleaching and dyeing-works, and in cotton factories) should be continued for more than 10 or 12 hours. I believe they are standing upon their feet during the whole of the time.

753. As to domestic service, for instance, do you think that where a female servant gets up at 7 in the morning she should not work later than 7 at night?—I think it would be most advisable.

754. How would you manage about the persons who are employed in beer shops and gin palaces; would you limit them in the same manner?—Yes; 12 hours' labour is abundantly sufficient, where the person is subject to anything like arduous labour, and is standing upon his feet during the whole of that period.

755. Mr. *Baxter*.] Do you consider agricultural labour arduous labour?—Yes, I do.

756. Mr. *Kirk*.] Is not a person employed in fields, in hedging or ditching, or making drains, employed in arduous labour?—I think that 12 hours a day is amply sufficient for them, and quite as much as they ought to be subject to.

757. Viscount *Goderich*.] Do you mean to say that you think it is desirable that persons should not work more than 12 hours, or do you think they ought to be prevented by law?—I do not mean to interfere with hedgers and ditchers, and ploughmen. I think it very unnecessary we should have legislative interference in that behalf.

758. Mr. *Kirk*.] Why do you think so?—Because they are more independent. I think they can better suit themselves; and if their employers choose to dismiss them they can more readily gain employment elsewhere.

759. As to the person you mention as having sustained a great amount of labour, would there be any difficulty in such a man obtaining employment in Manchester, or in any large town?—I think there would be a difficulty in obtaining employment in the bleaching-works. I think that the hands are abundant, and that employment in them is rather difficult to obtain in many cases, especially for some descriptions of men.

760. Are you aware of the hours at which the packers begin and leave off work in Manchester and London?—No; I know nothing about the working times of the packers in Manchester and London.

761. Do you intend to convey to this Committee the idea that a packer in Bolton, no matter how hardly he is worked, no matter what bondage his master subjects him to, cannot get employment out of Bolton?—I do not know.

762. Did not you state something of that sort before?—I stated that there was a considerable number of bleaching hands who would find difficulty in getting employment after they had been thrown out of a good place.

763. Are you aware of the third clause proposed in the Bill which has been proposed on behalf of the bleachers?—I was not aware of it.

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764. Do you know anything of the employment of the packers?—I have simply a vague idea that his work is to pack the goods after they are bleached and finished, and to make them into bales.

765. Is not that an employment that must be very common wherever goods are made into bales?—Yes.

766. Did not you state that you were unwilling to give that man's name, lest he should not get employment?—Yes.

767. And thence the Committee would naturally infer that other bleachers who wanted packers would not employ this man, unless he would work the same number of hours?—He did not wish to be dismissed from his present master, for whom he has worked for some years, and he made it a request that I would not divulge his name.

768. The question was put, whether he was not as independent of his master as his master was of him, and you said that he was not; what was your reason for saying that?—The difficulty of obtaining employment elsewhere.

769. Do you think that that exists with regard to a trade so common as that of a packer, which is universal all over England?—I presume that that was his reason.

770. Did he state it to you?—He said that he was afraid of being dismissed. Whether he might find difficulty in getting employment elsewhere or not, I am not informed.

771. Did not you state, in your former evidence, that you conceived the people employed in the bleach-works to be healthy as a class?—I did.

772. Who do you mean?—The whole of the operatives, with the exception, perhaps, of the finishers, who work in a very high temperature.

773. What proportion do they bear to the whole number of men employed in bleach-works?—I do not know.

774. Are not the finishers, who are working in the high temperature, more liable to diseases of the chest than the other workers?—I think they are.

775. Have many cases of that kind occurred?—They have.

776. Are they more liable than the same class of persons employed in a similar atmosphere in factories?—I think that they are employed at a higher temperature than most of the factory operatives, or than any of them.

777. Are there any particles, such as there are in cotton-mills, floating in the atmosphere?—I believe there are not; the only thing that we could suspect would be chlorine, and I think they inhale it in so diluted a form as not to be injurious to them.

778. Would not it be dangerous to have any portion of chlorine in the cloth?—I should suppose that no chlorine is left in the cloth.

779. Would it not be, in fact, destructive of the vegetable fibres in the cloth if you left any chlorine in it?—I suppose it would.

780. How could the operatives inhale a thing that is not present?—I presume the chlorine is disengaged in the process of bleaching, and I could suppose that, if it were disengaged to any large extent in a condensed form, it would be injurious.

781. How could that occur in the finishing-rooms, seeing that if there is any chlorine left in the cloth it will destroy it?—I am not stating that any chlorine is left in the cloth.

782. Did not you say that the operatives were likely to inhale chlorine?—I said that is the only noxious ingredient that they would be likely to inhale; I am not aware that I have witnessed any injurious consequences from that cause, and that if they inhale it at all, I say that it is in so diluted a form as never to be injurious.

783. Viscount Goderich.] Will you state to the Committee what is the average heat of the stoves in the finishing-rooms?—I think that in the finishing-rooms it is from 80 to 100 or 110 degrees, but I do not know from personal experience.

784. Lord John Manners.] Are the children and the young females who are subject to those long hours affected in any particular way?—I think they suffer chiefly from swelling of the legs and feet, and from varicose veins, and occasionally from ulceration of the lower extremities.

785. Have you witnessed those things yourself?—I have.

786. Have you seen any bones distorted at all?—Never.

787. Have you witnessed the skin off the feet of children and young females?—I have.

788. Those

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788. Those cases, as you have given the Committee to understand, are not frequent?—They are not frequent.

789. *Chairman.*] Are they more frequent in bleaching-works than in factories?—Yes; I believe they are, from the longer hours of labour.

790. Lord *John Manners.*] Are you an inspector of factories?—No, I have nothing to do with them officially.

791. Viscount *Goderich.*] Are you a certifying surgeon?—No; I am one of the surgeons of the Bolton infirmary, and I know something with reference to the comparative frequency of accidents in mills and at the bleach-works.

792. Mr. *Turner.*] In your evidence before Mr. Tremeneere, you say you are of opinion that accidents are fewer in bleach-works than in factories; is that still your opinion?—I think that is the case.

793. Lord *John Manners.*] Has your attention been called to the provisions of the Bill that has been before Parliament more than once on the subject of bleach-works?—Not especially, except by the committee in Bolton.

794. Do you think it would be advisable to prohibit the working of young children under 11 in bleach-works?—I think it would be very advisable; I think it would be as well to prevent their introduction under the age of 11 or 12.

795. *Chairman.*] Did you hear Mr. Robinson's evidence as to the value of the education clauses in the Factory Act?—Yes.

796. Supposing the educational clauses were inserted in the Bill, and that the people were permitted to enter their children at eight years of age, under the educational clauses, what would you say to that?—I think there would be no objection, if they were made applicable to factories.

797. Viscount *Goderich.*] You would have no objection to beginning as early as eight?—As early as ten.

798. *Chairman.*] Would you confirm the opinion you heard Mr. Robinson express, that it would be better for a child to be put to work at an early age, with provision for his education, than to be kept without work and education?—I think if the child is properly provided for as to food, and has a proper place to live in, he is better without physical labour until the age of 11 or 12.

799. Viscount *Goderich.*] Are you aware that the children begin work in the cotton factories at eight years of age?—No, I was not aware of it.

800. Lord *John Manners.*] You were asked whether you would prohibit an adult man from working 16 hours a day; have you ever heard of a ploughman working 16 hours a day?—I have not ever come across ploughmen, and I do not know much about them.

801. Mr. *Cobbett.*] You were asked whether you would propose by law to stop the labour of housemaids, and people who laboured in gin palaces, and so on; do you see any objection to interposing, by means of law, to restrict the labour of young persons in factories, that being practicable, although you cannot do it in gin palaces and other places; do not you think it is more practicable to restrict the labour of young persons in factories than to restrict the labour of any persons working in such places as gin-palaces?—Yes; that is the reason why I propose it.

802. It is practicable in one case, but not in the other?—Yes; and that is the reason why I answer the question in that form.

803. Why is it not practicable to shut up a gin palace at six in the evening, as well as a mill?—You may shut up a gin palace.

804. Mr. *Turner.*] Do you go to the length of wishing the Legislature to deal with adult labour?—I think it is most desirable, and I think there would be the greatest gain by it, inasmuch as they are the greatest number; I said that I thought it would be advisable that no individual should labour more than 12 hours a day.

805. Now may I ask you whether you would confine the hours of labour of sailors at sea?—By no means.

806. Of course they have to work according to the exigencies of the time and the weather?—It would be impossible to regulate that; it is absurd to suppose it.

807. May not such a principle exist in other trades, rendering it almost practically impossible to stop at particular hours?—I think it is not so in the bleach-works; but that is a question no doubt that will be answered more satisfactorily by artizans who are employed in them, and by the proprietors.

808. Mr. *Baxter.*] Are you aware that in many parts of the country there are such things as bleach-fields, in which the great majority of the processes are conducted in open air, and are analogous to agricultural labour?—I do not know

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whether there are establishments of that kind; but there are no such things at Bolton.

809. Mr. Wise.] Are not your answers given not as a political economist, but simply as a medical man?—Yes.

810. Do you state that too many hours are injurious to men on account of their health?—That is so.

811. Are you of opinion that it is as injurious to the masters as the men?—It can have no effect upon the masters.

812. Do you think that a man can work as well after he has worked 12 hours as he could before?—No, I do not think he can.

813. Would not he be unfit for labour after 12 hours?—I think that his labour after he has laboured 12 hours must be less productive than at the commencement.

814. Do not you think that under those circumstances he is of very little advantage to his master?—Not so much as he was at first.

Veneris, 12^o die Junii, 1857.

MEMBERS PRESENT.

Mr. Baxter.
Mr. Butt.
Mr. Cobbett.
Mr. Davison.
Viscount Goderich.
Mr. Kirk.

Lord John Manners.
Mr. Massey.
Mr. Packe.
Mr. Turner.
Mr. Wise.

LORD JOHN MANNERS, IN THE CHAIR.

Mr. Robert Haywood, called in; and Examined.

Mr. R. Haywood.
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815. Chairman.] WHAT is the nature of your employment?—I am connected with bleaching, though I do not take any active part in it; many years ago I lent monies on mortgage; the parties were not successful, and the works were thrown upon me. I advertised them for a year or two to let for bleaching and dyeing, not being brought up to that trade; but not succeeding, I was recommended by a friend to commence bleaching, and to employ some person to manage it for me connected with the bleaching; it is carried on at Salford under management; I have not much knowledge of it, being in no way concerned in it except being the proprietor.

816. How long ago was this?—Nearly 20 years.

817. Do you continue, up to the present time, the proprietor of those works?—I do.

818. Mr. Cobbett.] This was in Salford, was it?—It was.

819. How many hands did you employ in Salford, do you think?—I hardly know; between 20 and 30, I think; they have been reduced upon some improvements in machinery lately being made.

820. Was your foreman a person of the name of Ralph?—No; William Moseley.

821. Have you a person of the name of Ralph in your employ?—Not that I am aware of; but I hardly know any of the persons except the manager, William Moseley.

822. Are you enabled to state to the Committee what are the processes carried on in your bleaching-works?—I cannot well explain that; I am not at all a bleacher; I have been merely thrown into it in the way I have mentioned.

823. Do you know whether the first process is singeing?—Yes, I think it is.

824. Is the second, the lime process, called stewing?—I believe it is.

825. Is the third process boiling?—I think so; I really am not acquainted with the process, but I believe it is.

826. Can you say anything with regard to the hours of work in bleaching-works or in your own works?—In my own, for a considerable time past, they have been

been very inconsiderable; we have not had much work; but in some more extensive concerns they have worked very considerably indeed, and, as I think, very improperly for the health of the parties.

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827. I must ask you at once whether you think, from what you know of bleaching-works in your part of the country, that it would be advisable and right that there should be a limitation by law of the hours of work for females and young persons?—I do, quite; I think that nothing but legislative interference can remedy the evil.

828. Do you know whether, at various times, master bleachers have agreed with one another to shorten the hours, and whether that has been unsuccessful by some having broken that agreement?—I am not aware of that circumstance having occurred; I have very little to do with the bleaching myself, except in the way I have mentioned.

829. It has been stated that there may be an inconvenience, or rather an impracticability, in carrying out any law upon the subject, as the master bleachers are compelled to take in work very much larger in quantity at some times than at others, and that they are therefore obliged to work their hands at very long hours, in order to get that work done; do you think there would be any inconvenience, or that it would be practicable to carry on your business, the hours of labour being shortened?—I have no doubt myself that it would be practicable, and I think such arrangements would be made with regard to cloth that it would not be necessary to make these "pushers," as they are called, that is, working over-hours.

830. Will you explain to the Committee how you think these arrangements could be made?—I have no doubt as appeared in the report.

831. Are you alluding to Mr. Tremenhare's report?—Yes; and I am very glad to find from that report that some of the chief merchants in Manchester can say that such arrangements could be made to adopt the more regular employment of hands.

832. If I understand you rightly, the merchant is the person that compels the bleacher to work at those long hours?—Yes.

833. Because the merchant is the pusher?—Yes; quite so.

834. It is not the desire of the bleacher to work his hands in this manner, or to accumulate goods, or to get them done in that short space of time that they frequently are?—Not at all; I think he would be very glad to have regular employment; but they have a lot of goods, and they say, "If you cannot do them in such a time, we must send them to another place," and that induces both the master and the men to make an effort; but I was glad to find that they were willing to fall into arrangements, and allow a reasonable time, as appeared in that report.

835. I do not understand from you that, in your own works, you do practise very long hours of work?—I am sorry to say that for the last three or four years we have never been employed for a long time, not even the ordinary time; not to 12 or 10 hours; not even eight.

836. You attribute it then, do you, to a want of business?—Yes, there has been a falling off of business.

837. Has it been a falling off, do you think, of your own particular business, or has it been general?—I think it has been rather our particular trade.

838. But during this time, while you and your own particular works have been so slack, do you know whether the long hours have still continued in other branches of the same business?—They have in some other concerns, no doubt.

839. Are you acquainted with the master bleachers of Bolton and their mode of carrying on their business?—I have heard of them.

840. And I suppose what you know of them is from general reputation?—Quite so.

841. From what you did hear in that way, do you think that they carry on their business under the long hours of work?—Some of them very long indeed.

842. Has that induced you to think that there ought to be legislative interference?—Quite so.

843. And is it going on still?—It is, indeed.

844. Mr. Turner.] You are not very actively employed, I think you said, as a bleacher now?—No, I never have been personally.

845. Therefore you do not consider yourself very competent to give many particulars with regard to the bleaching business?—Quite so.

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846. Do you consider that mills are more favourably situated to bleach work now than the factories?—Very much; I hear that repeatedly, both from the masters and hands.

847. Is the occupation in the mills equally healthy with that of the bleaching-works?—Some part of the bleaching-works is less healthy, I should think, perhaps, but I do not know.

848. You say that it is the desire of the merchants, but not the desire of the bleachers or the men, that those long hours in bleaching should take place?—I am sure it is the desire of the men.

849. That they should not take place?—That there should not be extra labour.

850. But it is forced upon them by the merchants?—No doubt.

851. What causes the merchants to force this extra exertion upon them occasionally?—I suppose some ship may be sailing by which the order is to be sent off.

852. And can the merchants control the necessity of these bleachers on such occasions?—I should think they might; if they were all placed on one footing it must be controlled.

853. Have you much experience as a merchant?—Certainly not.

854. And therefore you do not know the difficulty a merchant is sometimes placed in in order to meet the demands of a foreign merchant?—No; but I think arrangements might be made; it is not needful to work so many hours.

855. But when these pushes do come, is he to execute them, or to write to his correspondents that he cannot get the bleachers to finish the goods in time?—I think he would be able to get them done; there is no difficulty, only they must have a little more time allowed for the bleaching.

856. Your works have not been employed more than eight hours, you say, on an average for some time?—Certainly.

857. Then your hands must be peculiarly happy and satisfied?—No; I think we are not seeking for an eight hours' bill. I am not aware that such a thing is in contemplation.

858. But you think that you always could get the same regular supply of work if this legislative act was passed, in the same way that the millowner can get his supply of cotton?—Not quite so regularly, but I think it would be very much more regular than it has hitherto been.

859. A mill, I think, can be stopped at any time, and commenced again, exactly at the point where it stopped, next morning, without any detriment to any operation going on?—I suppose it can.

860. The bleaching-works?—Yes, I think they may be; they are stopped on Sundays and they may be stopped at other times, and I think without inconvenience or any loss.

861. Mr. Davison.] Is your knowledge of the works of other bleachers as extensive as of your own?—Certainly not; it cannot be; I do not know anything of others, and I do not know much of my own.

862. You have not much experience, either, as a merchant?—No.

863. But as far as that experience goes, your idea is this; that a merchant should anticipate orders by purchasing goods and holding them over himself, to meet demands?—I think that is about the case.

864. To invest his capital in speculations and keep the goods lying there for orders that would never arrive, that is your idea of the business of a merchant?—I do not think it would be of that consequence.

865. But it must, must it not?—Sometimes it might.

866. Your concern is not much employed at present?—No.

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868. That would be a desirable end for a mortgagee in possession?—Yes, I should like to have more work, though I do not, and never did, seek 24 hours a day.

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870. Mr. Butt.] Have you had any opportunity of observing the effect of the Acts limiting the hours of labour in the factories?—I have heard on all sides that that has been highly beneficial, that the hands are both more healthy, and that they employ the leisure time very advantageously. I have heard that both from the spinners themselves and the operatives universally admitted. I had some friends.

friends very much opposed to interference in the spinning, and I was blamed for sanctioning it; but I rejoice to find since, that the master spinners as well as the employed quite approve of the restrictions on that.

Mr. R. Haywood.

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871. Do you think generally speaking, that the employers are satisfied with the alteration of these Acts?—I think they are; they do not like the interference of the inspector, but I find there is no other objection; at least, I find none.

872. They find the limitation of the hours of labour advantageous?—I believe they do.

873. I believe you yourself were opposed to the Factory Act?—At one time, on principle, we did not like interference; but that is an evil, I think, that could only be remedied by legislative interference.

874. You think the same remedies apply to bleaching-works?—Yes.

875. And do you think there would be the same results, namely, to give satisfaction to the employers and to the employed?—I think so.

876. Mr. Cobbett.] Do I understand that you were the mortgagee?—In the first instance.

877. But the works still belong to yourself, at the present time?—Entirely so.

878. How long have they belonged to you?—Nearly 20 years; they have been 15 in my hands.

879. And you have carried on the business 15 years?—Yes.

880. Then, notwithstanding it might be possible that the legislative interference would be injurious to your interests, I understand you to be ready to run those risks for the sake of humanity towards your working people?—Entirely; I should be very sorry to receive money at such a sacrifice as I know this demands.

Mr. Henry Waring, called in; and Examined.

881. Chairman.] WILL you state to the Committee what your occupation is?—I am a Bleacher by trade.

Mr. H. Waring.

882. How many years have you been engaged in that trade?—Forty-two years, I worked at it.

883. Are you working at it now?—No; they turned me off for being too old.

884. How long ago were you turned off?—Somewhere about three years.

885. But up to the last three years you were actively engaged in that trade?—Yes; I have never been engaged in anything else in my life.

886. In whose mills have you worked chiefly?—I worked at Backoth Bank, for Mr. Slater, 38 years and a month.

887. Mr. Cobbett.] Is that near Bolton?—Yes, quite close; I worked at other places before that.

888. Chairman.] I believe you gave evidence before the Commissioner a few years ago?—Yes.

889. Have any alterations taken place in the process of bleaching since you gave that evidence; of any importance, I mean?—No; I do not think there have.

890. Therefore, the evidence which you gave then is applicable to the state of things now?—Yes; they were engaged then with machinery, and they are going on now with the same process.

891. Have you seen any reason to change your opinions at all since you gave that evidence?—Not at all; I do not feel that I have.

892. Mr. Cobbett.] At the time when you first became a bleacher, I believe a good deal of the bleaching was done in fields?—Yes.

893. In the open air?—Yes.

894. You did it all in the open air?—Yes.

895. How long is it since that was discontinued, and the cotton goods were bleached under cover in bleaching-works?—We have done some for about 40 years, or about 45.

896. Will you be so good as to tell me what are the processes in bleaching cotton goods?—At the first commencement, the singeing.

897. That is, passing a hot iron, is it not, over the goods?—Yes, dressing or oozing the nap of the cloth.

898. You pass a hot iron rapidly over it?—Yes, it passes over a hot iron; it is a fixed thing, and it passes over it.

899. What is the second process?—Generally, they put them to steep after that.

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846. Do you consider that mills are more favourably situated to bleach work now than the factories?—Very much; I hear that repeatedly, both from the masters and hands.

847. Is the occupation in the mills equally healthy with that of the bleaching-works?—Some part of the bleaching-works is less healthy, I should think, perhaps, but I do not know.

848. You say that it is the desire of the merchants, but not the desire of the bleachers or the men, that those long hours in bleaching should take place?—I am sure it is the desire of the men.

849. That they should not take place?—That there should not be extra labour.

850. But it is forced upon them by the merchants?—No doubt.

851. What causes the merchants to force this extra exertion upon them occasionally?—I suppose some ship may be sailing by which the order is to be sent off.

852. And can the merchants control the necessity of these bleachers on such occasions?—I should think they might; if they were all placed on one footing it must be controlled.

853. Have you much experience as a merchant?—Certainly not.

854. And therefore you do not know the difficulty a merchant is sometimes placed in in order to meet the demands of a foreign merchant?—No; but I think arrangements might be made; it is not needful to work so many hours.

855. But when these pushes do come, is he to execute them, or to write to his correspondents that he cannot get the bleachers to finish the goods in time?—I think he would be able to get them done; there is no difficulty, only they must have a little more time allowed for the bleaching.

856. Your works have not been employed more than eight hours, you say, on an average for some time?—Certainly.

857. Then your hands must be peculiarly happy and satisfied?—No; I think we are not seeking for an eight hours' bill. I am not aware that such a thing is in contemplation.

858. But you think that you always could get the same regular supply of work if this legislative act was passed, in the same way that the millowner can get his supply of cotton?—Not quite so regularly, but I think it would be very much more regular than it has hitherto been.

859. A mill, I think, can be stopped at any time, and commenced again, exactly at the point where it stopped, next morning, without any detriment to any operation going on?—I suppose it can.

860. The bleaching-works?—Yes, I think they may be; they are stopped on Sundays and they may be stopped at other times, and I think without inconvenience or any loss.

861. Mr. Davison.] Is your knowledge of the works of other bleachers as extensive as of your own?—Certainly not; it cannot be; I do not know anything of others, and I do not know much of my own.

862. You have not much experience, either, as a merchant?—No.

863. But as far as that experience goes, your idea is this; that a merchant should anticipate orders by purchasing goods and holding them over himself, to meet demands?—I think that is about the case.

864. To invest his capital in speculations and keep the goods lying there for orders that would never arrive, that is your idea of the business of a merchant?—I do not think it would be of that consequence.

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899. What is the second process?—Generally, they put them to steep after that.

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900. Do they sometimes call that stewing?—No, stewing comes next after steeping; the lime process is the next.

901. That is boiling in lime, is it not?—Yes.

902. What is the third process?—They are washed out of that well, and then they are put into a boiler.

903. In soda-ash, or something of that sort?—Yes, in soda-ash or soda.

904. What is the fourth?—They wash them out of that, and put them to chemical.

905. That is some chemical preparation, is it not?—Yes.

906. What is the next?—They wash them out of the chemical process, and commence souring.

907. Then after you have finished that, the goods are called half white, are they not?—Yes.

908. Or one-worked, is not that so?—Yes, it is one-work as far as that.

909. What do you do next?—We boil them again.

910. Do you begin the whole process again?—Yes, we boil them again in ashes after they have been soured.

911. Mr. Kirk.] Do you not wash after souring?—Yes.

912. You singe again, do you not?—No, that is done away with: one singeing is sufficient.

913. What do you do then?—We boil them again, then chemical; after that they are washed out and boiled, and then the red ends we give them a good rinsing in clear water till we sour them.

914. Do you sour them again?—Yes.

915. What do you do after that?—Then they are washed and blued; a shade of blue is put in in general.

916. Is that for the purpose of stiffening?—No, to prepare them for stiffening.

917. What is the next thing after that?—Then we have done with them; the mangler commences with them then.

918. What does the mangler do with them?—They are stitched together, 30 or 40 hundredweight altogether, and they are not unstitched again until they come into the making-up room.

919. Have you now gone through all the processes?—Yes.

920. Is it necessary that all these processes should be carried on continuously, one after another, or can you stop at the end of every one, and suffer the goods to remain, we will say, 8, 10, or 12 or 24 hours, without their spoiling?—Yes; and keep the end good too.

921. It is supposed by some persons, that when you once begin one of these processes, you must go on through the whole of them without leaving off, or the goods will be spoiled; I want to know whether you can begin and continue to the end, and break off at any time with any one of them, and let the goods remain 20 or 24 hours, and then take it up where you left off, and go on with the rest of the process, without spoiling the goods?—If they knew the time to go they would make a way for it; if they understood their business, they would know when to leave them in a safe state. How do they do it at Christmas or Whitsuntide? they can leave them in a safe state, then, for three or four days, and cannot they do so at another time as well?

922. Then you mean that with a little care, at any rate, they could at all times leave off when they pleased, and continue the work again without spoiling it?—Yes, they could leave off at any time, I will guarantee that; I was a foreman for 14 years, and answerable for every end.

923. Were you foreman to Mr. Slater?—No.

924. Where were you foreman?—At the same place, but under Mr. Cocker.

925. During the time you have been working in bleaching-works, has it appeared to you that the hours of work were too long?—Yes; I think they are much too long, but if we did not do it, they would turn us off. These masters were in a bond at Manchester; and if the men grumbled, they would give them a quittance-paper, and you have to go home again, for they would not employ you.

926. You mean they would give a quittance-paper to the working men?—Yes; they would give the quittance-paper to the working men, if they did not do the work.

927. Mr. Turner.] Do you know that of your own knowledge, or have you only heard it?—I have seen plenty of quittance-papers in my time.

928. But have the masters made a compact with each other to do this?—

They

They have said to a man, when they have turned him off, "He will have to come back crying to me," and that has been the case many a time.

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929. Mr. Cobbett.] Have you known that to be the case?—Yes; I have known it to be the case.

930. Were the hours of work at the time you first became a workman as long as they have been of late years?—No.

931. When did you begin?—We began at 7 o'clock on Monday morning, and we gave over at six at night; and every other morning we began at six and gave over at six, and at four o'clock on Saturday.

932. That was when you worked in the fields, was it?—Yes.

933. When was there any alteration, that you remember; was it when you went into the bleaching-works, under cover, or did the long hours begin before you had left the fields?—The masters then began ruling their hours of labour according to the quantity of work which they got; they would take in quantities of work, and they would work their hands, like any piece of machinery, until they had done it.

934. When was that?—That would be 40 years ago.

935. That was when you were working in the fields, then?—No; after that.

936. Then the long hours began after you began working under cover, in houses?—Yes.

937. Did it begin as soon as you begun working in the houses?—Yes; it begun about that time, and it has kept continuing.

938. Has it continued about the same from that time?—No; it has a little bit amended, because they have extended their works; but still they will take any quantity, and make their men work any quantity of hours, if they can get work. They arrange the hours of labour according to the quantity of work they can get.

939. About when did it begin to amend?—About eight or nine or ten years ago.

940. During the time that you were at work, between eight and 10 years ago, what were the hours; were they regular, or were they sometimes very long hours and sometimes very short hours?—The boys and I washed the cloth after two men, and when one man had done work another came that commenced at five in the morning, and we washed till one o'clock; when the boys and I had half done, then another man came on, and then we kept continuing on from eight or nine, or 10 o'clock at night, and sometimes till 11 or 12.

941. Did I understand you to say, that you worked all that time?—Yes, I did; the boys and I, together.

942. And you stopped at one o'clock?—At one o'clock at night, sometimes, if our work was done; but we did not stop then if the work was not done.

943. Did you stop for meals?—Not much for meals.

944. How did you get your meals?—Many a score of meal I got was by putting a piece of bread and butter on the cloth and biting it as I went on; we used not to have meal-times then, we had not time for it generally.

945. Did the young people work in the same way with you?—Yes, the boys had to work along with me.

946. Were there any females who worked in the same place?—No, not any.

947. What was that work called?—Taking off squeezers; squeezing wet cloth; preparing it for mangling.

948. Were there females and young persons working in the same establishment?—Yes, just up to me.

949. What hours of work did they go through?—The same as I said before, whatever amount of work the master wanted done. It would sometimes happen on a Monday morning, when a ship order has come in, we have commenced at two or three o'clock, or sometimes at 12 o'clock; and my wife has had her stays laced at 12 o'clock on Sunday night, and she has never had them unlaced again, and never been in her bed all the week; she has been lying on a table, or any place wherever she could get to for half an hour; sometimes we used to take her breakfast to her to see how she was getting on, and we sometimes found her lying under the table, or anywhere; that was when we lived at Croft; then we began to have children, and in the thronged time we had to do just the same.

950. You say, you have known your own wife work in this way for a whole week, without having her stays off?—Yes, from Sunday night till the next Saturday, a whole week, many a time.

951. How long ago is it that you remember such a thing as that?—It is about 40 years ago.

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952. That was when you first began working, then, in the houses?—Yes.
953. Do you know whether the long hours have continued up to the present time, or within a short time of the present time?—Bleaching-works have been rather slack of late; there are some now rather thronged, and some are very slack; Mr. Blair is very slack at the present time, and Mr. Holmes is very thronged.
954. What had been the hours of work of late years; do you remember when this agitation began about the bleachers?—Yes.
955. What has been the hours of work of late?—I worked somewhere about 16 hours a day for 11 years.
956. Up to about what time?—Up to about three or four years ago.
957. That was when you left off, I suppose?—Yes, somewhere thereabout.
958. What have been the hours of work for females and young persons during that time; had they worked the same hours or not?—All the boys had to work along with me all that time.
959. Do you know any instance in which persons have worked 24 hours at a time of late years?—Yes, many a time.
960. Do you know instances in which they have worked two or three days and nights continuously?—Yes.
961. Lying on the table as you have described, years ago?—Yes.
962. Have they done that of late years?—Not as much as they did, because they do not get that amount of work.
963. Have they done it at all, should you say?—Yes, they have worked late lately at different places.
964. Where the master bleacher has work to go on with, what should you say are the ordinary common hours of work?—It depends upon the work; if they can get work they will have it done.
965. If the master bleacher has the work to do he will do it?—Yes.
966. And will he have recourse to the long hours of work?—Yes, he will work them now the same as ever, if he can get work to do; they will have it done, or turn you off.
967. If I were to go down to one of these bleach-works at the present moment, and got up when the work-people did, and remained in the works until the work-people came away, do you think I should find them working 8, 10, 12 and 16 hours a day?—You would find them mostly working 14 or 16 hours finishing.
968. Now?—Yes, when they are strong at work.
969. Should I find females and young lads at work in the same way?—Yes.
970. Has it been matter of complaint amongst your class of people that their health has been impaired by their long hours?—Yes; I can tell you one thing, when we bleached goods on the ground years ago, when young men were springing up about Bolton, I believe I could have picked out 500 men that would have done for the Life Guards; at Mr. George Blair's place, they were fine men; they were called "Big Sam" and "Big Joe;" but if you were to come down there now, I do not think you could get one out of them fit for a marine.
971. Do you think that that has been caused by these long hours of work; that it has reduced the class of people?—Yes, I do think it, and nothing else.
972. Do you think it has reduced their physical strength?—Yes; boys have worked with me, and when we have been going from our work at night, they have laid them down in a barrow, and any where, and slept, just when their work was not ready; when they would have to wait a time or two, they would throw them on the stairs, or into a wheel-barrow, and you would have to give them a pretty smart shaking to wake them up; I have done so many a time, and there has been scarcely one of them that could tell a letter in a book. I had two boys with me who commenced about nine years of age, and they grew up, and when they were married, neither of them could tell a letter in a book.
973. Mr. Davison.] How long ago was that?—About eight or nine years since. They have become young men, and some time back, when the people came down there to take an estimate of how many people there were of one religion, and how many there were of another, one of them came to me and asked me, "What religion am I to call myself?" I said to him, "Call yourself by what you are;" and he said "What am I to do?" I said, "You may call yourself anything, according to where you go to." He said, "Well, I never went to any place of worship since I went there with Kit;" and another says, "I never went to any place of worship since I went there with Nan." Then I said, "Them as goes nowhere

nowhere, I suppose, may call themselves church people," and they went up and stated they were church people. That is quite true, and there are many hundred females that cannot tell a letter in a book. My wife has six brothers now grown up young men, working at Orridge & Holmes', and four sisters; there are 10 of them altogether, and the whole 10 cannot tell 10 letters in a book; not a letter a-piece.

974. *Chairman.*] Is that because they would not go to any school to learn, or because they had no opportunity of doing so?—They worked such long hours, they were not able. A chap would come in and say, "Betty, call these lads up, and let them go to school, as well as the other lads;" "God bless you," she would say, "they have been out of their beds all the week, and let them lay still," and they would lay. Some of them would have their dinners up-stairs, and at one or two o'clock in the afternoon they would come down and brush the cobwebs from their eyes, wash themselves, and go out and take a bit of a walk, and then come home and go to bed again, and get up and commence on Monday morning just the same as before.

975. *Mr. Davison.*] How long ago is that you are speaking of?—About 30 years.

976. How long is it since you were dismissed from the works in consequence of being too old?—Near upon three years.

977. What age are you?—About 65.

978. Was it since then that you gave your evidence to Mr. Tremenheere?—Yes; I had been turned out six months, then; I had been 20 years in the service, and not away one day, except Sunday and Christmas time.

979. What are the ordinary hours of work at these places when there is not a push, as you call it?—Sometimes it may happen to be seven or eight, or nine or ten, or sometimes twelve hours, and sometimes it may run a month so.

980. And when these pushes come, then there are the long hours that you speak of?—Yes; they have their work to do before they can go.

981. *Chairman.*] I think you have said that when the work was done in the fields, these long hours were not heard of?—Oh no; they gave over at a regular time of night.

982. How did the merchants then manage with respect to their orders?—They did with those hours; but the merchants will keep their work back, to see which master will take it at the lowest price.

983. *Mr. Davison.*] Thirty years ago the orders from the Manchester and other merchants were not so numerous, were they?—No; we never heard tell of any pushes then. We gave over at regular times. We began at six in the morning and finished at six at night; I never heard tell of pushes then; the cloth used to take its regular course, and both master and men were satisfied then.

984. The trade was then in an evenly state, as it is called?—Yes.

985. *Mr. Butt.*] Have you ever seen bad effects produced upon the work by these long hours?—Yes, many a time.

986. In what way?—When the mangler has worked for a certain time, he begins to be sleepy and nodding; or the stitcher, he will kneel upon one knee, and then upon the other, and rest himself, but he cannot help sleeping and nodding; the cloth will begin to get crooked in the mangling. It gets spoiled and crumpled, and sometimes cut.

987. You have seen that as the result of over hours, have you?—Yes, I have, many a time.

988. Have you seen that occur lately within the last 10 years?—I do not know that I have just of late.

989. Have you ever known the work to be sent back to the bleacher to be done over again, in consequence of it being spoiled in that way?—Yes; if it is not stiffened properly it would have to be done afresh when it is not properly worked.

990. You have known that to occur?—Yes, thousands of times.

991. Have you known it to be sent back?—Yes, it is what is occurring regularly.

992. When the work is sent back, is there any deduction made from the wages of the men in consequence of it being spoiled?—He has a price for doing the work, and he has to do it, and he would have to do it over again; I do not know that he gets anything for that.

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993. Mr. *Packe*.] You have told us that some time ago, when you and the boys worked from morning till 12 o'clock at night, that you washed eight or ten tons of cloth a day?—Yes, and we have done nine tons of cloth a day for 12 months.

994. What was the age of those boys who worked with you?—I had three of them from about 9 or 10 years of age, and three or four from about 14 or 15, and two men along with them.

995. Were there three boys as young as nine years of age?—Yes, 9 or 10; they commenced first by taking off squeezers.

996. And you say that now there are females and lads working as long as 16 hours a day?—Yes, they do when there is work to do, and more than that.

997. What are the ages of these lads that are working for 16 hours a day?—They will take them at all ages.

998. You were asked how long they would be found working now, and your answer was, 16 hours a day, females and boys?—Yes, when they get work.

999. What I want to know is, what are the ages of these lads who are now working at 16 hours a day?—I have one working now that is 13 years of age, and he has worked for four years.

1000. Are there any as young working now as nine or ten years of age?—I do not think there are quite as young now as there were a few years back, but there are very little ones working now at plaiting down.

1001. As young as what?—As young as nine years of age.

1002. Working as long as 16 hours a day?—As I said before, they work on until their work is done, in a push.

1003. Do you mean boys as young as nine are now working for 16 hours a day?—Yes, when there is work to do, they must work that time.

1004. And at that age?—Yes, they take no notice of their age.

1005. You say your wife has been working a week together without taking off her stays and going to bed?—Yes, many a time.

1006. What was the work that she was employed on?—She was in the finishing department.

1007. How long ago is that?—Near 40 years.

1008. Is your wife working there now?—No.

1009. How long has she left off?—Many years; I can't justly tell when she began; it was when we had a good many children.

1010. Mr. *Davison*.] As much as 20 years ago?—Yes, more than 20.

1011. Mr. *Packe*.] Up to the time of her giving up, did she work that length of time?—Yes, she worked for years after we were married.

1012. And up to the time of her giving up?—Yes.

1013. What, for a week together without going to bed?—Yes, many a time.

1014. Up to the time of her giving up?—Yes.

1015. Mr. *Butt*.] Do I understand you to say, that you have at this time children working in the bleaching-works?—Yes.

1016. How many children are working now in the bleaching-works?—Three.

1017. And one of them, you say, is a boy of 15?—Between 12 and 13.

1018. How late have any of your children been kept at the bleaching-works within the last year?—I have one that has been for two years, and I dare say for six months at a time has never been home before 11 o'clock; that is within the last twelve months.

1019. Is that a boy?—No, a lass; a stitcher.

1020. What time does she go to the works in the morning?—Sometimes at six, sometimes at seven, and sometimes five; it depends upon the work.

1021. What age is she?—Twenty-four.

1022. Then do I understand you that she has been for six months together, working from 5, 6 or 7 o'clock in the morning until 11 at night?—Yes.

1023. Continuously?—Yes; for six months together, I think.

1024. Has she ever been kept later than 11 o'clock at night?—I can't say justly, sometimes they have been kept till 12, sometimes till one, but not as a regular thing.

1025. Have you known that daughter of yours to come home as late as one o'clock?—Yes, at two o'clock in the morning.

1026. Within the last year?—Within the last 12 months.

1027. *Chairman*.] Has that been in winter or in summer, or in both?—It makes no difference in winter or summer; they must do their work.

1028. How

1028. Mr. Butt.] How late has your boy come home within the last year?—He does not make many hours; he is working amongst very strong goods; and those machines will run a hundredweight a minute, or less.

1029. In point of fact, has he come home late or early?—No; he makes very little hours.

1030. Then he comes home early?—Yes.

1031. He has not been kept late?—No.

1032. Have you ever known your daughter kept all night at the works, as you say your wife used to be?—Yes, many a time.

1033. Has that been lately?—Twelve months since, or about that.

1034. Have you known your daughter remain all night at work?—Yes; and come home in the morning, have five or six hours' sleep, and go back again at noon.

1035. When she was kept all night, at what time did she come home in the morning?—At 6 or 7 o'clock; and then she would go to bed until 12 o'clock, and then be back again by the bell ringing at one o'clock, and commence again.

1036. How often has that happened within the last twelve months?—Not very often.

1037. Has it happened two or more times?—Yes, many a time.

1038. Did you ever know it happen two nights running?—I do not know about two nights, because there are two or three stitchers, and they stop their turn.

1039. Mr. Packe.] What was the age of your daughter at the time you are speaking of?—About 22 or 23.

1040. Mr. Butt.] Of course she slept there without taking off her clothes, what sleep she got?—Yes; she would have no time for that.

1041. Mr. Turner.] I think you say you are 64 years of age?—Yes.

1042. How long have you worked at the occupation of bleacher?—It is 52 years since I first commenced.

1043. What is the age of your wife?—About 62.

1044. Of course she did not begin quite so early; how long had she worked at the business?—She never did anything before she worked at the bleaching-works.

1045. What family had you?—Sixteen children.

1046. Have you ever suffered much in your health?—I have had very good health in the commencement of my days; I got healthy and strong by working out in the fields.

1047. Your wife, of course, has been a healthy woman, if she has had 16 children?—Very decent, for the matter of that.

1048. What wages have you been in the habit of getting when you were in your prime?—From 20 s. up to 30 s. at times.

1049. Are your children as ignorant as those you have described, who do not know their letters?—There are some that can't read much.

1050. At what age did you send them to the bleaching-works, when you were getting your 30 s. per week?—When the master wanted a hand, he did not care how soon they came.

1051. Do you think that you were doing your duty as a father of a family, when you were getting 30 s. a week, in entirely neglecting the education of your children?—There were these long hours, you see.

1052. But I mean in sending them at all until they had got some education; was it not your duty as a father to send your children to school, in order that they might obtain some education, when you were earning 30 s. a week?—I will tell you the way I was fixed; I was for seven years with sickness in the house; I buried a young man of 20, a young woman of 27, and another of 15, and that took all my earnings; there was hardly ever a day without sickness in the house for seven years.

1053. Are you the father of John Waring, who gave evidence a day or two ago?—Yes.

1054. He has been discharged, we understand, in consequence of being a delegate?—I do not know that, I am sure.

1055. He gave us to understand so, and that he could not get work; do you know what he has been working at for the last two years; has he been working at all for the last two years?—I am not willing to answer you every question.

1056. I want an answer to this question; has your son John Waring been working at anything during the last two years?—He does not live at home; he is here; you can ask him the question himself; I think he has been working at a foundry.

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1057. Then you do not think that it is the duty of a father of a family to look after these things, but you rather blame the master if he takes these young children?—When a father of a lot of children cannot get bread, he is willing to send them to work young, and to make any sort of sacrifice.

1058. But cannot you get bread at 30 s. per week?—That depends upon what I have going out; if I have 30 s. income and 40 s. outgoing, I cannot get bread quite so well.

1059. Do not you think it is much better that these young children should not be employed at all in bleaching-works?—I do not think it proper to employ them so early; I think that 12 or 13 years of age is quite young enough.

1060. Then what should a parent do with them; should he not attend to their education in some way?—Yes, to be sure he should.

1061. Is it a fact that the people in the manufacturing districts, generally, are unable to make provision for the education of their children?—There are libraries, and not schools.

1062. They are unable, from the want of arrangement, to give their children an education?—No; there are free libraries, but I do not think there is one in the bleaching department. I do not know if there is any library at Bolton; I do not believe there is one.

1063. They must have education before they can attend the library; should not the parent send them to schools of which there are numerous ones existing?—To be sure he should.

1064. But parents do not do that?—Some do, and some do not.

1065. Is that all the fault of the masters?—That has nothing to do with the masters, I should think.

1066. Then some blame attaches to the operatives themselves for not giving their children this advantage?—But where a man goes to work so early, and works these long times, if ever he has a chance he don't go regular; he can't for shame go into a school, because he has no education, and he sees little ones reading around him, and he can't put on a face to go.

1067. Mr. Davison.] But are not these long hours only in time of pushes?—Yes; I am telling you about times of pushes.

1068. Then at other times there is plenty of opportunity for the children to be sent to school, is there not?—Yes; but they do not like to go when they can't read a little.

1069. But they want to learn to read?—If the hours were limited that they could go, then there would be a regular time to go. It would not happen one day that they would go soon and another day late; but now it is late and soon, late and soon, and so on. If there was a regular time limited, at which they could go when their work was done, that would be a different thing.

1070. Mr. Kirk.] Is the usual practice in the neighbourhood of Bolton not to send the children to school at all?—Yes.

1071. They are not sent?—Very little.

1072. But they might go up to nine years of age; a child of seven can learn its letters and can learn to read, or even at six. Do you mean to say that from six years of age till nine, it is the usual practice at Bolton to allow the children to run about without any education whatever?—They are getting rather better education than they used to do.

1073. You have told us that many females of 15 or 16 could not read or write?—That was some time back, when the hours were long.

1074. Do the children in Bolton begin work before they are nine years of age?—Yes; many of them.

1075. What, now?—Yes; now they do.

1076. At what time do they begin?—One of mine began when he was about seven or eight, or about eight.

1077. Was that at the desire of the master, or at your desire?—They wanted little boys then to plait down, because they would come at low wages.

1078. And you thought that you were performing your duty to your son in sending him there?—No; I objected to do it. I told the foreman he was too young, but the master said he would do very well, and he might come.

1079. But did he command you to let him come?—He said he might come.

1080. That he must come?—Yes.

1081. And do you mean to say that the masters of Bolton insist upon their workmen sending their children to work before they are nine years of age?—Yes; they will take them before they are nine years of age.

1082. That

1082. That is not an answer to my question; give me a plain answer; is it your intention to convey to this Committee that the masters of Bolton insist upon their workmen sending their children to be employed before they are nine years of age?—Oh! no; they will let their parents have control over them.

1083. Do you think it would be a judicious and wise law to prohibit, by fine or imprisonment, any parent from sending their children to any employment before they are 12 or 13 years of age?—I should think 12 or 13 quite young enough.

1084. And would you be content that a law should pass imposing a fine upon you?—Yes; I should.

1085. *Chairman.*] Do I understand you to come here to complain either of the masters or of the parents of the children, for taking or sending children so young?—It was the men of Bolton that forced me to come up here; I did not want to come.

1086. But did you come up to complain of the masters; that it is altogether their fault for working these long hours?—Yes; they will force them to work at long hours when there is work to do, as I said before.

1087. What I want to know is, whether you come to complain of the masters as being especially to blame, or of the system generally under which these long hours are worked; you were asked whether it was the fault of the masters or of the parents that they were sent to work so young?—The masters always leant that way, because the younger the boys came, the less wages they would have to pay them; that has been the reason why they wanted them so young when they could get them.

1088. But as I understand you, you wish that these young children should not be employed at all?—Not at all under about 12 years of age.

1089. And you are anxious for a law to be passed upon the subject, to prevent these young children from being employed?—Yes; not under 12 years of age.

1090. *Mr. Butt.*] As to this conversation with the foreman, when your boy went, you say he was about eight years of age?—Yes.

1091. Was it the foreman who proposed to you to send him, or did you ask to have him taken in?—No, he said, they would do very well for their job, plaiting down.

1092. Did he speak to you first upon the subject?—Yes, he spoke to me first; I said, he was too young; he said, master had been asking for him to come; I said, "Tell master he is too young," and master said he was old enough.

1093. *Mr. Massey.*] Were you afraid of offending your master if you did not send him?—Yes, I was afraid of offending him.

1094. Then you would not have sent your child, if you had not been apprehensive of offending your master?—No; you must not offend your master, if you do, you know what would be the consequence.

1095. Supposing you had not sent your child when the foreman asked you to send him, and told you, that your master said he was old enough, were you afraid that you would have been discharged if you had not sent him?—Yes; I was always afraid of that.

1096. And that was the reason of your sending so young a child into the works, that you were afraid of offending your master?—Yes.

1097. And afraid, if you offended your master, he would have discharged you?—Yes.

1098. You say that distinctly, do you?—Yes, that was the reason.

1099. How long ago was this?—It happened about four years ago.

1100. *Mr. Packe.*] Do you know an instance where children have been required by the master to go into the works, and it has been refused, where the parents have been discharged?—I do not keep every thing in my head in that way; but I will tell you one thing: I had a daughter; they were very slack of work at Mr. Slater's, and she could have work at Meeting's Croft, if she could go; they let her go, for her to come back again when they were thronged, and when they were thronged they sent for her back; she would not come, so master told me to fetch her back. She would not come; I said they would bag me if she did not come. They said, "If they bag you we will help to keep you." Master came and said, "They have not put on your wench." I said, "No, they would have some time to give notice." He said, "Never mind notice; let her come back when we send for her." She would not come; I said I would see her at noon: he returned again. I said, "Well, to tell you the truth, she will not come." He said, "If she will not come you may prepare for the consequence."

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1101. Was that said to you?—Yes.
1102. What master was it that said that to you?—Mr. Joseph Slater.
1103. Mr. Davison.] What is the name of the foreman who you stated just now first applied to you to send your child?—I cannot justly mention that name.
1104. Is he living?—Yes, he is; he is not in the bleaching business now.
1105. Where does he live?—He lives somewhere near Hallowell.
1106. When did you see him last?—I saw him driving a cart about a month since.
1107. In whose employment is he; what is the name of his master?—He is for himself; he is not in any employ now.
1108. But in whose employment was he at the time you speak of?—In Mr. Slater's employment.
1109. And you say that the foreman told you that Mr. Slater desired you to send your son?—Yes.
1110. And you repeat that now?—Yes.
1111. You say you were not willing to come up here, but that you were forced to come, and that it was the people of Bolton forced you to come?—They wanted me to come, and said I knew the business as well as any man, and that I was a fit and proper person to come.
1112. Do you know any of those persons that urged you to come?—Yes, both males and females, and boys too.
1113. Any of your own boys?—No, not exactly of my own boys.
1114. None of your own boys did ask you to come, then?—No.
1115. Do you state that, that none of your own sons ever asked you to come?—I do not know that they ever did.
1116. Do you state that they did not?—No, I do not know that they ever did.
1117. Mr. Wise.] You have stated that in your time you could not afford to send your children to school; does that apply to the operatives who are now at work at Bolton; do you think they can afford to send their children to school now?—There are rather more going to school now than there were formerly.
1118. I ask you whether they can afford generally to send their children to school?—They cannot so well afford it.
1119. Then, if the children were not to go to work until they were 12 years of age, generally, what would you do with the juvenile population of Bolton?—There are ragged schools and free schools, and they can go to Sunday schools.
1120. What would you do with the mass of the juvenile population of Bolton if they were not allowed to work at all until they were 12 years of age?—They would get schooling.
1121. They would go to school generally, you think?—I think they would.
1122. Mr. Kirk.] If they remain out of work until they are 12 years of age why do they not get schooling before they are nine years of age; surely that is a very plain and simple question; I want an answer to it?—Well, I say if the hours of labour were restricted, in my opinion, they would get better still.
1123. What have the hours of labour to do with the not sending them to school before they begin to labour?—Some would go to school.
1124. Why do not all go?—How can I tell that? Every parent pleases himself about his own family.
1125. Supposing the hours of labour were restricted, would there be more wages paid to the work-people than for the long hours?—No, I do not think there would; it is not likely.
1126. How were you paid when you were in employment, by the day or by the piece?—By piece-work.
1127. And would not that still obtain; would you not still be paid by the piece?—Masters can please themselves whether they pay by the day or by the piece.
1128. Supposing you worked by the piece, and worked for 10 hours or 10 hours and a half, and had liberty to work 15 or 16 hours, which of those would produce the greatest amount of wages to you?—The 15 or 16 hours would amount to the most wages.
1129. When would the lessening of the wages enable the parents to send their children to school, to give them more education than they do now with the large wages?—You will bear in mind one thing—
1130. Give me a plain answer first to my very plain question; I ask you distinctly, if the parent earns less wages, will he have more to spend in the education of his children?—Apparently he would not have as much; but if he works them

so many hours more he has to have their bodies better supported with food, and their raiment will be wearing out; and if he has less wages they would do with less meat, and less clothing, and less fire, and that would meet the other end.

1131. What is the weekly cost of the education of a child under nine years of age at Bolton?—About 2 *d.* or 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ *d.* a week before they begin to write.

1132. And you mean to tell the Committee that out of earnings amounting to 25 or 30 shillings a week, the work-people of Bolton are not able to spare 2 *d.* a week for the education of their children?—But they do not get that regularly; sometimes they do not get 15 *s.*

1133. Take it at 15 *s.*, are they not able to spare 2 *d.* a week out of that to educate their children; is that your evidence?—No; I have nothing to do with that; no further than every parent should give his children as much learning as he can.

1134. But it is in evidence from your own son, that you gave him no education; that he was nineteen before he could read?—I dare say that he was that, or more.

1135. He states that he learnt to read after he was 19, and therefore you had not done your duty to him; as to this child that you speak of, as having been last employed at the instance of the foreman, what education had that child?—He had very little.

1136. He was eight years of age, you say?—Between eight and nine.

1137. Had he been taught to read?—Yes; he had gone to school a little before.

1138. I am asking you if he had any, and what progress he had made?—He had gone to a Sunday school some little time before, and a little to a work-house school.

1139. What day school did he go to within the last four years, and what amount did you pay for him, in order that he might be taught to read before he was nine years of age?—He paid 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ *d.* a week.

1140. For how long?—A few years; I cannot exactly tell.

1141. And he was a few years at a school paying 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ *d.* a week, and he could not read?—Yes; he could read a little.

1142. Were your children all brought up in the same way as those you formerly described to us; without the knowledge of what religion they belonged to?—The bleachers are pretty much of a set; I was not by myself.

1143. Did you bring up your children without taking them to any place of worship on the Sunday?—Yes; I never was brought up to any place of worship myself, and there is many a score besides myself in the same way.

1144. You told us, I think, and I think you mentioned in your former evidence here, that when you were a young man, you were at work from seven o'clock on the Monday morning till six in the evening, and that you left off on Saturday at four?—Yes.

1145. And do you mean to say that even then, when you left off on Saturday afternoon at four o'clock, that you went to no place of worship on the Sunday?—At some odd times I did.

1146. But you belonged to no regular place of worship?—No.

1147. To no sect of Christianity?—Not to join any sect.

1148. And you just lived without God in the world all your lifetime?—Yes; pretty well.

1149. And you brought up your family in the same way?—Yes; they were mostly brought up in that way all through the bleaching district.

1150. *Chairman.* Are there any schools attached to any of the bleaching-works in Bolton?—I do not know one.

1151. You do not know of any instance in which a bleaching master has opened and established a school for the children he employs?—No, I do not know one; there was one at Halliwell. Mr. Ainsworth built a church, and there was a school erected there, and they did not attend the school. The minister was finding fault terribly because they did not attend the school, and he had some of the classes up, and they told him that they worked such long hours that they could not attend school. He said it was not right, and he made some remarks upon it; and Mr. Ainsworth said that those who did not go to the church and attend school, he would turn them off; and after the clergyman had preached that sermon, and discoursed upon it, Mr. Ainsworth said that anybody who did go he would turn them off. So it was a few weeks before, if they did not go, he would turn them off; and then he made a change when they talked about long hours

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3165. Will you state to the Committee what those hours are that you complain of?—I believe the average time at present is about 11 hours a day, but formerly the average time was 12 hours a day; but, on occasions, they were forced to work for a much longer time; sometimes continuously for 16 hours a day. At other times they would work 12 hours for three days a week, and 18 hours a day for the other three days of the week.

3166. Do you mean that the same persons will work 12 hours for three days in the week, and 18 hours for the other three days?—The same persons.

3167. And do those hours obtain now, or are you speaking of a state of things which has altogether passed away?—I believe that, in consequence of the representations of the workers, the masters have met them in a friendly spirit, and that they have voluntarily agreed to an alleviation of those hours; but it is now reduced to 11 hours a day, with the mutual consent of masters and workers.

3168. Does that consent obtain in other establishments, or are you speaking merely of Messrs. Hamilton's?—No, I believe it has been a very general arrangement; and I am personally acquainted with most of the master bleachers in that locality, in the neighbourhood of Paisley, and I believe they are all willing that the time should be limited to 10 hours a day. I believe that feeling is very general.

3169. Before you came up to London, had you any opportunity of conversing with Messrs. Hamilton on the subject?—I have not conversed lately with them on that subject, but I believe it was the general feeling.

3170. And among the workpeople whom you attended, what is the general feeling among them?—I believe the feeling among them is this, that they feel on better terms with their employers in consequence of the concessions that have been made. In speaking of the exertions of Parliament, I believe they have had a favourable effect upon the population in the neighbourhood of Paisley. Paisley has been rather notorious for being a place where ultra-radicalism has prevailed; but I believe the feeling now is, that they can look to Parliament for the redress of every just grievance, and that has had the effect of attaching them to the British Constitution, and a feeling of loyalty is, I may say, universal amongst our manufacturing population.

3171. Have you had any opportunities of knowing what are the feelings of persons engaged in the bleaching-works with respect to any proposed legislative enactment interfering with the hours of labour in their own employment?—There is, in the first place, a profound feeling of necessity.

3172. Do you believe that there is no difference of opinion among the working classes upon that subject?—I am not aware of any among the working people; there is very little difference of opinion even looking at the employers; the most benevolent of the employers are most anxious that they should be protected against the cupidity of a sordid few.

3173. You have given the Committee the four points to which you think the unrestricted system of working in the bleaching-works is prejudicial to the health of the persons so engaged; what are the effects produced by these four causes upon the health of the persons?—First, in reference to the erect position, I would say that varicose veins, that is, a swollen condition of the veins of the leg, is a very common complaint. It is a complaint to which shopkeepers are liable from their constant standing position, and to which workpeople in the factories are subject, but it is still more frequent in bleaching-works in consequence of the great heat. I know that varicose veins, and swellings of the leg, and extensive ulcerations are very common; and sometimes those ulcerations eat into the veins, causing very extensive and dangerous bleeding. I have known the workers bleed almost to death in a very short time; one young woman in particular has been twice at the gates of death in consequence of these ulcers eating into the varicose veins of her leg. Rupture is another thing that is very common amongst them in consequence of the constant standing. Then next, as to the artificial heat, most of these females are young girls from the Highlands, and from Ireland; they frequently come with a plump and healthy appearance, but that very soon disappears; they become pale, and thin, and weakly; they become subject to dyspepsia or indigestion; they become subject to constipation of the bowels, and to bilious complaints; they become subject to nervous diseases, hysteria, irritation of the spinal nerves, to severe neuralgic headache; and one thing which I found to prevail almost univer-

sally

sally among them was a derangement of those functions peculiar to them as females. Again, from the sudden transition from heat to cold they were very liable to inflammatory complaints, generally to sore throat, bronchitis, inflammation of the lungs, pleurisy, inflammation of the liver, and other abdominal viscera, chronic and acute rheumatism, particularly in the foot. I found that was a very common complaint, from the excessive heat of the apartment where they work. They were often employed without shoes and stockings, and they very often went out in that condition into the open air; this often brought on a rheumatic complaint of the foot of a very obstinate character, and it appeared to me that some of them were lamed for life in consequence of that. Then, as to the long hours during which they were engaged, I would say this is not merely an evil in itself, but it rendered the constitution more liable to suffer from the other causes I have assigned.

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3174. Will you tell the Committee what, in your opinion, would be the effect, not upon the actual generation of young women who are working these long hours, but upon the next generation to whom they may give birth?—I should say that these influences would not merely affect themselves injuriously for life, bringing on premature old age, and making them less able for the discharge of their functions as mothers; but that it would have an injurious effect upon their posterity, and that it would ultimately, and does actually, lead to a great increase of the pauperism of the country.

3175. Do you mean by a great increase of the pauperism of the country, that the generation of children now springing up would be unable to obtain their own subsistence from work?—Yes; I should say both themselves and their families would often sink into a condition of pauperism consequent upon the effects I have assigned.

3176. Have you any other observations to make bearing upon this class of questions?—With regard to the time they are employed, they are sometimes employed for a short time, sometimes for full time, that is up to the 12 hours' employment, and sometimes overtime. There is a sort of barracks provided for the female workers, what they are in the habit of calling a woman's house, and I could generally tell from the appearance of the woman's house whether they were working short time, long time, or full time. When they were at work short time, they were generally all at their employment, and the sick list was very light; when they were employed for 12 hours a day, the sick list was heavy, unusually heavy; but when they came to work 16 hours a day, or for 18 hours a day, perhaps for three days in the week, the amount of sickness was positively distressing.

3177. Do you happen to have any figures with you that will show this?—No; the nature of my engagement was such, that I did not require to keep any notes at the time, so that I do not possess any statistics; but that is the impression left upon my mind from an experience of 10 years.

3178. Is the woman's house now in operation?—It is still in operation. I believe the Messrs. Hamilton particularly, from humane considerations, have made very great improvements in the state of the woman's house; they have reduced the number allowed to remain in it; formerly it was in a most crowded, unhealthy condition; and I found when I was obliged to treat cases of disease in the house, which I was frequently obliged to do, that the confined atmosphere had a most injurious effect upon my patients. I found after giving great relief, in a case of acute disease for instance, that from the close and heated atmosphere during the night, by next morning my patient was as ill as ever; and I think that where such houses exist, it will be requisite that they should be put under some public arrangement, in order to protect the females who are residing in them.

3179. What number of females were lodged there?—Here again I am at a loss to supply figures, but I may say at once the number was excessive in proportion to the accommodation.

3180. Was the house attached to the works?—The house was attached to the works. The wards have often been not merely crowded with beds, but there have been as many as three workers in each bed.

3181. You mention that when there were these long hours or overtime, the sick list was very heavy; what was the practice when the sick list was heavy; were the patients removed into other wards, or did the sick and disabled women remain in the same ward as those who were going to their work?—The time

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1202. Mr. Davison.] It would be better if the masters did that, would not it, in your opinion?—The masters send them to the workhouse when they cannot work any longer.

1203. Mr. Wise.] You mean to say that, in your district, there are no clubs or friendly societies, or any establishments where you pay so much a week, so that if you are sick or get old you have a little weekly payment?—Yes, when they are sick, or out of work, but nothing for old age.

1204. But there are friendly societies or clubs in the neighbourhood?—I do not know of any where I come from. I never heard tell of a club, or anything, for old age.

1205. Mr. Davison.] Are there any clubs for other purposes?—Yes; there are clubs if they get lame, or if they are sick, but nothing for old age.

1206. Are there any clubs there for the purpose of opposing the masters?—No.

1207. Or for the purpose of supporting the workmen in any way?—No; I do not know of any.

1208. Viscount Goderich.] You do not mean to say that there are not sick clubs in Bolton?—No; but not for old age.

1209. Do the workmen in your trade subscribe to clubs of that kind?—They never lay themselves out for that kind of thing, whatever profession or branch they may belong to.

1210. Do people engaged in the bleaching-works subscribe to clubs of that kind?—Some of them.

1211. Mr. Davison.] Do you subscribe?—No; I am an Oddfellow, but not a subscriber for old age.

Mr. Thomas Miller, called in; and Examined.

Mr. T. Miller.

1212. Chairman.] WHERE do you live?—At Bolton.

1213. Will you tell the Committee what your occupation is?—Yes; I have been connected with the finishing department at Mr. Hardcastle's for these last 24 years.

1214. Are you connected with that department now?—Not at present; but to last November.

1215. Are you engaged in any other department of the bleaching process now, or not?—Not at present. I have commenced business for myself in a small way, shop-keeping; I left in November last.

1216. Did you give evidence before Mr. Tremeneere two or three years ago?—No, I did not.

1217. Will you have the goodness to tell the Committee generally what your views are on the subject of the hours of work in the bleaching business?—My views are for restricting the hours of labour of young persons.

1218. Will you have the goodness to tell the Committee what your reasons are for coming to that opinion?—Because the hours are too long for females and young persons, and even old persons, to work.

1219. During the 20 years that you were in the finishing department at Mr. Hardcastle's, can you tell the Committee what were the severest hours for any time that you yourself observed?—We worked from all hours, from seven in the morning to 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12, and even 2 o'clock in the morning; and I have worked longer than that myself, that was in the making-up and packing department, where I was engaged for the last four years.

1220. Does the observation apply to the finishing department?—To the making-up and packing department.

1221. Taking the finishing department, what are the longest hours that you remember in the finishing department?—I was connected with the beetling department at one time under Mr. Hardcastle for a great number of years; I have worked 36 hours at once, without any stoppage, but for meals.

1222. Were all those who were working that number of hours male adults, or were there women and young boys?—It was the case with all connected together.

1223. And the women and the children worked the same long hours on those occasions?—Yes.

1224. Was your observation at that time called to any bad effect from those long hours on the children and women?—There were no bad effects, but in the state of their health generally, after working a series of weeks, and perhaps months, they got quite done up, and fatigued.

1225. What

1225. What happened to them when they were in that state, were they forced to give up the work, or did it continue?—They were forced to give up through necessity; they were not fit to stand. I have seen them stop at home two or three days at once, and then come again after they got recruited.

1226. Are you aware of any whose health finally sunk altogether under those long hours, who either were obliged to give up the employment, or died in consequence?—I never knew any one to die, but to give up work in consequence of the long hours they had to labour.

1227. At what temperature were the rooms in which these long hours were worked?—The one where we worked was always a cool temperature, no stoves, plenty of open air certainly, but the long hours.

1228. Was the nature of the occupation such that the persons engaged during these long hours could sit down and rest themselves, or were they chiefly standing?—Occasionally they could sit down, at other times they could not, for hours together and days together; sometimes there might be a little slackness in the work coming forward, they might sit down then, but the general thing was to keep to it till one was done.

1229. What were the meal times during these long pushes?—Half an hour for breakfast, one hour for dinner, half an hour for tea; the time was never certain when we were to go home at night.

1230. Can you tell us how young children were engaged in this department?—From all ages; I have seen them from 10, 11 and 12, but they are not quite so young now; I believe none are taken in now under 12 within this year or two.

1231. Does that observation apply to all the departments in Mr. Hardcastle's works, or only to those you have specified to the Committee?—I will not say all, only connected with the making-up and packing department that I was engaged in for the last four years.

1232. Take the finishing department; I think you were engaged in that before you were engaged in the packing department, were you not?—Yes, our set was not connected with the finishing department, goods come there finished to the makers-up; the finishing department was a different department.

1233. Then if I understand you you have no personal knowledge of the other departments?—Yes, I have a knowledge of what they call the beetling department.

1234. Are children and women employed in the beetling department?—Not so frequently, perhaps there might be one or two employed in ordinary operations not connected with the beetling, at least at Mr. Hardcastle's; I have seen women employed in the beetling department.

1235. Are the hours very long in the beetling department?—Yes, very long; that is a tedious process.

1236. What hours were the people generally employed shortly before you left Mr. Hardcastle's employment?—I have seen them very busy for four, five or six months at once, 13 or 18 months ago; we used to work when we were busy from all hours, very nearly from 7 in the morning up to 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12 o'clock, and sometimes later than that.

1237. What opportunities of education would the children employed in the way you have described, have?—No opportunities at all for education, unless they had it before they came to the works.

1238. Is there any school attached to Mr. Hardcastle's establishment?—Yes, there is a school attached to Mr. Hardcastle's works.

1239. What class of children attend the school?—Principally the works children, before they come to work.

1240. How long has the school been established?—Perhaps a dozen years, I cannot say exactly to a year; but it has been established a number of years.

1241. And is it attended by children belonging to the works?—Yes, belonging to the parents at the works, and other children also; there is a schoolmaster attached to it.

1242. But I think I understood you to say, that no children actually engaged in the works attend the school?—No, they cannot attend while at their work; and when they are busy at work for months together they have no chance of attending the school.

1243. Are you able to tell the Committee at what ages in the various departments at Mr. Hardcastle's works the children commence to work?—Generally about 12 years of age, from 12 to 14.

1244. Then up to 12 the children have an opportunity of receiving education?—Yes, they have an opportunity up to that time.

Mr. T. Miller.

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1245. Mr. *Davison*.] You were asked up to what age they attend?—They have an opportunity of going to school before they come to work.

1246. Do they commence at 12 to work, or 13, or what age?—Yes, 12 or 13; I have seen them younger.

1247. *Chairman*.] But at the present moment you think that is the age at which the children commence working in Mr. Hardcastle's mill?—Yes, I believe they have adopted the rule lately.

1248. Viscount *Goderich*.] Is that rule acted upon in Mr. Hardcastle's establishment alone, or generally in the bleaching-works in that neighbourhood?—It has lately been adopted at Mr. Hardcastle's.

1249. And not elsewhere?—I cannot speak for elsewhere.

1250. *Chairman*.] Do the parents show any anxiety to send their children to this school?—Yes, I think they generally do.

1251. Have they to pay?—Yes, they have to pay.

1252. So much per week, I suppose?—Yes.

1253. I think you began by saying, that you were in favour of legislative interference?—I should think it would be the best plan for the good of the trade that something should be done in it.

1254. Do you speak for the good of the masters, as well as the good of the workpeople and their children?—Yes.

1255. And are you of opinion from the experience you have had, that legislative interference restricting the hours of labour, and the age at which children should commence to work in the bleaching-works, would be beneficial, and not prejudicial to the interests even of the master?—Yes, there should be some regularity fixed in the hours of bleaching and finishing, that is my opinion.

1256. Has your attention been called to the provisions in the Bills that have been from time to time brought before Parliament with that object; are you aware at all of the nature of any Bill that has been brought before Parliament for the purpose of restricting the hours of labour in bleaching-works?—Yes.

1257. Were you in favour of a provision for preventing children under the age of 11 from working in bleaching-works?—Yes, quite in favour of it; I think it is quite soon enough to send a child at 12 years of age to work.

1258. Then, passing on from children to women and young persons, how many hours in the day do you think it would be proper that they should labour in those bleaching-works?—I should think 10 hours a day would be quite sufficient for children and young persons.

1259. The actual time now fixed by law for the factories is 10 hours and a half, is it not?—Yes; 10 hours and a half, or 60 hours a week.

1260. Therefore, I understand you to be in favour of placing the same limit on the hours of labour in the bleaching-works for women and young persons as is already placed by law on the labour of similar classes in factories and mills; is that the evidence you wish to give?—Yes, I am quite in favour of that.

1261. Have you had an opportunity of witnessing the effects of the Factory Acts on the moral, social and physical condition of the factory people in Bolton?—No; I have had very little acquaintance with factory people; only what I have heard, and the effect which it has produced on the young people at the working mills.

1262. What effect have you heard of or witnessed?—Of attending schools and libraries at night; those connected with the bleaching and finishing have no opportunity whatever of attending at a school or going into a library for a week.

1263. During the 20 years you were employed in Mr. Hardcastle's bleaching-works, was it the habit of your fellow-workmen to apply themselves at all to libraries and mechanics' institutes, or any of those sort of institutions?—No; being wholly employed, we had no chance; there used to be a night school attached to the works.

1264. How was it attended?—When there was a slack time they used to attend to it, and when they were busy they had to go to give it over.

1265. So that there was no certainty?—No; there was no certainty.

1266. There was no regularity in the hours of attendance upon the institution?—No.

1267. Viscount *Goderich*] Was that night school established by Mr. Hardcastle himself?—No, I think not, but I am not certain whether he has established one or not; there was at one time a school held in my own house, and a young man came teaching, and I even gave him the room free to come and teach in at night; when they had time they came, but with the irregularity of attending at the school many gave over.

1268. How

1268. How was he paid for his trouble?—He was paid by the learners so much a night. The young man that taught belonged to the works.

1269. Was that since you left the works?—No.

1270. While you were working there, was it?—Yes, I dare say it was 10 or 12 years since.

1271. How long did that go on before he gave up?—It went on from time to time for a year or two.

1272. Mr. *Packe*.] You stated that there was an anxiety in Bolton, amongst the parents, to send their children to school?—Yes.

1273. Do you confine your answer to that to the parents in Mr. Hardcastle's establishment, or generally to the people at Bolton?—I do not know as to that; I can speak for myself.

1274. Are you speaking of the parents in Mr. Hardcastle's establishment, exclusively?—Yes.

1275. Not to the people in Bolton, generally?—No, I do not know anything of them.

1276. You speak of Mr. Hardcastle's establishment?—Yes.

1277. *Chairman*.] Are any of your own family engaged in any of the processes of the bleaching business?—Yes; my family has been all engaged at one time, and I have one engaged at Mr. Hardcastle's now.

1278. In what capacity?—In the making-up department.

1279. Can you tell us what are the hours of labour there at the present moment?—It is sometimes six, sometimes eight, and sometimes 10; I have seen her come at 10 at night, within the last month or six weeks.

1280. And at what time does she begin?—At seven o'clock in the morning; six o'clock is the hour stated, but it is always seven before they can all get gathered together and start.

1281. What is her age?—She was 24 years of age; she works in the making-up room.

1282. How old was she when she commenced working at Mr. Hardcastle's establishment?—Twelve years.

1283. Have you any other members of your family engaged in the bleaching business?—No; at present I have a son who is engaged in the making-up department at another works.

1284. Mr. *Packe*.] What age is he?—He is 27 years of age.

1285. Mr. *Davison*.] Your children are all educated, I take it for granted?—Yes, they are all educated.

1286. You are from Scotland, are you not?—Yes.

1287. Mr. *Kirk*.] What is your general mode of beetling?—There are different sorts of beetling different sorts of goods.

1288. Can you give the Committee any idea of what you mean by the word "beetling"?—It is a process of finishing goods; I may say that goods are sometimes put on in a wet state, and beetled a certain time.

1289. For how long at a time?—Sometimes an hour, sometimes half an hour, and sometimes longer, according to the condition of the goods, and many of the goods are beetled 20, 24 or 30 hours in different places, according to the style of work.

1290. Then the labour of attending this beetling is not continuous labour, you have a roller have you not?—Yes, there are two beams attached to each row of beetles.

1291. And one is filled while the other is emptied?—Yes.

1292. The labour is not continuous, is it?—The labour is not continuous altogether, but there is very little time to spare when there is a double row of beetles running on the same beam.

1293. *Chairman*.] You say that in your opinion the interests of the masters would not suffer from the application of legislative interference to the hours of labour in bleaching-works, I suppose you are aware that it has been stated that in many instances they would be unable to comply with the demands of the merchants with that limit so applied to their business?—Yes, I am aware of it.

1294. Can you give the Committee any opinion upon that point?—No; I think I cannot go so far; I would rather leave that alone.

Mr. W. Mather.

Mr. Wright Mather, called in; and Examined.

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1295. *Chairman.*] WHAT is your occupation?—I am in the stove and drying room.

1296. How long have you been engaged in that department?—About 12 or 13 years, and in other places as well; I have been engaged at Mr. Bridson's about 18 years.

1297. And you are working there now?—Yes.

1298. Have you been engaged in different departments in Mr. Bridson's works?—Yes.

1299. I believe you gave evidence before Mr. Tremenheere two or three years ago?—Yes.

1300. Have you seen any reason to alter any of the opinions that you gave, or the statements you made to Mr. Tremenheere?—No; I have not seen any alteration, only this Whitsuntide they have shifted machinery, and it will not be as hot now as it was then in the progressive room.

1301. I think, at that time you stated the heat to be as high as 150 degrees?—Yes.

1302. Now the heat is not so great?—It will not be so great now.

1303. Can you tell what has been the diminution of the heat; what is the heat now?—In summer in the split-room, it is from 100 to 130 degrees.

1304. Even now?—Yes.

1305. Do you go through that great heat for many hours together?—I am not in that department at present.

1306. But you have been?—I have been.

1307. How long were you in that department?—I dare say eight years, off and on.

1308. Will you tell the Committee for how many hours together you remember being in that room, where these processes were being carried on?—There is a place where they dry the fancy goods; you must be in all the time, sometimes; I have been in there 12 hours a day, and sometimes 16, when we are very busy.

1309. You yourself have been as long as 16 hours in a room, the temperature of which you described as being considerably above 150 degrees?—Yes.

1310. In your evidence before Mr. Tremenheere, I see you stated that it was during the middle of the day that the heat rose to 150 degrees?—In the progressive room.

1311. In the room you have been telling us of; you say yourself have been in that room for 16 hours together; what would be the greatest heat in that room?—The greatest would be about 130 degrees.

1312. Would that be for only a very short time during the day, or would that be the heat for a considerable number of hours together?—For a considerable number of hours together.

1313. How many persons might there be in the room with you at that time?—Three young women.

1314. Can you give the Committee their ages?—They change very often, and I could not pretend to give you their ages; sometimes I am working with one set, and sometimes I may be working with another set.

1315. What clothes would they have on while they were engaged in this room?—I did not see any difference made in their clothes.

1316. Did they bring extra clothing to put on when they went out?—Yes; when they went home.

1317. Is the work hard that they are engaged upon?—No, it is not very hard, although it is very hot.

1318. Are they able to lie down and rest at all during the occupation?—Some part of them loose their petticoats for about half an hour, and lie down in the night time; they never lie down in the day time.

1319. Were these young women in the habit of complaining of the severity of the work, and the great heat they were subject to?—Yes, they have complained many a time of its being so hot.

1320. Did your own health suffer at all when you were engaged in that way?—No, I had very good health.

1321. Mr. *Packer.*] You stated to Mr. Tremenheere that there were five boys working in that room?—In the progressive room.

1322. The heat of which I think you state was as much as 100 degrees?—From 100 to 150.

1323. And

1323. And that they were working as long as up to 18 hours a day?—Yes, they worked for 12, 13, 14, 15 or 16 hours a day; just as the work was.
1324. But you stated to Mr. Tremenheere that it was as long as 18 hours a day?—Yes; they have worked as long as 18.
1325. In that temperature?—Yes.
1326. Mr. Kirk.] Often?—Yes.
1327. Mr. Packe.] What were the ages of those five boys?—There was one 10, another 11, and one 13.
1328. Then 10 was the youngest?—Yes.
1329. Chairman.] Is there any school attached to your employer's works?—Not that I am aware of.
1330. At what ages do the boys generally enter his employment?—The very lowest is 10 years of age that I have known employed.
1331. Have you had your attention called to any proposal for restricting the hours of labour in bleaching works?—Yes; I wanted 10 hours to the day, if we could get it.
1332. You are anxious that there should be a limit to the hours of labour?—Yes, I am anxious.
1333. Do you think that that is the wish generally of the working people engaged in those works?—Yes; I never heard any of the women or men say different, but what they would like it to be 10 hours to the day.
1334. Have you heard them canvass the question of wages at all?—No, I never heard anything about wages.
1335. But the people generally are in favour of their having their hours of labour shortened in the bleaching-works?—Yes.
1336. And you give that to the Committee as your opinion and wish?—Yes, I do.
1337. You have been engaged in these bleaching-works, I think you say, for 18 years?—For 18 years with Mr. Bridson.
1338. Mr. Packe.] Out of this 18 hours a day, what time is allowed for refreshment?—Half an hour to breakfast, an hour to dinner, and half an hour to tea.
1339. Two hours, then, out of the 18?—
1340. Chairman.] Have you thought at all of the effect that the shortening the hours of labour might have upon the interests of the masters?—No, I have had nothing at all to do with that; I was not aware of coming up here until they sent for me.
1341. Had any alterations taken place during the last year or two in any of the processes in Mr. Bridson's work?—Yes.
1342. Will you state to the Committee what those alterations have been?—They have machines for bleaching.
1343. They have introduced the machines?—Yes.
1344. For what processes?—There are four machines, and there are eight or nine crofters for bleaching petticoats.
1345. What was the effect on the labour of the persons employed in this process before the introduction of machines?—They employed men and young lads.
1346. Who do they employ now?—They employ men, and there are about eight in that place; there are now about eight men and three lads at the machines.
1347. Of what ages would those lads be?—Thirteen years of age; they do not make very long hours with them.
1348. What number of hours are they generally employed at these machines?—It may be about 12 or 13 hours.
1349. Do you mean exclusive of meal-times?—Yes, they have meal-times.
1350. That is to say, the working hours, besides an hour and a half or two hours for meals?—Yes; and a little time between, while they are waiting for the cloth to be ready.
1351. Are the bleaching-works in the town of Bolton or in the neighbourhood?—In Bolton.
1352. You have said there is no school attached to the works; is there any school within reach?—About a quarter of a mile off there is one.
1353. Do any of the lads employed in these works attend school there at all?—I do not know of any; they certainly attend upon a Sunday.
1354. Speaking generally, are the young persons employed in these works tolerably well educated or able to read?—Some of them are, and some of them

Mr. W. Mather. are not; I went to school when I was eight years of age, but I have forgotten it all.

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1355. After eight, you never went again?—No; I went on a Sunday.

1356. Did you enter those works yourself when you was eight years of age?—Yes, eight or nine.

1357. And after that you had no further opportunity of receiving any education?—Except on Sunday. When I was working night and day I did not like to begin one week, and then never go the week after; so that kept me away.

1358. You thought it was not worth while?—There is a week at night and a week at day, and I did not like to start for a week at day, because I could not go regularly.

1359. In those days were there many children as young as yourself in those works?—Yes, there were a good many children.

1360. But I think I have understood you to say that now they are not taken in so young, generally?—No, not so young as they were.

1361. *Mr. Turner.*] Generally speaking, I suppose it is the wish of the working classes that you associate with the bleaching operatives to have the same hours of labour adopted in the bleaching-works that are now adopted in mills and factories?—Yes.

1362. Do you think that that would be beneficial to the working people?—Yes.

1363. You have no opinion to give, I think, as I understand you to say, as to how it would affect the interests of the masters, and of the trade generally?—No; I was not aware of coming up here.

1364. Then you have no opinion to give as to how far these restrictions placed upon English bleachers, there not being the same restrictions placed upon bleachers in foreign countries, would operate to the prejudice of the English bleachers?—I am not aware of anything of that kind.

1365. You have said that you would like the same hours of labour that are adopted in factories to be also adopted in the bleaching-works?—Yes.

1366. And that all the people in the bleaching-works would prefer it?—Yes.

1367. Have you ever heard of an instance where women or young persons employed in bleaching-works have left their employment in consequence of the long hours, to avail themselves of the shorter hours that prevail in factories?—Yes; there have been persons left there and gone to the factories.

1368. Is that a very frequent occurrence?—No, I do not know that it is; some leave and go to shops.

1369. Have you heard many instances of it?—No, not many.

1370. It is not generally the case?—No; there are some few who go to the factories.

1371. And yet if they should leave their situations in the bleaching-works in consequence of objecting to the long hours which are sometimes adopted there, they are not at all unfit to go into mills, and therefore might avail themselves of the alternative?—Sometimes when they leave there they go into service.

1372. But not often into mills?—No, not often into mills.

1373. Then the workpeople do not seem to think it a desirable change on their part to leave the bleaching-works and go into mills?—No, they do not.

1374. How do you account for that, if the hours in mills are so much more favourable to their interests?—They think it is a little lowering to them to go into a mill.

1375. Then it is rather a superiority of tone of feeling adopted amongst the bleaching operatives?—Yes; when a person has been brought up in a place he does not like to shift.

1376. He thinks that it would be a degradation to go into a mill?—Yes.

1377. Then, we are to infer, I suppose, that they are considered, on the whole, a more respectable class of people, and a higher grade of calling than the mill-hands?—I think so.

1378. Then it would not be a change for the better to be turned into factories?—It would be better if we had factory hours.

1379. But about the adoption of those hours upon the interests of trade, as a trade, you do not give any opinion?—No.

1380. Merely that it would be better to work shorter hours than longer?—Yes.

1381. Mr. *Packe*.] Is it not from being brought up at the bleaching-works and being accustomed to them, that they do not like to leave them and go to another place?—It is from being accustomed to it; they do not like to shift to another work.

Mr. *W. Mather*.
12 June 1857.

Martis, 16^o die Junii, 1857.

MEMBERS PRESENT.

Mr. Baxter.
Mr. Butt.
Mr. Cheetham.
Mr. Clark.
Mr. Cobbett.
Mr. Davison.
Viscount Goderich.

Mr. Kirk.
Lord John Manners.
Mr. Massey.
Lord Naas.
Mr. Packe.
Mr. Turner.
Mr. Wise.

ISAAC BUTT, Esq., IN THE CHAIR.

Rev. *William Milton*, called in; and Examined.

1382. *Chairman*.] I BELIEVE you are a Clergyman?—I am.
1383. Of the Established Church?—I am.
1384. Where do you now live?—At the vicarage, Little Marlow, Buckinghamshire; I am curate of the parish.
1385. How long have you been there?—Three years this month.
1386. Where was your place before that?—Some years ago I was in Lancashire.
1387. How long ago is it since you were in Lancashire?—It is seven years since I left the neighbourhood of Bolton.
1388. Had you a pastoral charge there?—I was incumbent of St. Paul's, Halliwell.
1389. How far is that from Bolton?—Two miles, or a mile and a half.
1390. Were there any bleaching-works in your parish?—There were large bleaching-works.
1391. Can you tell us how many?—There was only one bleaching firm; they had large works throughout the parish.
1392. Who were the proprietors of that?—Mr. John Horrocks Ainsworth.
1393. Can you tell us about how many men were generally employed in these works?—I am not able to say that.
1394. Were any of your congregation workers in those works?—The chief part.
1395. Were you acquainted with the hours of work in these works?—Yes; they constantly came before me.
1396. State to the Committee what the usual hours of work were?—The hours of work varied perpetually for different sets; and for the same sets at different times; they worked very irregularly, sometimes very slack, little or nothing to do; at other times there was great pressure, and the hours were very severe. The cases that I particularly noticed were those of young children and women, in which a set of young persons of the ages from 9 to 19, 20 and 22 worked, as an ordinary thing, from 6 in the morning to 12 at night; that was varied on the Friday, in which, beginning on Friday morning, they worked all Friday night, and down to tea-time, which was about five or six, on the Saturday evening, by which they worked about 107 hours in the week, deducting 12 hours for meals; leaving a gross amount of 95 hours in the week.
1397. Did that frequently occur?—That was, with some sets, the constant work; I have known one case in which a young woman suffered from it, which caused me to investigate the case, and she, I know, had been working at that rate for three weeks constantly.
1398. What was the name of the person?—Elizabeth Greenhalgh.
1399. Mr. *Davison*.] About what age was she?—She was, I think, 26.
1400. *Chairman*.]

Rev. *W. Milton*.
16 June 1857.

Rev. W. Milton.

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1400. *Chairman.*] Will you just state the particulars of that case?—The particulars of that case were, that she was ill on the Sunday, and off her work on Monday; a message was sent, that if she did not come on Tuesday she need not come at all; she went very ill on Tuesday, and her mother went to ask leave that she might come home at nine o'clock that night, she having gone at six o'clock in the morning; that was refused; it was represented that she was unwell; the overlooker said she must work it off; she went on for a day or two longer; she was then obliged to give it up; she was unable to work at all; the medical man said she might have recovered her health if she worked from six in the morning to six in the evening, and took her regular meals; but her constitution suffered so much that she never recovered; she died under my ministration.

1401. How long ago is that?—That was in 1849; she died in 1850.

1402. Do you recollect any other particular instance of overwork?—I asked her the longest time she ever worked at a stretch, and she said, "three nights and two days;" being about 60 hours, in which she never left the works, and never paused, except a short time for meals.

1403. Can you tell the Committee what ages girls generally begin to work at?—They work as young as nine or ten; I think nine and ten, to eleven.

1404. Are you able to say whether girls of that very young age work the same number of hours?—They work the same hours; a set must work together.

1405. Can you give us any idea of the number of women who might have been employed in these bleaching-works in your parish?—My parish is a part cut out of the large parish of St. Peter's, Halliwell, but the works were throughout in one hand; the whole of Halliwell bleaching-works are in the hands of one firm; I think the number there would amount to 600 or 700 women and children, as far as I remember now.

1406. Can you give the Committee any information as to the age at which boys began to work?—They worked, I think, from nine to ten.

1407. And were they working the same hours?—Yes; they must stand with their set.

1408. Had you any opportunity of observing the effects of those long hours on the people?—Yes.

1409. Will you give your opinion as to the effect on their health?—It struck me that it was injuring their health very seriously; that they prematurely grew old, and, except the strong ones, the others could not stand it; many of them died. It seemed to me that there were some cases in which their illness might be traced directly to the overwork. There was one case, that of the sister of the woman I have mentioned; she was a girl of 18, working the same lengthened hours; she came home at two in the morning very ill, she was in fits at four the same morning, which fits never left her, and she died some little time afterwards.

1410. Did you attribute that to the overwork?—I attributed that to the overwork.

1411. Can you give us any information from your observation of the moral effects of these long hours?—The moral effects are very bad, as you will easily perceive, when I state to you that in these sets of young men and young women, when the work is pressing, they lie down together in one room; one part of the room is for their sleeping; no distinction is made, I believe, between them; and that must of course be very injurious.

1412. Do you mean that there was a room set apart for the purpose?—No; I am speaking of their work-room; all the rest they had was to lie down in their work-room.

1413. Independent of that, what was your observation of the effect upon their physical and moral condition?—They were denied all those opportunities which they otherwise might have availed themselves of, and which I have found in factories in other parts of my cure have been of great benefit to young persons who have been released from their work at certain hours.

1414. Were the hours such as to prevent their attending to your religious ministrations?—They had to work constantly throughout the week; and frequently on the Sunday they told me that they were so wearied that they could not get up to their school or their church on Sunday morning; that kept them away in many cases.

1415. And probably that interfered with their education?—They were taken away from school very young, and never had a chance afterwards. I commenced

an evening class in the week for the young men, and when work was rather slack I got a good number of them to attend, but when a pressure came they were broken up, and perhaps never came back again.

1416. You did not find that they returned when the pressure ended?—The work had to be begun over again, and presented great difficulties; one very injurious effect was, that the work was so fitful; at times they were very busy, and at times they were idle, and that for days, when they would lounge about the streets, having nothing to do, playing as they called it.

1417. Are you aware of any efforts having been made by their masters to provide them with churches and schools?—Yes, churches and schools had been built in the parish by the masters in many instances, and are doing a great deal of good. The church of which I was incumbent was built by the master of the works.

1418. By Mr. Ainsworth?—Mr. Ainsworth; he also built large schools, which are also carrying on a great work.

1419. Had you ever occasion publicly to speak on the subject of these long hours?—Yes, I spoke of them at Bolton, at a meeting about the Ten Hours Factory Bill.

1420. Have you a copy of the observations which you made on that occasion?—I have. (*The Witness handed it in.*)

1421. Had you ever occasion to allude to it in your sermons?—Yes, I have alluded to the subject in my sermons.

1422. Where was that?—At Halliwell.

1423. Do you know of any of the workpeople having been withdrawn from your church in consequence of that sermon?—Yes, they were forbidden to attend the church.

1424. Will you mention the facts connected with the workmen being forbidden to attend your church?—Yes, a feeling of hostility arose between the patron of the church and myself. I had spoken to him on the subject of his works, at one time; it was not well received, and other circumstances occurred which produced an unpleasantness of feeling, and after my speaking at Bolton on the subject he took very severe measures about it; he ordered me to leave my house, which I found was not the parsonage; it never had been made a parsonage; it had never been conveyed, therefore a writ of ejection was served on me, and I was obliged to take lodgings; he forbade me to enter his schools at all, which schools had also never been conveyed, and he ordered the gas to be stopped.

1425. Do you know of the workpeople being prohibited from attending your church?—Yes, they were forbidden; they were ordered to be watched and reported if they attended; and in one case a father was sent for and told that he had authority over his son, who was only 20 years of age, and he was to prevent him from going to church, and if he did not, he and all his family would be dismissed.

1426. Did those men cease to go to church in consequence?—Some of them did.

1427. Can you mention one particular case?—No, I cannot follow that man in my mind now.

1428. All did not cease, we understand you?—All did not cease.

1429. Do you know of any of those who disobeyed those orders being dismissed?—My impression is that I do; but it is not so clear as to be able to fix it. I know that some left the works.

1430. Would you not think it probable, if that threat had been carried into execution, and the man had been dismissed, your attention would have been drawn to it, and you would have remembered it?—Yes.

1431. And you cannot say, sir?—My impression is that some were ordered to leave; but at the distance of seven years I cannot fix it.

1432. Would it not be a circumstance very likely to fix itself on your memory?—Yes; but, at the same time, it is so serious a charge that, without being very clear upon the subject, I do not like to make it.

1433. Then you do not think yourself in such a position as to be able to make the sort to such a charge against Mr. Ainsworth?—No.

1434. Then would you not think it fair to conclude that there is no charge of the sort to make?—It is not in evidence.

1435. When these children were taken away very young from school, and sent at this very early age to work these long hours, would you not consider that a breach of parental duty?—Certainly.

1436. Had you an opportunity of ascertaining, in your pastoral ministrations,

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why the parents did that?—The reason is clear; they wanted the immediate proceeds of their children's labour, and if they did not go young they probably would not go at all.

1437. Did that result from any pressure put upon the parents by the masters, or was it the fault of the parents?—It must be placed to the fault of the parents, they being desirous to obtain the wages.

1438. Did you ever know or hear of a case, in which a master compelled a workman to send his child to work at an early age?—No, I have no knowledge of that myself.

1439. Then are we to understand that it would have been in the power of the parents themselves completely to prevent their children from attending at all?—Yes, I suppose it would.

1440. But if they sent them at all could they prevent them working these long hours?—No.

1441. There is that coercion, that if they work at all, they must work these long hours?—They must work with their set.

1442. Previous to leaving Lancashire, did you perceive any improvement in the shortness of the hours of work?—No, not at all.

1443. You saw no amelioration or change whatever?—No, none at all.

1444. Mr. *Cheetham*.] How long is it since you left?—Seven years in September.

1445. How long were you there?—I was there three years and a half.

1446. Is it seven years since you left?—Yes.

1447. Then your observations refer to what occurred seven years ago?—Yes.

1448. Have you any knowledge of the period between that time and this?—Not of my own knowledge; I have information, but not of my own knowledge.

1449. Mr. *Kirk*.] Previous to your making these observations in your sermons as to the long hours of work of these operatives, was there any direction from the patron to the workmen, to attend your church?—There had been when first the church was opened; the people were desired to attend the church, as I understood.

1450. *Chairman*.] Was your church endowed by Mr. Ainsworth?—Yes.

1451. So that the incumbent was paid by him?—There was an endowment of 1,000*l*.

1452. Mr. *Turner*.] You are well acquainted with the family of the Greenhalghs I suppose?—Yes.

1453. Elizabeth was the daughter who died, I think?—Both died.

1454. Were they a healthy family?—I should say they were.

1455. Not afflicted with scrofula?—I am not aware that they were affected with scrofula.

1456. I am not asking these questions without good grounds for so doing; they were not afflicted with scrofula and consumption?—I am not aware of it; the father is a hale old man, and is living still.

1457. Their father gives a very different account, and the medical man; were they not of a delicate constitution?—I should say they were of an ordinary healthy constitution.

1458. The younger daughter, Elizabeth, I believe, never was well after her confinement?—She has worked for 18 hours a day for years after her confinement.

1459. The other one was called Mary Jane, I believe; had she once brain fever?—She had fits after coming home from work.

1460. Do you think that they were brought about by the hard work?—I am sure they were not obviated or decreased by it.

1461. You were the clergyman at St. Peter's, were you not?—At St. Paul's.

1462. That church was built by Mr. Ainsworth?—It was.

1463. Has not Mr. Ainsworth also built another church, St. Peter's?—He was joint founder of St. Peter's.

1464. And also has built schools?—Not belonging to St. Peter's.

1465. But he has built schools in Halliwell for the benefit of the people?—Yes.

1466. Has he not the character generally of a very enlightened and benevolent man?—He has done a great deal in building schools.

1467. Has he not done more than any other person in the neighbourhood for the benefit of his workpeople?—I cannot say that; as I said before, he has built a church and schools, and done a good deal for the benefit of his people.

1468. What

1468. What was the origin of your quarrel with Mr. Ainsworth?—The first was having to speak to him as to some rather unbecoming conduct in church.

1469. Of Mr. Ainsworth himself?—Yes, on the part of Mr. John Horrocks Ainsworth himself. If the Committee wish to know the circumstances I can tell them.

1470. Then the origin of your quarrel was not in consequence of the work-people and the long hours, it was something personal to himself?—Yes, it was, the year before; that was reconciled, and we were friends for a year afterwards.

1471. Did not Mr. Ainsworth complain of some irregularity in your manner of performing the service?—I believe there was a question between two collects, which should be read first and which second; Mr. Ainsworth wished to interfere, and I would not accede to it.

1472. And in consequence of that, Mr. Ainsworth wished you to leave?—He often wished me to leave; he often sent messages to that effect.

1473. And you were on very bad terms?—We were.

1474. You preached very violent sermons against Mr. Ainsworth, and afterwards published it in the newspapers?—I wrote to the newspapers.

1475. And in consequence of that, Mr. Ainsworth directed his workpeople, I think, not to frequent your church?—I believe so.

1476. But the origin of the quarrel was not in consequence of your preaching about the long hours, it arose from another cause?—Before this quarrel arose, I spoke to Mr. Ainsworth about the long hours, and he knows the motive of the quarrel as well as myself.

1477. But you did leave?—I did so.

1478. And you went afterwards to Ridgway, in Yorkshire?—In Derbyshire.

1479. You went to a church there, built by Mr. Sidney Herbert, I believe?—That was at Wilton.

1480. Did you leave that church very soon?—No; I was there not quite two years.

1481. Why did you leave that church?—The place did not agree with my health.

1482. There was not disapprobation of your conduct on the part of the incumbent or patron?—The patron never expressed anything of the sort to me. The terms on which I have the honour to be with him at present —

1483. But you did leave?—I did leave, and took another curacy.

1484. *Chairman.*] As to your having been on bad terms with Mr. Ainsworth; were you on bad terms with him before you attacked the long hours of work?—Yes.

1485. For how long?—The first rupture I had with Mr. Ainsworth was a few months after my going there, about a year and a half before the period of which I am speaking, and then again in December 1849.

1486. Did you ever know any of these bleaching-works carried on on Sunday?—Never at Mr. Ainsworth's.

1487. Did you ever know it at any other place?—I have heard of it at other places.

1488. I have it in your own handwriting that the work has gone on on Sundays; I want to know whether that is correct?—I think you will find I state I was informed that it had done so, because I myself am not aware of it of my own knowledge.

1489. I see it is that you were told so; you had been informed of it, had you?—Yes, by the persons who worked there, and from them I knew it, though it did not come in my own immediate knowledge.

1490. Then do we understand that persons who have themselves worked on a Sunday, have given you that information?—They have.

1491. But it has never been the case at Mr. Ainsworth's, you say?—No.

1492. *Mr. Cheetham.*] I understand you to say that you remonstrated with Mr. Ainsworth upon the subject of these long hours?—Yes, I did.

1493. But you told the Committee first of all, that he directed the parents of the children to send them to the church and to the schools?—Yes; the parents were not compelled to do so.

1494. Did you ever remonstrate with the parents themselves upon the impropriety of their conduct in sending their children to work so young?—I am not aware that I ever did; I may probably have said to them, "Why do you send your boy away from the school to go to work so soon?" and the answer has been "We want the wages."

1495. According to your own statement, the parents being more to blame than

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the employers, do you not think it was your duty to have pointed out to those parents what their duty was in retaining their children at home?—I possibly have spoken to parents upon that subject, but perhaps it never had great weight; for the powerful argument of immediate pay would be stronger than any clergyman's remonstrance.

1496. As you thought it was your duty to make animadversions upon the employers, did you at the same time animadvert on the conduct of the parents in permitting their children to go to work so young?—No; I am not aware that I did.

1497. Were there any cotton mills in your district?—No; in the immediate neighbourhood there were, but not in my district itself.

1498. What distance might they be?—There was one a mile from the church.

1499. Has it been within your knowledge that any of these young children and women have left the bleaching-works and gone to the cotton mills, owing to these long hours of labour?—I cannot recall any instances of it.

1500. You did not know of any?—No; but they were at liberty to quit their employment, I presume.

1501. You are not aware that they went to the cotton mills, where they were restricted by Act of Parliament to shorter time of labour?—I am not aware of instances of that kind; there were changes continually.

1502. When the people made complaint to you about the long hours, did you ask them what wages they earned?—Yes, I did.

1503. Did you ascertain what wages were earned by a similar class of work-people at the cotton mills?—I knew that very well.

1504. Were they larger?—During the pressure of work at the bleaching-works they had more money than at the ordinary stated work of the factory.

1505. You have spoken of the inability of these young persons to attend your evening classes of the week-nights in consequence of these over hours, but you also said there was a good deal of irregular employment, and there were times when they had nothing to do?—That was so.

1506. Did they avail themselves of those leisure moments in order to attend to your instructions?—They did when I first began with the schools, but then it was broken off, and only a few returned; there was no certainty that they might be able to go for more than a week or a fortnight, and then be called away again to work.

1507. They did not return afterwards in order to make use of the advantages again?—Some did.

1508. But the greater proportion did not?—The exact proportion I cannot state.

1509. Mr. *Packe*.] After the direction of the patron to the operatives that they should attend your church, had you a large congregation?—Yes, very fair congregations.

1510. Did you see a considerable falling off after there was an expressed wish that they should not attend your church?—The church was nearly emptied; they tried to come, and some did come in disguise, and with borrowed clothes, in order to escape the watchers, who were set at the doors in order to watch them; there were persons placed there who had to report on Monday morning who the people were that had attended church.

1511. Mr. *Cobbett*.] I understand you to say, that your first difference with Mr. Ainsworth was with regard to your mode of performing your duties?—No, it was rather Mr. Ainsworth's own conduct in church, on one occasion.

1512. You had some little difference with him then?—Yes; and he then dismissed me.

1513. After that, you became reconciled again?—Yes.

1514. And remained with him?—Yes, for more than one year afterwards.

1515. Was it at the end of that year that you made some observation in your sermon about the long hours of work?—It was after that year.

1516. What was the general scope of your observations, with regard to the long hours?—I spoke with reference to the long hours chiefly at the meeting at Bolton, more than in the church.

1517. But you did allude to the subject in your sermon?—I stated that I thought they worked very long, and I hoped they would get some relief—such relief as other operatives enjoyed.

1518. Had

1518. Had you an opportunity of observing the factory operatives?—I had in Leeds, and in the neighbourhood of Bolton.

1519. Do you remember them before the Ten Hours Bill was passed in 1847, and after that time?—I had.

1520. Could you perceive any sensible difference in them after they were restricted to 10 hours a day?—Certainly.

1521. Do you know whether they were more in the habit of attending at the schools after the shortening of the hours of labour?—Yes.

1522. And were they better satisfied with their condition?—A great deal better satisfied.

1523. You had been in communication with them enough to satisfy yourself of that, had you?—Thoroughly.

1524. Did you observe whether they improved in their personal physical appearance, as to health?—My experience of that district before the passing of the Act was slight. I did not go into the north until 1846.

1525. The Ten Hours Act passed in 1847, did it not?—It did, and then the people seemed to improve in their moral and social condition generally.

1526. Do you know that they attended more to the schools, and to matters of education generally; had they better opportunity for that purpose after the passing of the Ten Hours Act?—Certainly.

1527. Had you conversation enough with them to know whether the young women did more needlework and household work after the limitation of the hours of labour than they did before?—They did more needlework and household work afterwards, certainly, than before.

1528. Did they get into the habit of making their own clothes afterwards?—Yes, they did.

1529. Do you remember such a thing as a bazaar at Bolton at which the work of the young factory people was exhibited and sold?—I do not recollect the circumstance.

1530. Mr. Davison.] I believe Mr. Ainsworth built the church of which you were the incumbent?—He did.

1531. And he also assisted in the building of another, did he not?—He did.

1532. And he also built the school-houses?—He did.

1533. Evidently for the education of the people in his employment?—Certainly.

1534. Do you consider that it is the first duty of a parent to educate his children?—One of the first duties.

1535. According to your present recollection, you never remonstrated with the people for their not doing so?—I occasionally spoke to them, and pleaded with them against sending their children so young into the works.

1536. And their answer was that they wanted money?—They wanted their wages; I find that pretty much the same throughout the country generally.

1537. It was before your personal quarrel with Mr. Ainsworth that these school-houses and churches were built?—Yes.

1538. At what time was it that you wrote to the newspapers, was it after your personal quarrel?—Yes, it was.

1539. Was it after that he was anxious to get rid of you?—Both before and after.

1540. He wanted to get rid of you before?—Yes.

1541. On what grounds?—Personal dislike, I presume.

1542. Had he personal dislike to you then: you had some misunderstanding relative to his demeanour in church?—That was on the former occasion.

1543. Then after that he wished to get rid of you?—Directly; he sent down a message that I was to leave the house.

1544. And upon that ground?—Yes, because I would not apologise to him.

1545. Was it subsequently to the quarrel that you wrote to the newspapers about him?—Yes; subsequently to the second quarrel.

1546. But I am speaking of the personal quarrel arising from your complaint of want of proper demeanour?—That was in the year 1848.

1547. Was it after that quarrel that you wrote to the newspapers against him?—Not immediately after.

1548. How long after was it?—A year and a quarter.

1549. What was that second quarrel about?—The second quarrel was in consequence of Mr. Ainsworth dictating to me how I was to perform the service in the church.

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1550. About the reading do you mean?—No, in what order I was to perform it.

1551. The second quarrel then was of a personal nature also?—Yes.

1552. It had no reference to the workpeople?—No.

1553. And then you wrote to the newspapers?—After the meeting at Bolton I wrote to the newspapers, in order to correct an inaccuracy in the report of that meeting.

1554. You complained of an inaccuracy in that report?—Yes.

1555. Was that the sole subject of your communications?—That was the groundwork of my communication.

1556. Was it the sole subject of your communication?—I entered into the whole subject of the meeting, and my statement there.

1557. You wrote to the newspapers complaining of the inaccuracy of the report of some public meeting?—Yes, that was my first communication to the newspaper, I wrote more than once.

1558. Did you write upon any other subject unconnected with that public meeting?—My letter is in print, I cannot recall all the subject.

1559. Did you ever write before?—No, I wrote no letter before that, that I remember; I wrote afterwards to correct an inaccurate account of the church services.

1560. You wrote upon that subject?—I wrote on that subject; when the workpeople were forbidden to attend the church, of course it produced a great commotion in the neighbourhood; people in Bolton were very indignant on the subject, and came over and attended in large numbers at my church; an account of it got into the newspapers which was inaccurate, and I wrote to correct it, and I gave an account of the origin of the quarrel.

1561. Was it a year and a half between the first and the second quarrel?—A year and a month.

1562. Did you ever send any letter to the newspapers, complaining of the conduct of the parents in not sending their children to school?—

1563. Lord *John Manners*.] Can you tell the Committee what amount of education the parents of these children generally had themselves received?—Very slight.

1564. Is it in your experience that those parents who had themselves received a very indifferent education cared very little about their children getting a better?—Very little indeed, if there be a profitable argument on the other side; otherwise, there are persons who had no education at all themselves, who are, in some cases, most anxious for their children to have education; but there is no argument against the argument of money.

1565. During the time that you were in this cure, did you ever communicate with your brother clergymen on the subject of these long hours at the bleaching-works?—Yes; I have communicated with them, and some have communicated with me upon the subject.

1566. Was the opinion which you expressed at that meeting, and which I understand you to repeat before this Committee, shared by your clerical brethren?—Yes.

1567. Or did you stand alone?—In opinion I was not alone; in action, perhaps, I was.

1568. You had means of satisfying yourself that the views you took of the injurious nature of these long hours upon the moral and physical condition of the young people in the bleaching-works, were shared generally by the clergymen of your neighbourhood?—It was; whether generally so I cannot say. Some wrote to me, agreeing with me, after my published statement on the subject.

1569. Mr. *Davison*.] With respect to the public meeting, of course that had no reference, nor did it owe its origin to any private misunderstanding with Mr. Ainsworth?—My object was to do good to the people.

1570. My question was with respect to your speech at the public meeting, and that had no reference whatever to your previous quarrel with Mr. Ainsworth?—Do you mean the motive of the speech?

1571. Yes?—It is very difficult to define motives.

1572. Would you have made that speech at the public meeting, do you think, if you had not had a previous misunderstanding with Mr. Ainsworth?—I think I should.

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1573. Mr. *Turner*.] Does not Mr. Ainsworth bear in the neighbourhood the character of a very excellent man?—Of a very arbitrary man.

1574. But is he not very kind and benevolent to his poorer neighbours?—To all under him, as long as they are under, and will be under him; but if they oppose him, there is nothing that will hinder him from taking extreme steps.

1575. You say that on one occasion he misbehaved himself in the church, and by that means excited your anger?—Not my anger.

1576. Will you allow me to ask you what that circumstance was?—It was after the service was over; he would stop in the church and ask to have the organ played, and he would call out from one end of the church to the other to the organist to play this, that, and the other, which he liked; and as we walked home from church together, I said to him that I thought it was a bad example to set; he immediately left my arm (you are aware that he is blind), and was exceedingly angry. I said I was very sorry that I had said any thing to make him so angry, but he would not be appeased. On the Friday he sent a message to me, saying that he had waited at home all day on Thursday, expecting me to come and make an apology, and as I did not do so he ordered me to leave the house, and not to enter the schools; he ordered the supply of gas to be cut off, directed the servant who attended the church not to attend, and ordered the choir not to sing.

1577. My question only referred to the mode in which he misbehaved himself in the church; Mr. Ainsworth is a blind man, you say?—Yes.

1578. He built the church?—Yes.

1579. He is fond of music?—Yes.

1580. And he requested the organist to play something in church after the service was over?—Yes.

1581. Was that the ground of the misunderstanding?—Not in the way in which you put it, but the way in which he called from one end of the church to the other, and the manner in which he behaved was, as I thought, unseemly.

1582. *Chairman*.] Probably the real cause of the quarrel with Mr. Ainsworth was that he thought he was master of the church, and you thought you were?—Mr. Ainsworth thought he was my rector.

1583. Probably there were faults on both sides?—Most likely; but allow me to say that I do not think I was in fault in speaking as I did on that subject.

1584. I believe there was a quarrel even on such a subject as this; whether you were to read the collect on Advent Sunday first or last?—Yes.

1585. And Mr. Ainsworth wished you to do it as he desired?—Yes, and selected subjects for me to preach on, and sent me a doxology.

1586. You did not like to submit to that?—Not at all.

1587. Whatever were your motives, or whatever was the difference between you and Mr. Ainsworth, I presume it did not influence you to say anything that you were not sure was true?—No.

1588. And of course, whether you quarrelled with Mr. Ainsworth or not, does not alter the fact as to the long hours of work?—No.

1589. Mr. *Davison*.] Did it influence you in saying anything that was sharp towards him?—Probably it did.

1590. Mr. *Cheetham*.] I understand you to say that there were no cotton factories within a mile of your district?—There were within a mile, outside of the district, but none in the district; there was one cotton work out of employ at the time; I do not think it was in employ while I was there.

1591. And yet you have been giving evidence as to the state and condition of the operatives employed in the mills?—Because many of them lived in my parish.

1592. Was the number large who were so employed in the mills?—Yes, considerable.

1593. You entered the parish in 1846, I believe?—In 1848.

1594. You then had no previous knowledge of the condition of these people?—My knowledge was gained in Leeds, where I was before that.

1595. I thought you had no knowledge of the population near Bolton?—Nor had I before 1848.

1596. Yet you have been giving evidence as to the difference between the period before and after the operation of the Ten Hours Act?—I was speaking then of Leeds, nothing was said about Bolton.

1597. I understood your remarks to apply to this neighbourhood?—They will apply to this neighbourhood, because I can compare that which I saw at Leeds with the state of things which I saw in Lancashire.

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1598. How can you speak to the state of things in a district of which you had no previous knowledge?—I had a knowledge of the factory people in one place, and they are much the same; the evidence I gave was comparing the people at Leeds before and after the passing of the Act.

1599. Lord *John Manners*.] I understand you to say, that whatever your differences with Mr. Ainsworth might be, you give him credit for being a humane and well-disposed employer of labour?—Most anxious to improve the condition of his people.

1600. Then, in any communication which you made as to the over hours of work in his bleaching-works, you did not single him out for especial animadversion; but you spoke against the system?—Against the system; and that system is seen most favourably in Mr. Ainsworth's works, because the limitation of Sunday-work is very strict there.

1601. Therefore you would, upon the whole, think that Mr. Ainsworth's works afforded rather a favourable than an unfavourable specimen of the management of bleaching-works in that part of the country?—I should.

1602. *Chairman*.] Would you consider that if under the dominion of a benevolent man, anxious to promote the temporal and spiritual welfare of his people, these excessive long hours prevailed, it would be a very strong argument in favour of legislative interference?—Decidedly.

1603. And the higher the character of the man in whose establishment such a system prevailed, you would probably think the stronger would the argument become?—Yes; in other works they doubtless suffered more; at the same time there was one circumstance connected with the works at Halliwell, which was an additional hardship, and that is, the modified truck system, the keeping a shop which the people were compelled to attend; that does not occur in large towns, it only occurs in outlying districts.

Mr. *Stewart Fletcher*, called in; and Examined.

Mr. *S. Fletcher*.

1604. *Chairman*.] YOU were examined, I think, by Mr. Tremenheere?—Yes.

1605. Where were you working at that time?—I was working for Mr. John Lancaster, at Salford.

1606. How old are you?—I am 31 years of age.

1607. I believe you have been working for about 19 years?—Yes.

1608. At what age did you begin?—I must have begun somewhere about the age of 12, though I cannot justly speak within six months or a year. I think I must have been somewhere about 12 years old when I first commenced to work for Messrs. Turner & Mallar, at Close, near Ratchiff. The firm is now Mallar and Son. I worked there for something like six or seven years.

1609. In what department were you employed?—In the making-up department always; I never worked in any other.

1610. Is calendering a part of making-up?—Calendering is the process before making-up.

1611. Have you ever worked at calendering?—I have done very little to it, but not much; it has always been considered that my place was in the making-up room.

1612. Where were you working at the time of Mr. Tremenheere's report?—I was working for Mr. John Lancaster, of Springfield End, near Salford.

1613. Do you know how many boys were employed in those works?—I should think something like 70 men and boys together; perhaps there might be from 18 to 20 boys and girls. There were not many girls, I think; only three. They did not employ girls in their works. I have not worked at bleaching-works; I have only worked at dye-works.

1614. Are you working there now?—No; I have left there about four months.

1615. What were your general hours of work during the two or three years that you were there?—They varied very much while I was there.

1616. You say you only worked in dye-works not in bleaching-works?—Yes; but bleaching and dyeing are connected.

1617. Was the place where you were working a bleaching establishment, or only a dyeing establishment?—It was considered a dyeing establishment, although they bleached a little.

1618. During the time you were there, what were the hours of work?—They varied very much; we very seldom gave over before six o'clock, and we were considered

considered very slack when we gave over at six or seven o'clock; our hours were from six o'clock in the morning until six o'clock at night, with half an hour for breakfast and an hour for dinner.

1619. During times of pressure, did you work later?—We then worked until 11 o'clock at night, frequently.

1620. Did that continue for many days successively?—Yes, for many months.

1621. Do you mean that it continued every day for more than a month; that you worked from six o'clock in the morning until 11 o'clock at night?—Yes.

1622. Did you ever go beyond that, 11 o'clock at night?—Yes; I have worked till 12 o'clock.

1623. Have you ever worked all night?—I never worked all night there, but I have gone at 12 o'clock at night to commence work.

1624. Did you ever know any of the people working with you suffer in their health from so long hours of work?—Yes; I have known a great deal of it from over fatigue at work.

1625. Did your own health ever suffer?—I do not know that it did at that time, because I had got stronger and healthier; but I am inclined to think that it had suffered previously, and perhaps it might suffer a little then, because I was none of the stoutest.

1626. In point of fact, did you find these long hours injuring you; were you tired when your work was over?—Yes, I was very tired and fatigued, and the boys especially were very tired; indeed, they were often wishing for a Ten Hours Bill to pass.

1627. Among those who were working with you, was the feeling generally in favour of a Ten Hours Bill?—Yes, it was the general feeling with their people; and to prove it, they paid their pence every week in order to support the delegates to keep the agitation alive; because we were all workmen, and we could not go from one place to another at our own expense constantly; and lads and men as well put their pence together, in order that we might obtain it.

1628. Did you mention to Mr. Tremenheere an instance of your falling asleep in walking home?—Yes, but that was not at that place; that was previously.

1629. But you did fall asleep as you were walking home?—Yes; I had worked all night that night, and I had worked all night many a time there; I knew a great many once that were very ill through it as well as myself; in fact, I was very ill a time or two when I was there; I worked there nearly seven years.

1630. When I asked you if your health had suffered from this overwork, I did not mean to confine you to that one place?—I understood you to confine it to that.

1631. In any place has your health suffered?—I was ill many a time through it; at Mr. John William Smith's we worked till 10 or 11 at night frequently; at times all night, and at it again in the morning.

1632. Did these long hours last successively for any length of time?—Yes, they lasted as long as the work lasted; it would last over a month together working till 12 o'clock at night.

1633. Not till 12 o'clock every night?—Sometimes we gave over at nine o'clock; but if we did give over as soon as that, we considered we had done very soon indeed, and would be very glad; the first place I was speaking of we were so worked; at Manchester I recollect working from five o'clock in the morning till 11 o'clock at night, as long as six months together; and we were told by the manager that they were getting rather slack, and we must begin to give over at 10 o'clock, so we reduced the hours, from five o'clock till 10.

1634. And that was when the work was getting slack?—Yes, we worked from five o'clock till 10 then.

1635. Did you, at any place where you were employed, know women to work that number of hours?—Yes, they all worked on alike; one party did not give over before the other, and the young people had to work as long as the older ones.

1636. Then, you have known boys working for those hours?—Yes.

1637. At what ages?—Varying from 10 to 20.

1638. Do you mean boys of 12 years of age working from six o'clock till 12?—Yes.

1639. That you have known to occur continuously for days?—Yes; it was a regular thing, and it is not in one dye-work alone, but it is so all through the trade where they dye calicoes; it is not so bad in other dye-works.

1640. In how many works have you been engaged altogether?—Perhaps at six altogether.

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1641. But in some not so long as in others?—I was six years at Mr. Croup's, and seven years at Mr. Smith's, and at Dewhurst's, in Salford, for nine months; they did not work so very late there; they tried to regulate themselves similar to the factories; they very seldom worked over time, unless they were obliged to.

1642. Is there a general rule there against working over time?—Yes; but it is one adopted by the masters in working, trying to act upon the factory principle.

1643. Do you know whether they are continuing to do that now?—Yes, they do it now.

1644. Among the parents of the children is there any objection to their working these long hours?—Yes; there must be an objection, because they know it is injurious.

1645. From what you have heard among them, do you think they object to the long hours?—Yes.

1646. Have you heard them complain of it?—Yes, many a one.

1647. Did you ever know of the case of a man forcing one of his workmen to send a child into the works of the master?—No, I do not know that there has been anything of that kind come to my knowledge, because I have always worked in districts where there has been more employment in factories and other trades as well, consequently we have not been so much under the masters; we have been at liberty to change our places.

1648. Lord John Manners.] I see that you have stated to Mr. Tremenheere that upon one occasion you had been ill for a month, owing to these long hours?—Yes.

1649. Were you attended by any medical gentleman?—Yes.

1650. Did he tell you that your illness was owing to these over hours?—No, he did not tell me so; but at that time I was working very late, and consequently I could attribute it to nothing else; I had been working late for a very considerable time, I was under Dr. Hall.

1651. Is he living in the same place still?—Yes, he is living in the same place, Salford.

1652. Mr. Turner.] At the places you have been working at, I think you say the children were chiefly 11 years of age and upwards, you have not mentioned one under that age?—No, they have not been very young where I have worked, although there are places in Manchester where they are taken younger.

1653. Are they very destitute of education, very ignorant?—They are very ignorant indeed.

1654. How do you account for that; if they only commence working about 11 years of age, do their parents neglect their education altogether?—Yes, I should say it must be their parents' neglect.

1655. Do you think it desirable that they should be educated before they go?—Yes, I think it desirable that they should be educated, but education has become a deal more popular now than it was, and perhaps they will be educated before that age, but it never has been so yet; they have been glad to catch a little education when they could; under the present system they cannot go to the night schools, and if they have not got educated before they commence working they have no chance afterwards; I have often commenced going to school myself, but never had the opportunity to continue at night.

1656. They are still taken at about the age of 11 at the present time, as far as your experience goes, are they?—Yes; they will not do for work under that age well, because they require them rather strong.

1657. They are now getting into a better state of education?—I should say they would be.

1658. But are they?—Around by Manchester I consider they are very ignorant indeed; I am speaking of the lads employed in those establishments.

1659. Even at the present time?—Yes, even at the present time.

1660. Then, of course their parents must neglect them?—It is evident they very the n. must do so.

1661. You have, yourself, been engaged from an early age, and you have felt my eye. 1662. y much fatigued by these long hours, of course?—Yes; I have gone to work in

1663. morning, and when I have been going away I have scarcely been able to hold grown up the open, and I could hardly tell whether I had one leg before the other.

You remained a considerable time in some places?—Yes.

What age were you when you went to work at Mr. Dewhurst's?—I was en; it was previously to my going to Mr. Lancaster's.

1664. They

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1664. They worked regular hours there?—Yes.
1665. You remained only nine months there, and yet you remained seven years at a place where they worked these long hours; how was that?—They were considered busy at Dewhurst's if they worked from six o'clock in the morning until six o'clock in the evening; and when they were slack they could not employ those hours with the men they had; and consequently I was discharged, in consequence of their being slack.
1666. Then you did not leave of your own accord?—No; they have sent for me twice since, but I have not been back yet.
1667. Where are you working now?—I am what they call jobbing, sometimes at one warehouse and sometimes at another, just where they want me; we have a room to meet in, and if they want a maker-up they send to this room for one; and if I am first on the list I go, and if another is first, he goes; they are obliged to have this room in order to accommodate the merchants, and those who want the making-up done in the warehouses.
1668. Do you prefer that irregular mode of working rather than having a settled employment?—At the time I left they were very busy at Lancaster's, working till half past 10 o'clock at night, consequently I would sooner sacrifice a little money which I had to do in leaving, and I went jobbing, sometimes at one place and sometimes at another.
1669. Is not the work very irregular at the warehouses?—Very irregular indeed; sometimes they are without wanting a job done for three months.
1670. It is not proposed, I think, to put the warehouses under the regulations of this Bill?—No, I think not; I cannot well see how they could do it.
1671. Will not a good deal of the work that must be done in a very short time be done at the large warehouses rather than at the finishing places?—Oh no, it will not; the finishers will not give it up.
1672. Is it not a fact, that at the very large warehouses in Manchester, such as Mr. Pender's, there is a regular set of makers-up and finishers, as much as in the bleaching and dyeing works?—They certainly have a number of finishers there.
1673. Is that system extending in the large warehouses?—I think it is; I believe several have commenced lately.
1674. Would the bleachers and finishers have a fair opportunity of contending with the large warehousemen if they were restricted in their labour, and the warehousemen were not restricted in theirs?—No, they would not; but if finishing is included in the Bill, as well as bleaching and dyeing, if it was a bleaching and dyeing and finishing Bill, then I think it would only be justice between the men and the master.
1675. You think it would be right?—Yes, I do.
1676. Therefore, wherever there is finishing going on in an establishment, you think that establishment should be included in this Bill?—Yes, that is my sincere impression respecting it.
1677. Where would you stop in the operation?—I would stop there.
1678. What would you consider included in a finishing and making-up establishment?—Where they keep calenderers, and are dyeing and bleaching; of course they would want making-up afterwards, and all the younger persons are chiefly employed in the making-up department, and the calendering.
1679. We have heard some very distressing stories of the way in which packers have been overworked at these bleaching-works?—You must mean makers-up, I think.
1680. No, I allude to packers, there was one very serious case mentioned?—There might perhaps be one in a bleaching-works, although they do not require very many in bleaching-works; it is chiefly in warehouses, and in warehouses they are nearly all men.
1681. Would you include all packers in the operation of this Bill?—Yes, I would include all packers at bleaching and dyeing-works and calender-works.
1682. But not in warehouses?—No.
1683. Why are the warehouses not to have the benefit of the Bill as well?—I have just told you that they are nearly all men who are employed in packing in Manchester in the warehouses. I do not think there is one out of every 20 who is under 18 years of age.
1684. In the making-up rooms connected with the packing rooms, are there no young persons employed?—Yes, but they are obliged to have helpers.

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1685. Can the packers continue their work if the making-up room ceases to work?—No.

1686. Then of course the packers must stop when the making-up room stops in the warehouse?—Yes, but if they employed so many more makers-up then they could keep the packers employed, if they thought proper they might engage as many more makers-up as would keep the packers employed every time they wanted them.

1687. Mr. Kirk.] Pray, is the employment so constant as that they can employ makers-up permanently?—Yes, they do do that at the places of which this gentleman has been speaking.

1688. They employ them permanently?—Yes.

1689. And you think they might double the number employed?—Yes.

1690. In order to keep the packers at later hours?—Yes, if they thought it would be to their interest to keep the packers later hours, but I do not think they would think so; I think they would arrange things so as to let them all go at once.

1691. What is the reason of keeping them these long hours?—Because there is work to do; as long as they have work to do they will do it, it is to their interest to do it.

1692. How? will they not pay the people for their over time?—Yes, but they must have an interest in it, or they would give it up altogether.

1693. If the employment is of a permanent character, how can there be any interest on the part of the master to keep the people over time?—If the master made 20 l. in one day, and if he had to pay his workmen for working the night following, and if they could do as much work in the night as they could do in the day, that would be another 20 l.; so that would make 40 l. instead of 20 l.

1694. Supposing he had no employment for them, what is to be done then; supposing a time came when he had no orders, does not that occur?—Of course it does.

1695. Have you not yourself stated that it does occur even with these exceedingly humane masters, who only employ their workpeople at factory hours; there are times when they have not employment for them?—Certainly.

1696. And do you mean to inform us that those are the only parties that have not permanent employ?—I do not exactly understand you.

1697. You have stated that the reason of your leaving, or being turned away from one place was, that they had not employment for you at that time?—Yes.

1698. Was not that likely to occur with others?—Yes.

1699. Does it not, in fact, occur with others?—It does occur with others; but at the same time, if anybody must work after six o'clock at night, this firm would be employed; they would not have to be playing then as they are now; at other places they are working night and day, when they are only working half time.

1700. But how is it that those people get employment by night and day, and others only get employment by day-time?—Perhaps they do it a little cheaper; the masters know that better than me.

1701. Do not you get more wages for over time, comparatively, than you do for ordinary day time?—Those who are paid by the piece get just the same, they get so much a hundred, and if they do it at night it makes no difference; they have so many shillings per hundred. But those who work by night in my branch of the business are paid extra; 5d. is the pay by day, and 6d. at night; and not only that, we have luncheon half-hours while working in the night, and we are paid for them, whereas, in the day-time, while having a half-hour for luncheon, we are not paid for it. So, as far as that goes, the master would not gain so much in the night as he would in the day; but this is only amongst the makers-up, not amongst the dyers.

1702. Mr. Cheetham.] You have told us that you have been employed in districts where there are other occupations than bleaching and dyeing?—Yes.

1703. And that in those districts parents object to these long hours in bleaching works; is that the case?—Yes.

1704. Can you give the Committee any instance in which a parent, objecting to these long hours, has found his child employment in other works?—No, I do not know that I can.

1705. So that whilst you have heard these objections, you do not know of any instance where that objection has been carried out?—No, because persons are apt to complain about a thing where they do not try to remedy it; that is very often the

the case. For instance, many hundreds of men have said to me, knowing that I have taken an interest in this cause, "How is the Ten Hours Bill going on?" and when I have told them, they have said, "Well, I wish they may get it," and when they have said that, that has been all they have done towards getting it.

1706. Is it within your knowledge that there is a difference of wages for the operatives in the bleaching-works where the long hours are carried out, and those of other occupations in the same district?—They, perhaps, might be rather better in our branch of the business.

1707. In the bleaching-works, you mean, though there are branches connected with it, that they are not so well paid as they are in the making-up department, and sometimes the parents will keep the lads in these establishments, thinking that they will get what they consider the best job, that is the making-up; if they can get them to be makers-up, then they consider that they are paid for letting them work over their strength previously, but if they should not get into that, then it is as much as they can do to draw a livelihood out of their labour?—

1708. In the bleaching-works, do you mean?—Yes.

1709. Do you mean to say that as regards the employment of these young children in these works, the wages are no better than they would be in the cotton mills that are restricted by Act of Parliament?—No, I do not think they are any better in the lower branches of the business.

1710. Then how do you explain the fact, that parents do not remove their children from these establishments, where there are these long hours, to places where the shorter hours are carried out?—If they get a child upon a job they do not often like shifting him; they think matters will be mending in a very short time, and they keep putting it off a little longer, and a little longer, until the boy or the girl has grown up, and then they do not like taking them away and putting them to another place to learn.

1711. Have you any opinion as to who is the guilty party, the employer who finds the labour, or the parent who permits his child to undertake it; where would you apportion the blame in this case?—I must blame the parent in that case; at the same time, if there was a law to prevent this it would be a great deal better. If there was anybody to blame we should try to remedy it; and I am convinced there is no other way of remedying it, except for the Government to say that they must not work these hours; because if they do not say that, the masters will say, "I have got some bleaching-work to do," and the men will say to themselves, "If I do not do it somebody else will," and they all run to it; they are all to blame, in my opinion.

1712. Then you would have a restriction not only between the parent and the child, but between a grown-up man and his employer; you would legislate for both alike?—I am not attempting anything of that sort; we are only asking for legislation with respect to the children; I say the young children and the women ought to be protected. Men ought to be able to protect themselves, in my opinion; and I think if they would all act as I have done they would do so.

1713. Then you do not advocate any legislation for men?—I do not.

1714. When you say women, do you mean grown-up women?—Yes; I mean the female class.

1715. Can you give me any instance of any woman leaving one of these bleaching-works and going to the cotton mills, or any other employment in that district?—No; I think it very rarely happens that they leave the bleaching-works to go to the factories.

1716. And yet they find fault with the long hours at the bleaching-works?—Yes.

1717. You speak of grown women, who are capable of acting on their own responsibility?—Yes.

1718. And you would have an Act of Parliament to force them to do that which they do not do at their own option; you, judging for them, would carry out an Act of Parliament to compel them to do that which they do not choose to do for themselves?—I do not propose to pass an Act of Parliament to drive them away from the bleaching-works to the factories; I only want them not to be allowed to work this unnecessary over time; I consider it is uncalled for, because I am of opinion that there are quite sufficient hands in the bleaching and dyeing-works to do the work in 10 hours and a half in the day.

1719. But you tell me that they can leave these bleaching-works, where there

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are these long hours, and seek a shorter employment in the cotton mills, and yet you tell me that they do not do that; is not that your answer?—Yes.

1720. So that you are of opinion that an Act of Parliament ought to be passed, in order to compel them to do that which they do not choose to do voluntarily; is not that the case?—You might as well say the same by me, because I would not work this over time at Mr. Lancaster's; I left because I would not do it; but it must be done while there is no law to prevent it; but I go away; where must I go to? Must I go to a factory? If I go to a factory, I shall have to learn the business. A woman would have to do that now, and what would she have to sacrifice in order to do it? She would have to go there, perhaps, for two or three months, in order to learn any particular branch, and would have to work all that time for nothing. It is a very unlikely thing that she would leave the bleaching-works in order to do that. Those instances that I have been speaking of are not as bad as might be enumerated. Those who have given evidence with respect to this Bill have always been very careful to put the hours short enough. I mean they have not exaggerated, fearing lest there should be some opposition, and fearing that they should try to disprove what they have said; we have always been very careful to under-rate it. If anybody could just come up and give a plain statement, the evidence would be fifty times better than it is. I have two letters in my pocket, that were given me only yesterday, relating to the time that they work at Robert Charlton & Sons, Blackfriars, Manchester, where, for about three months together, they have worked till nearly 12 o'clock for about three nights in the week; the man who has sent me this, put down just the time they worked.

1721. Do you know that of your own knowledge?—I know that it happens at every dyeing establishment in Manchester, and every finishing establishment as well.

1722. Do you know it of your own knowledge?—Yes, I do.

1723. What is that place?—It is a finishing establishment, and they make up and pack as well.

1724. Are young persons employed there?—Yes, they are men and boys; I believe they have no females at all.

1725. What are the hours during which you say they worked?—They worked for about three months together till about 12 o'clock at night, for about three nights in the week, and Robert Charlton says in his evidence that they occasionally worked over time, and making it appear that they did not often do so. In those three months they only gave over six times at 8 o'clock; that was their time, from 8 o'clock in the morning till 8 at night; and in those three months they only gave over at 8 six times. This is the paper he sent me: "Over time from July 21st, 1856: Monday, 10 o'clock at night, Tuesday 12, Wednesday 12, Thursday 12, Friday 12, Saturday 8. July 28th: Monday, 10 o'clock at night, Tuesday 12, Wednesday 12, Thursday 12, Friday 12, Saturday 5. August 4th: Monday, 10 o'clock at night, Tuesday 12, Wednesday 12, Thursday 12, Friday 12, Saturday 8. August 11th: Monday, 10 o'clock at night, Tuesday 10, Wednesday 12, Thursday 12, Friday 12, Saturday 5. August 18th: Monday, 10 o'clock at night, Tuesday 10, Wednesday 9, Thursday 10, Friday 10, Saturday 4. August 25th: Monday, 12 o'clock at night, Tuesday 12, Wednesday 12, Thursday 12, Friday 12, Saturday 5. September 1st: Monday, 10 o'clock at night, Tuesday 12, Wednesday 12, Thursday 12, Friday 12, Saturday 8. September 8th: Monday, 10 o'clock at night, Tuesday 12, Wednesday 12, Thursday 10, Friday 10, Saturday 5. September 15th: Monday, 12 o'clock at night, Tuesday 10, Wednesday 10, Thursday 10, Friday 10, Saturday 4. September 22d: Monday, 8 o'clock at night, Tuesday 10, Wednesday 10, Thursday 10, Friday 10, Saturday 4. September 29th: Monday, 10 o'clock at night, Tuesday 10, Wednesday 10, Thursday 8, Friday 8, Saturday 5. October 6th: Monday, 8 o'clock at night, Tuesday 10, Wednesday 9, Thursday 9, Friday 12, Saturday 4. October 13th: Monday, 8 o'clock at night, Tuesday 9, Wednesday 8, Thursday 10, Friday 12, Saturday 5. October 20th: Monday, 12 o'clock at night, Tuesday 12, Wednesday 12, Thursday 10, Friday 12, Saturday 5. October 27th: Monday, 10 o'clock at night, Tuesday 10, Wednesday 10, Thursday 12, Friday 12, Saturday 4."

1726. You say that they worked three days a week till 12 o'clock at night?—Yes.

1727. What

1727. What time did they work the other three days?—Some days they gave over at 10, and some days at 9. Mr. S. Fletcher.

1728. At night?—Yes, but on the average it amounts to 78 hours per week for that three months. 16 June 1857.

1729. Can you give me the proportion of boys that are working in this place?—I should say the boys would be something like one-third.

1730. You advocate the introduction of the finishing departments into the Bill?—Yes.

1731. Are you aware that in a previous Bill there was a clause to carry out legislation for the finishing departments?—Yes, I am aware of all that.

1732. Are you aware that that clause was afterwards withdrawn?—Yes.

1733. As to these two-thirds of men who are in this employment, is it not quite competent to them to leave it if they do not like these long hours?—Yes; but if they left, where must they go to? They would have to learn another business if they went elsewhere, and they would have nothing to do; and if they leave one place to go to another, it would be almost as bad.

1734. Supposing that the labour of this one-third of boys to whom you refer was restricted by legislation, what effect would that have on the labour of the men who worked with them; would it restrict their labour too?—It would have no need to do so, provided the master would obtain men; but I think he would not do it; I think he would still employ lads, and get more machinery, and regulate things according to law. For instance, when this agitation began there were very few masters who did not get more machinery. Mr. Lancaster, who I was working for, has doubled his machinery, and he can do as much work again as he could before this agitation commenced.

1735. Supposing that legislation was carried out to restrict the labour of these boys, would that restrict the labour of the men who labour along with them?—No; I cannot see how it would restrict them.

1736. They might go on with the long hours?—Yes; they could do the work the boys do.

1737. But the men might go on without the boys?—They could go on without the boys, but they would be obliged to do boys' work.

1738. Then they might labour without the boys?—Yes, the work could be done.

1739. *Chairman.*] This paper professes to give the hours of work from the 21st of July to the 27th of October 1856; to what works does this refer?—To Robert Charlton's, of Manchester.

1740. What is he?—A calenderer, finisher, and maker-up.

1741. Is he a bleacher?—No, they neither bleach nor dye; it is a large establishment, nearly as large as any in Manchester.

1742. *Mr. Davison.*] Were you ever in that employment?—No, I have never been employed there; I have worked not far from it.

1743. Have you ever been employed in that establishment yourself?—Never.

1744. Then your knowledge arises from this letter which has been sent to you, and that only?—No, not only that, but from seeing this man almost every week, and sometimes two or three days in the week.

1745. *Chairman.*] By whom was that document prepared?—By Thomas Bracken, a maker-up in that establishment.

1746. Then, except from inquiry, you have no personal knowledge of these hours, or of the truth of this document?—No; but I am inclined to believe that every letter of it is quite correct.

1747. Have you made such inquiries as to satisfy yourself that it is true?—Yes, I have, and I am quite satisfied that it is true; and if it was required, he could come and state that, and a great deal more.

1748. *Mr. Davison.*] When did you get that paper?—On Saturday.

1749. Was that the first time you had got it?—Yes.

1750. What time had you to make inquiries as to its truth between Saturday and this?—I have been in the habit of conversing with this man for something like three years, principally upon this subject. I happened to say to him that I was coming up here, and that I had not taken particular notice of the time that I had worked on the particular days. I knew that we had worked these unreasonable hours, and I knew that he had done the same. He said he had taken notice of the time that he had worked. I said, "I should be very much obliged to you for a list of the hours;" and he gave me this list, just as he had

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taken it down. It shows that they commenced work at eight in the morning, and it gives the time at which they gave over at night.

1751. Mr. Clark.] You say men could supply the place of boys; would not that end in breaking up the set, and ultimately turn the boys out of work?—No, it would not turn the boys out of work; they would never attempt to do anything of that sort. They could as easily give over two or three hours sooner of a night as work to the time they do. If one master cannot do all the work, there is another master slack who can do it.

1752. That is not exactly an answer to my question; you say that the men could work different hours from the boys; would not that end in the boys being thrown out of work entirely; do not the men and the boys work together a given number of hours?—Yes.

1753. If the boys work 10 hours, and the men work 16 hours, could the work of the boys be done between the 10 hours and the 16?—It could not be done so very well, unless they had boys over 18, provided 18 was to be the extent.

1754. Chairman.] Would it be possible to employ boys at all if the men work longer than the boys?—Oh yes, it would be possible.

1755. How?—Because they would have it arranged so that they could shift one boy from one job and shift him to another; to have them in different stages, they would have one quantity of boys perhaps of about 10 years of age, another quantity of about 12 years of age, and so on, and they keep going higher, two or three of an age together. Those lads could be shifted from different jobs, so that they could go on with certain portions of work, and a certain portion could be left over till next time, provided they were determined to make over time; but I think that would be unnecessary, except in a few instances.

1756. Would it be possible to carry out bleaching and dyeing work so as to have a number of boys employed who might stop at six o'clock, and keep the men working on for an hour or two longer?—Certainly, it would be possible.

1757. Mr. Wise.] It would be very easy to have a second set of boys, would it not?—Yes.

1758. Lord John Manners.] Have the answers which you have been lately giving to the Committee reference to this particular work; the statement which you have handed in has reference to bleaching and dyeing works, has it not?—The making-up has to be done whether the cloth has been bleached, dyed, or only finished; and these lads have to be employed in the making-up warehouse. The man that dyes finishes as well; consequently, if these finishing places were not to be restricted, that would not remedy the evil, because the employers have as many boys in proportion to men as they do in the dye-works, and it would leave a great many unprotected.

1759. Does your evidence bear upon the labour in the bleaching and dyeing-works, or upon those other warehouses that are neither bleaching nor dyeing-works?—My evidence applies to all three, bleaching, dyeing, and finishing.

1760. Mr. Cheetham.] In some of the bleaching-works they unite the whole of the three of those processes?—Yes, they do in some; and in others they only dye and finish, and in others they only finish.

1761. In Manchester there are a number of establishments who do the finishing and packing, are there not?—Yes.

1762. Are you of opinion, that if that portion of the trade in Manchester were left out of the Bill, that it would be unfair and unjust to the persons so employed to leave them out?—Yes, I am of opinion that it would be unfair, not only to the operatives themselves, but to the masters as well.

1763. So that in any attempt at legislation you would include all?—I would include bleaching and dyeing, and finishing, and anything connected with it.

1764. Wherever it might be found?—Yes; for instance, if that was not the case, the place that I have been speaking of, Mr. Lancaster's, where they do not dye, would be compelled to give over at six o'clock at night. There is another place, Messrs. Charlton's, where they do not dye, and because they do not dye they can work night and day; they finish and make-up as well.

1765. Chairman.] Do you consider there is the same necessity for restricting the hours of labour in finishing as there is in bleaching?—Yes, I do, as far as that extends.

1766. Is the temperature the same in the finishing-rooms?—Yes.

1767. Is there a very high temperature in the finishing work?—Yes, just the same as it is in dye-works, and hotter in a great many instances, because the calenderers

calenderers are under the making-up department, where they employ all the young persons.

1768. But in any establishment which does nothing but finish, is there any very high temperature in any of the rooms; I mean in a merely finishing department?—I am not acquainted with any that do only finish, because they all make-up.

1769. Taking finishing and making-up together, if there is any establishment that does nothing but finish and make-up, is there the same high temperature in any room connected with such establishment that we hear of in the bleaching and dyeing-works?—No; it is not requisite to have such a high temperature as they have in the bleaching-works in order to dry the pieces; we do not need that in the finishing.

1770. Then, so far as relates to the evil of keeping people together in a very high temperature, the same necessity would not apply to a finishing establishment as it would to a bleaching and dyeing works?—It is just as hot in the finishing-works in a finishing department as it is in a finishing department in a bleaching-works.

1771. But the same necessity would not exist, as far as the high temperature is concerned, for regulating the hours in a finishing-room as in a bleaching-room?—No, it would not.

1772. Mr. Kirk.] Are we to understand that in finishing you include calendering?—Yes; that is what I mean by finishing.

1773. First there is calendering?—Yes.

1774. And then making-up from the calendering?—Yes.

1775. And then there is packing the cloth in bales or boxes for export?—I do not care anything about packing; because, as I told you before, there are very few young persons employed in packing.

1776. But is it not an ordinary thing at present to see over the doors in Manchester the words Thomas and John So-and-so, calenderers and packers?—Yes; or makers-up and packers.

1777. Are not the words calenderers and packers the ordinary words to be seen over the doors at Manchester?—Yes, I say it is so.

1778. And that is what it means, is it?—Calenderers, makers-up, and packers is what it is usually; and if they do not calender, then it is makers-up and packers.

1779. Is not that the very identical class of establishment with respect to which you have handed in this paper?—Yes.

1780. And this is one of the places where these extremely long hours have been worked?—Yes, and a large place too.

1781. But how did your friend happen to select this particular period, from July until October 1856; was there any reason for it?—Yes.

1782. What was that reason?—The reason was this, because we have all met together, at least this man that I am acquainted with, and others, for a considerable time, perhaps for three years, and we have talked the thing over; and we considered that the best thing that could be adopted would be to have legislative interference, provided we could get it; we have talked about which would be the best means of getting it, and so forth; and it appears that this man thought he would take notice of the hours he worked, and that it would be all ready, provided he was called on at any time; I was of the same opinion as he was, but I neglected it, or else perhaps I should have had a few papers as well.

1783. That is not exactly an answer to the question I put; my question was this, whether there was any particular reason why the period from the 21st of July to the 27th of October should be selected?—I did not take it myself, or else I could easily have answered the question.

1784. Chairman.] Is it not, in point of fact, a period at which they worked very late?—I know that I took notice of how much money I earned in seven years, and if I had taken notice of how many hours I had worked it would have been more good. I have left it off now; and you may just as well ask me why I left that off as ask me why this was done.

1785. Do you not believe that that period was selected because it was a very strong instance of the hours of overwork?—Perhaps it might be.

1786. Mr. Kirk.] Is not that the period of the autumn trade, the busiest season of the year?—Yes, I should say it is, although the summer season is a very busy one; they are very busy now at that same place.

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1787. *Chairman.*] Was that paper prepared for the purpose of giving a very strong instance of the hours of overwork?—I have just given you my reason for getting it; I told the man that I had not got any particulars of the hours, and he said that he had.

1788. Would you not think it most natural that any one wanting to illustrate the evil of long hours would select the time when the hours were longest as a proof of it?—It looks very natural that that would be so.

1789. Do not you believe that that was the case with that paper?—I do not think it is a bit worse than it is in reality.

1790. Are there many bleaching-works in which they do not calender and finish?—There are a few, but not as many now as there were formerly, because as time gets on they get better off, and then they commence calendering; formerly there were plenty of dyers who did not calender or finish, but now they have got on better, and they have calenderers and began to finish.

1791. Are there many establishments in which calendering and finishing is carried on without bleaching and dyeing?—There are a few, not many.

1792. Are they diminishing?—Yes, they are diminishing every year.

1793. Your opinion, I understand, clearly is, that any legislation would be imperfect that did not include those establishments that are merely calendering and finishing places; you would like to apply the Act to them?—Yes, I would.

1794. Is it not a fact that there is a difference of opinion among the operatives who are interested in this question upon that subject?—Yes, there is a difference of opinion, but very slight.

1795. Are there not some of them, probably the bleachers, who are willing to give up the Act as far as applies to finishers only?—Yes, and I would sooner give up that part of the Act rather than miss having a Bill altogether; we say that it would be a loss and an injustice to have them excluded, but still we would rather allow it to pass than lose the Bill altogether.

1796. *Mr. Baxter.*] Is it not extremely difficult to define what is a making-up and finishing-room?—No, I do not think it is very difficult.

1797. You think it would be quite easy?—Yes.

1798. Is not a laundry a finishing and making-up room?—They must have fabrics; it is not considered in our branch, a laundry.

1799. *Mr. Cheetham.*] You say the bleachers are now increasing in the finishing and calendering departments; that is so, is it?—They are all extending their works as far as they can. A good many of these bleachers and dyers and finishers commenced like oneself; they had nothing to begin with; they began as they could; some began with dyeing for a while, and did nothing else; if they got on with that well, they added calendering to it, and then they began with finishing; others began with bleaching, and then if that got on well, they added calendering, and then making-up and dyeing; some began at the other end, and started with making-up and packing, and if they got on well with that they commenced dyeing and bleaching.

1800. So that the calendering, finishing, and packing in the hands of the bleachers is increasing?—Yes.

1801. Is not that also extending in the town of Manchester, among the warehousemen and merchants; the calendering as well as the finishing-up and packing?—Yes, it is all extending both ways.

1802. Do you know a large warehouse in Manchester belonging to Mr. Pender?—I am not well acquainted with it myself; I have heard of it; I know there is such a warehouse.

1803. Is he not adopting it in his warehouse?—Yes.

1804. You are of opinion that legislation ought to include such establishments as his?—Yes, I think if it did not include that it would be an injustice to Mr. Charlton, because that is a large establishment, and they do a large amount of work.

1805. And it would be an injustice to the bleachers of Bolton?—Yes, I think it would, because they might finish at Bolton and make-up as well as they do at Manchester, although I do not think it often happens so. I do not think they do it without bleaching, though they could do it.

1806. So that supposing the warehouses in Manchester were excluded, but the bleaching-works at Bolton were included in the Act, there would be nothing to prevent the bleaching firm of Messrs. Charlton, or any establishment at Manchester, from bleaching and calendering too, and then they would be free from

from the law, would not that be the case?—That depends on how the law was made.

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1807. I am assuming it to be as the last Bill was; that clause was withdrawn then, was it not, in consequence of an announcement that if it was adopted it would transfer all the calendering and finishing department to Manchester?—I doubt but it would be so.

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1808. Then, in that case, if he could not help himself he would be, in comparison, upon disadvantageous ground as regards such an establishment as Mr. Pender's?—Yes, he would in that case, although he would stand on the same ground as the other gentleman did who carried on the same business as himself. If it was only one particular business I do not know that it would matter much, although it would leave a great number unprotected, provided it does not bring finishing in; it is not very long since Mr. _____ began dyeing in his dye-house unconnected with his calendering place, and about a mile distant from it; and it is not very long since Mr. Goodyear began to dye, and his is a finishing-house; and it is not long since Mr. Isaac Berry began to dye, and that is a very large making-up and finishing-house; they are all three very large establishments.

1809. Then, if any legislation did not include a finishing establishment, they might go on with their finishing establishment at Manchester, while their works in the country were stopped?—If that were to be the case, it would be a very bad thing; because there are very few employed in the dyeing; they are nearly all employed in the finishing department; and if the finishing is exempted, we lose the benefit of that part of the Bill, and there would be a very great number left unprotected.

1810. So that as the last Act of Parliament was drawn, not applying to these finishing establishments, the Act, in your opinion, would be defective?—Yes; that is my opinion, and it always was from the very first.

The Reverend *William Milton*, recalled.

1811. *Chairman.*] DO you wish to make any statement by way of addition to, or explanation of the evidence which you have given to the Committee?—I do; in respect of one part of my evidence, upon which some doubt was thrown by the statement of the father of the person I alluded to, and the medical man. I remember now the circumstances under which that statement of the father was obtained: the father was sent for after my statement was published, and he was desired to put his name to a paper stating that his family was unhealthy, and so on; he declined to do so; he was argued with for some time; many of his family worked in the works along with him, but the man said he could not truly say so, and would not do it; he was sent away, and told that would do for the present; he did not sign the paper on that occasion; since that, from the letter which is produced, I presume he has signed it. I should state, that the medical man who has been referred to is the very same medical man who said to me that this young woman might have been living now if she had worked from six o'clock in the morning till six o'clock in the evening, and had her regular meals; he is the family medical man of the head of that firm; after my statement was published I believe he made some statement which I never saw, but which I find is now referred to, in order to contradict my statement. I have ventured to make these remarks in order to vindicate my evidence, upon which some doubt has been thrown.

Rev. W. Milton.

Mr. *Samuel Price*, called in; and Examined.

1812. *Chairman.*] WERE you examined before Mr. Tremenhoe?—Yes.

1813. In what employment are you?—In the finishing and packing room.

1814. Where?—At Mr. Ainsworth's.

1815. How long have you been working in that employment?—Nearly 42 years.

1816. Have you always been in the finishing and packing department?—Till within about three years.

1817. What were you working at before?—I was odding about in the works for the three first years of my servitude, when I was working there.

1818. Will you explain what you mean by "odding"?—I went about with
0.37—Sess. 2. a pony

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Mr. Samuel Price. a pony and caravan in the works, three of the first years that I worked in the works.

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1819. That was carrying goods from one part of the works to the other?—Yes.
1820. After that, how were you employed?—Then I went into the packing-room.
1821. Then you have always been working in the packing-room when you have been employed in any of the rooms?—Yes, either in one part of the works or another.
1822. Are you acquainted with the temperature of the stove-rooms in bleaching establishments?—Not in them all.
1823. But in the room you worked in?—That was the packing-room; the temperature in that room was very high at times.
1824. What heat was it in the packing-room?—That depends on the weather, mostly; there was a drying stove adjoining the packing-room, and if the wind served one way it threw the heat into the room, which caused a great heat.
1825. During the time you have been working for Mr. Ainsworth, what have been the hours of labour?—They varied very much; but I should say, on an average, they would be from 14 to 16 hours per day, at busy times.
1826. Go back to the time when you first went to work, then what were the hours of work there?—I should say from 14 to 16 hours.
1827. Did you work as late as 12 o'clock at night?—Yes, and hundreds of times all night during my time.
1828. Can you give us any idea of what the average of work through the year was?—Not correctly.
1829. As near as you can, do you think you worked on an average during the whole year, 15 hours?—Yes, 15 or 16 hours on an average throughout the year.
1830. How often has it happened in a month that you have worked all night?—Sometimes it has happened three or four nights in a week.
1831. All night?—Yes, and perhaps we have gone home for two or three hours in the day, and then came again and worked all night again.
1832. Has that ever occurred recently?—No.
1833. Has there been any improvement then in the hours lately?—There has since the agitation of this question commenced, the hours have been shortened some little.
1834. When did that improvement take place?—Since this agitation.
1835. Do you mean the agitation for this Bill or the factory agitation?—For this Bill.
1836. When did it begin?—About 1853, I think it was.
1837. How many females are working at Mr. Ainsworth's?—I do not know.
1838. Are there 80, do you think?—I should think there are at least.
1839. How many boys, can you tell me?—There may be more boys now, because they have made a change in the machinery in the bleaching department; there are more than there used to be.
1840. Are there 50?—I should say there were.
1841. You stated to Mr. Tremenheere that there were 80 females and 50 boys?—That was correct at that time, I had just left the works, and I made that statement previously to my leaving the works.
1842. Did they work the same hours that the men did?—Yes.
1843. Had you ever any management of the boys and girls working in the finishing room?—In the packing room I had, more than 20 years.
1844. Did you observe the effects that the hours of work had upon them?—Very much.
1845. Tell us what they were?—It caused them to fall asleep.
1846. Have you seen that?—Very often.
1847. Do you mean that you have seen them fall asleep at their work?—Yes.
1848. Did you ever awake them?—Yes.
1849. How did you awake them?—Many a time by shouting, and at other times getting a board, and rapping it on the table, making a loud report that used to startle them, and I could keep them awake then for an hour, or more than that, perhaps, by frightening them.
1850. At what time did you do that?—From 11 to one.
1851. Had you often to do that?—At busy times.
1852. Are there any of your children employed in the bleaching-works now?—Two boys.

1853. Any

1853. Any daughters?—Not at present.

1854. Had you any?—Yes, I had two.

1855. Do you recollect a daughter of yours being obliged to leave her work?—
Very well.

1856. From what cause?—From bad health.

1857. What produced the bad health?—It was being too long on her feet from the over-pressure of work; the doctor told me that that was the cause, and he told me that I must not allow her to go to the works again; if I did, she would be down again; consequently, I took her away.

1858. What was the greatest number of hours you have been working in a week; can you tell me?—I do not know that I have ever taken notice of it.

1859. Was there ever a week that you were not 16 hours in bed?—I have been many times that I have not been 20 hours in bed during the whole week.

1860. And working all the rest of the time?—And working all the rest of the time. I recollect one week, a very busy time; it was one particular order, and we were never in bed the whole week; that is a good many years ago.

1861. *Mr. Clark.*] You slept in the day time, I suppose?—We were always sleeping, almost.

1862. *Chairman.*] I believe Mr. Ainsworth is considered a good employer?—Yes, he is considered a very honourable gentleman.

1863. And has he done a good deal in the way of providing churches and schools for his workmen?—Yes, he has.

1864. Still, these long hours are carried on at his establishment?—Yes.

1865. Have you been able to form an opinion as to what the effect on the masters and workmen would be of an Act limiting the hours of labour?—They would want more machinery.

1866. Would that be a very great injury to the master?—I do not think it would; because, as the case stands now, a great deal of machinery has to run for not one-half of its power; for instance, one-half of the hands are at home or in the packing-room, the men that have to do the finishing department, the latter end of it, previous to lowering it on to wagons, or whatever they have to go upon, they are sometimes four or five seconds after many hands have done with it, consequently, the machinery has to run for that part; whereas, if they had given over at one time, the machinery might stop at one time, and the machinery would be working for the whole of the hands at once.

1867. Do you think the effect of such an Act would be to distribute the work more equally through the year?—I think it would.

1868. Do you think the same quantity of work could be undertaken in the year, with the short times, with more equal hours?—Yes, I think it could; there are slack times now, and if the work was done more regularly I think it could be done in the time.

1869. Do you think that would have the effect of distributing the business more equally among the bleaching masters?—That would depend upon themselves, I think.

1870. Do you think you are competent to form an opinion; you have heard of the objection of orders coming from shipping requiring work to be done in a very short time?—Yes.

1871. Have you considered that objection?—I have considered that they ought to have longer time to do it in; the time is too short; and I have known goods to be injured very much by being pushed.

1872. Then do you think the goods would be better done?—If there was more time to do them in.

1873. Would the effect of an Act limiting the hours of labour be a means of securing a longer time?—I think it would.

1874. Do you know whether the bleaching-works, where these long hours prevail, have much to do with shipping orders?—Large works have more to do with shipping orders than small ones.

1875. But wherever long hours prevail, you stated to Mr. Tremenhoe that many of the works that worked the longest hours had little or nothing to do with shipping orders; is that so, or do you remember that?—I do not remember that now.

1876. Has Mr. Ainsworth's establishment any night schools?—Yes.

1877. Are they well attended?—No.

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1878. Why?—

Mr. Samuel Price.

16 June 1857.

Mr. Samuel Price.

16 June 1857.

1878. Why?—For one thing, there are so many of them that are working in the bleaching-works that they cannot attend them through the long hours.

1879. Lord *John Manners*.] Your boys are still employed at Mr. Ainsworth's bleaching-works, are they not?—I have two boys at work there.

1880. How long have they been in the works?—I think one has been in 14 or 15 years, and the other about 10.

1881. You call them boys; are they both grown up?—Yes, they are both young men; one is 21, and the other 28.

1882. At what age did they enter the works, do you remember?—About 12, I think.

1883. Were you able to give them some education before they went into the works?—They always attended the school previous to their going to the works.

1884. Mr. *Cheetham*.] Do you recollect the wages that they earned at 12 years of age?—I believe 4 s. per week.

1885. And what time did they work at that age?—That would depend upon the set that they worked in; there are workings at so many per hundred per day; they receive so much, but if they do not do work that will amount to that, they will come short of it; in the finishing department they do not work by the day, they work by the hundred.

1886. And their earnings were 4 s. for the week, you say?—Yes, if they did six days' work.

1887. Can you give me the time that they worked each week?—No, I cannot.

1888. Was it three full days for the whole of the week, do you think?—Yes; and more than that.

1889. You have told us that the work is irregular, sometimes long hours, and sometimes short?—Yes, they are.

1890. What do these boys do when the hours are short; do they go to school?—No; perhaps they may have to wait for work an hour or two, or three hours, perhaps; the boys cannot go away, and cannot go to school.

1891. They cannot leave the premises?—No; because they may be called at any time.

1892. But when there is slack work at the works altogether, I suppose they cannot go above half a day?—They work; sometimes they cannot.

1893. Then what do they do the remaining half-day?—They have an opportunity of attending the schools.

1894. If they think fit?—Yes.

1895. Do they do so?—In many cases it is the fault of the parents if they do not.

1896. Not of the master?—No; because the privilege is held out to them, and it rests with the parents then.

1897. Is there any other kind of bleaching-works that your boys could have gone to at this early age; are there any cotton-mills in that neighbourhood?—Not very convenient.

1898. Mr. *Turner*.] How long have you worked at the occupation of a bleacher?—Nearly 42 years in the whole.

1899. At what age did you begin?—When I was going into ten.

1900. I suppose you were a healthy man during that period?—Yes.

1901. Have you ever suffered very much in your health?—No, I do not know that I suffered much, only once I got a fall in the works.

1902. An accident?—Yes.

1903. Did you ever lose a single hour during that period from sickness?—Only three weeks at three different times.

1904. Three weeks altogether during the 42 years?—Yes.

1905. Do not bleachers, as a class, consider themselves rather superior to those who work in mills?—Well, I do not know that they do.

1906. In the stoves; are the workers confined constantly to these stoves; have they not an opportunity of coming out very frequently to get fresh air?—Yes, they have; they are not wholly employed in the stoves.

1907. You sent your children to school, I think you say?—Yes.

1908. So that they can read and write, and have a pretty fair average education for their class in life?—Yes, they have.

1909. Is that generally the case among your fellow workmen?—At Mr. Ainsworth's works it is pretty general.

1910. Has

1910. Has Mr. Ainsworth established schools for the benefit of his work-people?—For the benefit of the neighbourhood.

1911. Of the neighbourhood generally?—Yes.

1912. I think you said that if shorter and regular hours were established, the work would still be got through?—I think it would.

1913. Have you had experience yourself of the mode in which work is supplied to master bleachers?—No.

1914. You do not know why they are busy at certain times, and slack at other times?—No.

1915. You do not know that that arises from the demand of certain merchants, the shipping sailing at particular periods?—No, I do not.

1916. Do you know that the owner of a certain mill can go if he has capital and buy his cotton at any time, and keep his mills regularly going all the time?—Yes.

1917. Do you know any reason why a bleacher cannot do the same?—I think it might be done in proper hours.

1918. Why do you come to that opinion?—Because a slack time would fetch up the difference if the work was regulated.

1919. But is it the bleacher's fault that he is sometimes slack?—I do not think it is; it would be more the merchant's than the bleacher's.

1920. But is the merchant in fault because his supplies come so irregularly?—I do not know, but I think they might rest a good portion of it with the merchant.

1921. Then you think the merchant might supply, for the sake of keeping these bleaching-works employed, and send cloth to be bleached at a time he did not want it?—That would depend on the sort of cloth.

1922. Any kind of cloth, or any kind of orders for bleaching cloth wanted for any particular market, would the merchant be prudent in buying cloth and sending it to be bleached when he did not require it?—I think not.

1923. Does he require it regularly?—No, I do not think he does for shipping orders.

1924. Then can he supply the bleachers with it regularly if he does not require it?—I do not think he could.

1925. Then why do you mean to say that the bleacher can keep his works regularly supplied in the same way that a factory owner can his mills?—Because the merchants might regulate their orders in that sort of way.

1926. You have just answered me the contrary, that he cannot; can he regulate his orders received from foreign countries; would he not be glad to execute them when he receives them; can he anticipate what will arrive?—I do not think that he can.

1927. You do not know much about it, do you?—I do not pretend to know much about it, for I never was among them during the time I was in the business.

1928. Mr. Cobbett.] You were asked just now whether the factory-master could not go, whenever he liked, and supply himself with cotton; that is, the raw material, you say he could?—I should say he could, he has the market to go to.

1929. The cotton comes from America, does it not?—From different places, I think, besides America.

1930. So far as you know, does it not principally come from America?—Yes.

1931. The cotton that comes from America is then worked up; spun in the factories?—Yes.

1932. And then it is made into cloth also in factories, is it not?—In connexion with the mills, I believe it is.

1933. Then has not the merchant the same power of getting the cloth that has been worked up by the factory-master that the master has of making it; is there not the raw material for the bleacher?—Yes.

1934. There is always plenty of it, is there not, in Lancashire?—I doubt but there is, but it is not only bleaching; they might get the cloth bleached, but then there is the finishing.

1935. There is the cloth to be finished, is there not, always ready?—Yes, they have cloth to be finished, but you do not know the finish that will be required for the cloth, although you have it in your hands.

1936. But there is the raw material, that is, the cloth, to be bleached and finished?—Yes.

1937. Mr. Davison.] Adopting that course, the merchant must become a
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Mr. *Samuel Price*. speculator by investing his capital in an article that he does not then require, must not that be so?—I say he may purchase the goods.

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1938. But merchants do not generally, until they get the orders, give an order for the execution of the work?—No, I do not believe they do; I do not think it would be wisdom to do so.

1939. Then, when he gives his order, he gives it for a particular description of goods, and to be finished in a particular manner?—Yes.

1940. Would you not consider him a very unwise man, as a merchant, who would not only speculate in the goods, in orders that he may never receive, but also speculate in the particular finish which may never be required?—

1941. Mr. *Cheetham*.] Does the bleacher purchase the cloth that he bleaches and finishes?—No.

1942. It is delivered to him?—Yes.

1943. By whom?—By the merchant or manufacturer, I believe.

1944. Does the merchant, or agent who sends him the cloth, buy it before he receives some order for it?—I cannot tell that.

1945. You do not know?—No.

1946. Are you of opinion that a bleacher can carry on his business as steadily as a cotton-spinner?—It would require regulation; if legislative interference was enforced, I do not doubt that they might regulate it, the same as they do under the Factory Act.

1947. The bleacher might become the buyer of the cloth?—No; I do not think he could.

1948. He would always be subject, then, to the changes of the merchant, would he not, even after your Act passed?—I do not know how that could be; it would want regulating.

1949. Would you not want an Act to regulate the merchant, to compel him to be more steady in his delivery of goods to the bleacher?—I do not see how they could make an Act for that.

1950. Mr. *Cobbett*.] Does not the manufacturer frequently send to the bleacher himself, without the intervention of the merchant, at all?—Some do, and some do not.

1951. In your own neighbourhood of Bolton, do not the manufacturers send their cloth to the bleachers to be bleached?—Yes; there are manufacturers in Bolton that do so.

1952. Do you know Mr. Crooks, of Bolton?—Yes.

1953. Do you know whether Mr. Crooks does so?—I do not know; it is a department I never worked at.

Veneris, 19^o die Junii, 1857.

MEMBERS PRESENT.

Mr. Baxter.
Mr. Butt.
Mr. Cheetham.
Mr. Clark.
Mr. Davison.

Mr. Kirk.
Lord John Manners,
Mr. Massey.
Mr. Packe.

LORD JOHN MANNERS, IN THE CHAIR.

Robert Barbour, Esquire, called in; and Examined.

1954. *Chairman.*] WILL you have the kindness to state to the Committee what your occupation is?—A Commission Merchant at Manchester. R. Barbour, Esq.

1955. I believe you gave your evidence before Mr. Tremenheere, the commissioner, three years ago?—I did. 19 June 1857.

1956. I see, in answer to question 352, you state to Mr. Tremenheere, "We do not think the merchants, as a body, would be affected, or would raise any objection to legislative restriction of the hours of work for females and boys in bleaching-works, even if it had the effect of limiting the quantity of work done within a certain time." Will you have the kindness to state to this Committee the reasons which induced you to come to that opinion?—There are a variety of reasons connected with the conclusion which both myself and one of my partners came to with reference to the question. There are great facilities now for exporting goods compared with what there were some years ago; and if you receive an order and you cannot get goods up in time for the vessel, almost immediately, for most markets, you have another opportunity. Another reason is, that for the more distant markets, if we receive orders for instance to load a vessel, or a portion of a vessel, we generally have sufficient time to prepare the whole of the goods that are required for that one vessel; and the goods which require finishing of course have our first attention, in order to get ready for this vessel. I am quite aware that delay very often takes place, probably in putting the goods in process for those shipments that require finishing, but if the hours of labour were more limited, it would tend to induce merchants to give out those orders even more promptly than is done now.

1957. Are the Committee to understand, that under the present system, the merchants do not feel that there is any necessity for them to give out their orders promptly, as they might and would do under a more restricted system of labour?—They feel that there is a necessity; but under those circumstances there would be still greater necessity to give the work out promptly in order to ensure the delivery of those goods in time for a certain ship.

1958. There being that necessity, do you see any practical difficulty in the way of the merchants giving out their orders more promptly than they have hitherto done?—Of course the particular difficulty comes from the state of the market; if we expect goods to fall in price, we delay purchasing as long as we possibly can; that is one circumstance that sometimes comes in the way; but generally speaking, I do not see any practical difficulty in the way of merchants giving out their orders. The difficulty frequently arises in this way; suppose, for instance, there is the mail from India, and perhaps a vessel is going off at a certain time, it will be the endeavour of every merchant to get his goods first to market. The general working of it is this; they say, "We will furnish such a quantity of those goods if you will deliver them by a given day"; then we go to the bleachers, and say, "If you can finish us a quantity of shirtings, or other things, upon a given day, we will give you them." There would be no necessity for that if all were upon the same footing. I do not think it would make any great difference whether we got those goods by the very day we desired to have them; if they missed this vessel,

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we should get one in the course of a fortnight afterwards. The great matter is, that all parties should be put upon an equality.

1959. I need hardly ask you whether the facilities for supplying the foreign markets have greatly increased during the last few years?—They have greatly increased.

1960. Are the Committee generally to understand that the same difficulty which prevailed before steam was invented, or before it was brought to its present state of perfection, now exists with reference to the supply of foreign markets?—Certainly not; there is additional facility for the supply of foreign markets after the existence of steam. A great many of the fancy goods are sent to many of the nearer markets by steamers, instead of sailing vessels; it must be considered to have given additional facilities in supplying foreign markets.

1961. Have you had any communication or conversation lately with any of the other commission merchants in Manchester upon this subject?—No, I have not; I was not aware until Wednesday that I was to be called here, and I had occasion to go from home yesterday, and I have not seen any one upon the subject.

1962. *Mr. Davison.*] In point of fact, is it not a matter of great moment to have the orders which you receive executed as soon as possible?—Clearly so. It is the case with all businesses, of course.

1963. And, of course, it is a matter of great moment to be the first in the foreign market, if possible, is it not?—Clearly so.

1964. How would you like a law passed that would compel the merchant to have always in store himself the goods fitted for the foreign market?—I do not think any merchant would like it; I do not think it is necessary.

1965. *Chairman.*] Are the Committee to understand that, speaking as a commission merchant, you have no objection to the proposed legislation affecting the labour of women and young persons in bleach-works?—That embraces a wide question. I think it is very desirable that the Legislature should interfere in the least possible degree with trade of any kind; but there may be exceptional cases with regard to boys and females, where it may be necessary, probably, for the Legislature to come in. At the same time, if you could do without that it is very much better. There is one point connected with boys, particularly, and young girls, which I should like to mention; we hear a general complaint from all schools and other educational seminaries, that the children are taken away at much too early an age from school—that they are not half educated.

1966. At what age are the children in the bleach-works round Manchester taken away from the schools?—I cannot speak with regard to the bleach-works, for there are very few of them in the immediate neighbourhood of Manchester. Those remarks I offered as to the children, particularly apply to the various occupations connected with Manchester; but I think it is a very great evil which I refer to, and one connected with the factory system, which does not appear to me to work well; I allude to the system of partially employing children at work; I would rather keep them at school till they are educated, and keep them for the whole time at school.

1967. Does this observation of yours apply strictly to the generality of children at the bleach-works?—Strictly; I am not aware of the age at which they are chiefly employed about Bolton.

1968. *Mr. Davison.*] Suppose a restriction with regard to hours were put upon bleachers, would not it leave the merchants optional still as regards the mode of sending in their orders?—It would leave it optional; but the interest of every merchant would be, when he knows he has a certain stipulation, to send his orders out soon, or he would not get them back in time for the market.

1969. Would not a restriction imposed upon the bleachers still leave it optional to the merchant or commission agent to whom he had given his order as to the time within which he should give it?—Clearly.

1970. *Mr. Kirk.*] As a commission merchant, do you pack in your own establishment?—We do, to a large extent; we cannot always do everything, and we sometimes send them out to be packed.

1971. To whom do you send your goods to be packed?—To the packers.

1972. What is the description of person generally understood as a packer?—In Manchester packers are merely makers-up, and packers for merchants.

1973. What

1973. What do you mean by that?—Take, for instance, shirtings, or take jacconets, or a variety of things, they examine them, and hook them up, and pack them; that is what is usually done.

1974. Is there much difference between a packer-up in a bleach-work and a packer-up in the city of Manchester?—The only difference is this, that the bleacher combines a variety of other operations.

1975. Will you confine your answer to the packing-up department, which in the proposed Act of Parliament is specially alluded to?—With regard to bleachers, the practice of late years, I presume, is, that the bleachers in many cases pack the goods that they bleach for the merchants, and send them off to the ships, but along with that they combine a variety of nice operations, the bleaching, and so on. With regard to the mere act of packing, of course there is no difference between them and any other packers.

1976. Is it your opinion that you yourself and the other packers-up in Manchester should come under the operation of this Act as well as the bleachers?—I think there is great difficulty in applying the Act generally, when you come to anything that is very specific. You may lay down a certain principle with regard to particular operations, but as to the trade generally, there would be a great risk.

1977. Would not you have a great objection to an inspector walking into your packing-room and saying that your men must stop work, or you would be fined?—Yes, certainly.

1978. Does that apply equally to the packing-rooms of bleachers, or is there any reason why the bleachers should be under a restrictive law?—It does not appear that the question with regard to bleachers is immediately connected with the packing; packing is a mere fractional part of his employment; it is the bleaching and finishing the goods: the great bulk of the goods produced by the bleachers are delivered in Manchester and elsewhere unpacked.

1979. It is in evidence before us that in the packing-rooms the principal part of the cruelty exists; how is that?—It is accounted for in this way, that the packing is the last operation; and if the goods are not finished by a particular hour it is impossible that they can be packed.

1980. Could you give the Committee any idea as to what hours you at any time employ your people in packing goods?—We in our business are very irregular; we depend much on vessels going off; probably the bleacher himself delivers the goods in the evening, when the vessel is going the following day, and we cannot avoid packing the goods at night.

1981. About what time do you consider that the people are at work in the packing-room?—In extreme cases they may have been till 10 or 11 o'clock, perhaps 12; I cannot well state; I have not so immediately the charge of that department as I used to do.

1982. Do you believe that it is not at all unusual in cases of necessity for shipping that persons do work, even in your own premises, to 11 and 12 o'clock at night?—Occasionally they do so for a particular ship.

1983. Would not that form the ground of your objection to a restrictive law preventing those people working after a certain hour, or subjecting you to a fine?—Not altogether; of course I should not like the surveillance of an inspector coming in. With regard to the question of restriction, I think most parties are desirous of curtailing the hours of labour as far as they can; the hours of labour in most establishments are very much less than they were many years ago.

1984. Is not it the tendency of the feeling, both of the employers and employed, to shorten the hours of labour?—Decidedly so.

1985. Do not you believe that its operation has been as effective in Manchester as any legislative enactment could possibly be?—As far as Manchester goes, I think it is; I think that no one has particular cause to complain with regard to Manchester; the tendency perhaps is to go to the opposite extreme in particular cases.

1986. Do you think that the people of Manchester are the only exception to the rule?—Where there are works in Manchester, either bleachers or dyers, if there is any law passed, of course it must apply to them as well as to others; but it is difficult to lay down a principle to be applied to every kind of establishment; the great difficulty is where to draw the line. I have no personal objections that our establishment should be closed every night by seven or eight o'clock, but you cannot do it; we feel that we are partly the servants of the public. Some merchants

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may come and say, You must get our goods ready, and we cannot help ourselves, though we do not desire it.

1987. Mr. Cheetham.] Is not the bleacher to the same extent your servant?—He is, but he is in this position, that if, for instance, I receive an order, or any other merchant receives an order for a certain quantity of goods to be ready by a given day, if the bleacher tells us that it is impossible to do them by the time, we must make our arrangements accordingly: in many cases many of the warehousemen, I dare say, at Manchester are very unreasonable with the bleachers, by stating that they must have the goods by a given day, although in many of those cases I do not think it is at all necessary that they should, and they are obliged to work all night to get them done, and sometimes the goods are not so well done. Some years ago we used to be subject to complaint of some goods, which we know did arise from the goods being hurried and put out damp. Of late years we have had very few complaints of that kind.

1988. You stated in answer to a question put to you, that there is always an inducement upon your part to have the goods ready as early as possible after the receipt of the order?—Clearly so.

1989. Do occasional delays take place in the sending out of orders from the state of the market as regards price?—Yes.

1990. Does that circumstance narrow the time to be allowed to the bleacher for the completion of his work?—Quite so.

1991. And consequently a pressure takes place upon the bleacher?—Yes, quite so.

1992. That which takes place in your case I presume acts generally?—Quite so.

1993. Your case is not an exception to the general rule?—Not at all.

1994. Would not the bleachers be in the same position with regard to other houses as with regard to your own?—Clearly so.

1995. What do you propose as a remedy for the bleacher in this state of things?—The only remedy appears to be this, that the bleacher must say that he cannot finish the goods by a certain time, or he must increase his establishment in order to get them done, or employ machinery, or do it some other way.

1996. Would it be a benefit for the Legislature to compel him thus to provide machinery?—As I stated, I am highly averse to any legislation with trade of any kind. With respect to the factory question, I do not think it is found that with regard to the merchant of yarns the legislative interference was any grievance; if we go to the spinner making yarn, and he says he cannot make what we want by the required time, we either go somewhere else, or wait.

1997. Is not there a great difference between holding yarn and holding bleached goods?—I was speaking with regard to the execution of orders; there is this great distinction between the bleacher and the spinner, that the mill must go on; but the bleacher suspends his operations when he has nothing to do.

1998. Is not it the fact that he is compelled to do so, because he would spoil the goods if he finished them at his own risk and held them over?—I do not think there is much risk in finishing goods and holding them over; but it is the practice not to hold over.

1999. Might not a bleacher say, I expect a similar order next month to the one I have received this month, and I will bleach goods for it?—It is not the bleacher who would do that; it would be the merchant or the trader in Manchester who would do that; but that would not be done at the risk of the bleachers; I do not think that the bleachers speculate in that way.

2000. Is not it the case that goods held over are not so valuable to the purchaser as his goods that come direct from the bleach-works?—Generally, when they are finished, they are not left open, but they are kept packed; but they are not kept for any length of time.

2001. Do I rightly understand you to state that the merchant, who alone holds the stock, as a rule, seldom does hold it?—Yes.

2002. When he receives orders, he then makes a pressure upon the bleacher to deliver them?—He immediately puts them in process.

2003. Mr. Davison.] The difference between a spinner and a bleacher I understand to be this, that the spinner has his materials by him, his cotton or his flax, whereas the bleacher is dependent upon the merchant's orders; is that so?—Yes.

2004. The

2004. The one must go on, and the other depends upon the execution of his orders at the time?—Quite so; the positions of the two are quite different.

2005. Mr. *Packe*.] In reference to an answer you have recently given, is not it the fact that you are liable to heavy and serious losses if the goods are hastily bleached and finished?—Some years ago, as I stated, we had a great many complaints; there very often have been complaints made for goods damaged, and there has always been a great question as to the cause of this damage; the bleacher, of course, in most cases, has stated that the liability is not with him; that it has arisen either in the course of the packing or of the shipping. There are a variety of causes, and it has been almost impossible to tell what was the real cause. My own impression is, that if the bleacher has a reasonable time to bleach and finish the goods, there is much less liability to damage than there is when they are very hastily done; and of late years we, as merchants, have had very few complaints of the damage arising from bleaching, which, I suppose, arises from the bleachers taking more care to send them up dry. If they send them up in a damp state the goods are apt to get mildewed before they arrive at their destination.

2006. Does that arise from their being hastily made up?—It is a difficult question to say how it arises, but my belief is that it arises from their being hastily done; they may be put up damp.

2007. Is not it frequently the case that the injury arises from the humidity of the climate to which they are sent?—It may arise; if the goods are put up dry, it may not hurt them.

2008. Are not you obliged to take greater precautions with regard to some markets than others?—Decidedly so.

2009. If the goods were packed in the same way for all markets, would not you find that for some markets they would be injured?—If you come to pack bleached goods you must be very careful; if you pack them for China, you put them in tin, but in such case they are liable still to mildew, if the goods are in an improper state when they are packed.

2010. Mr. *Davison*.] Would not unskilfulness in the bleaching or in the process of dyeing, independently of the packing up, tend to produce damage to the goods?—Just so; the goods are hurried, so that we have not time to examine all the goods, and sometimes they are injured.

2011. Irrespective of damp, may not an unskilful man in the trade dye the goods so as to produce damage?—He may.

2012. Is not that an evil that will remedy itself?—Generally the bleachers and dyers are intelligent men, and there is not much danger of that.

2013. Mr. *Cheetham*.] You said that if the bleacher always had a reasonable time for the execution of his order, it would be properly delivered; does the merchant ever take into account what is a reasonable time for the bleacher?—We know, in certain classes of goods, that we cannot have them returned before a given time; as to ordinary goods, any one knows that you may bleach goods in a day, if it is necessary. My opinion, therefore, brings me to the judgment that it may involve some extra expense to the bleacher in finishing them quickly; and I believe that there is a risk, both to the merchant and the bleacher, in so doing.

2014. In his endeavours to meet the desires of the merchant, is he not obliged to work these irregular hours?—If he undertakes to deliver the goods, of course he must do it.

2015. Are you aware of the least time in which he could deliver goods in a proper state; could he deliver them in seven days, for instance?—That is rather a difficult question; I should think that, by going to an extra expense, he could deliver in a shorter time than that; but he could not carry on a large concern in that way.

2016. Would not the extra expense incur extra work also?—Yes; he would incur additional expense in chemicals in order to purify them.

2017. Whatever expense he would pay for this chemical preparation, must not the workmen work additional hours upon part of the work?—I do not know; but I presume that the natural inference is that it would lead to that.

2018. Mr. *Davison*.] Supposing that a law be passed limiting the hours within which the workpeople in the bleach-works shall work, is it not your opinion that it will lead to hasty bleaching in order to meet the demands of the merchant?—I am not sure that it would; I think it would rather lead probably to a better system of management.

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2019. By an extension of works?—By an extension of the works upon the part of the bleacher, and by the merchant giving his orders more early.

2020. Will not the merchant remain free?—He will remain free, but it is his own interest to get the goods well done.

2021. Supposing that you found that you could get your orders executed in a very short time, what effect would that have upon the merchant, would not he take the last moment to get the benefit of the market and the prices of the day?—No doubt he would.

2022. Then, if that be so, do not you think that the case that I have put will have the effect of doing injury by the sudden and hasty bleaching of goods?—No, I think not; because I think the merchant knows perfectly, as I have stated, that the goods were done at a great risk, and that it assists the sale of them very much to get them well finished. In a case of emergency he might give out goods and get them rapidly in; but that would be the exception; the principle would be to give a sufficient time to the bleacher to bleach his goods.

2023. Have not you already stated that you had had goods damaged from some defect in the process?—Yes.

2024. Have you known that by giving abundance of time you might probably guard against that?—Yes; I dare say in the cases I refer to the bleacher may have had ample time; he may have been pushed by some other order, and may have put down goods in a corner, so that when the goods were wanted they were not ready.

2025. He may have been pushed by the merchant?—He may have been pushed by one or two merchants.

2026. Mr. *Cheetham*.] Has not there always been a desire upon the part of the merchant to be first in the foreign market with his goods?—Clearly so.

2027. Does not that desire operate among all classes?—Yes.

2028. And whenever there are orders to complete for the foreign market, to sail by a particular vessel, might not the bleacher be pressed by all the different merchants?—He is now; and he might be under all circumstances, but he would have some benefit. I do not think the merchants would be in a worse position than they are in now. Supposing, for instance, a mail arrived to-day, and certain merchants have orders to send goods when the vessels are sailing by certain days, the bleachers say, "We cannot do that; we are all engaged."

2029. Mr. *Davison*.] Within what time, as far as your own experience goes, would a bleacher execute an order of a general nature; what would be a reasonable time for the execution of the order?—It depends very much upon the class of goods and upon the extent of the goods; for instance, if we had an order for China which would come in great masses, and that a good many pieces were to be shipped, they would have a month or six weeks to execute the order, and the bleacher for a large order will require 10 days.

2030. Supposing a clause were put in the proposed Bill to require all merchants to give 10 days' notice, how would you like that?—I think it would be absurd; for this reason, if you say that the merchant is only to bleach longcloths, you may do it; but when there is a quantity of different things, all the different things take a different time; if you tie us down to a particular time, you may legislate in respect to it.

2031. Is it your notion that it would be absurd to tie up the commission merchant?—I have no objection to be tied up any more than any other party.

2032. Supposing we give you 10 or 12 days to send the order, would that be reasonable?—I do not think it will be right at all, under any circumstances, for this reason, there are great improvements going on with regard to bleaching; some party in Manchester is offering to bleach goods in a day; improvements may take place with regard to bleaching, and it would not be fair to tie us down.

2033. Supposing that we put a bleacher in the witness box; do not you think that he would be of opinion that the merchants should be tied up by legislative enactment to give their orders in a certain time, and not the bleachers?—I think sometimes the merchant is much to blame; it is not the bleacher only.

2034. Mr. *Cheetham*.] Supposing the bleacher does not deliver the goods by the time the vessel sails; what is your mode of dealing with him?—At one period, when there were very few opportunities of shipping, we perhaps held the bleachers liable in a penalty; but that has quite exploded now, there are no such things.

2035. Is there any case in which the goods have been invoiced to the bleacher for

for such a detention?—I do not think we have ever had a case; there may have been some trifling deduction made.

2036. Do not you think, as regards the result to himself, and also to oblige his customer, the bleacher has every impelling motive to work long hours to complete those orders?—I think he cannot help himself.

2037. We had evidence, at our last meeting, from an operative bleacher, who gave it as his strong opinion, and, I believe, as representing his fellow-workmen, that it was absolutely requisite that all the makers-up, finishers and packers of the warehouses in Manchester and elsewhere should be brought within the operation of any legislative enactment that may be made with regard to the bleachers; is that your opinion?—No; it certainly is not my opinion.

2038. Where do you draw the distinction?—That is one difficulty I feel.

2039. Do you admit that it is only fair to all parties to bring them all alike into the Bill?—I think it is perfectly reasonable, that if it possibly could be done, all parties should be brought under the new system of legislation.

2040. Are they not the same class of workmen in the one case or in the other, either in your warehouse or in the bleacher's warehouse?—There is a distinction between the one case and the other; in the one case packing in the bleach department is an exceptional case; in our case we have nothing to do with finishing and bleaching, and we are often, as I said, put in a corner by the bleacher himself bringing down the goods at seven or eight at night, when we have to ship them the following morning; what can we do?

2041. Are you aware that at Manchester there are other establishments that do not differ in that respect?—Yes, quite so.

2042. Would you undertake a legislative enactment with regard to those establishments?—I think it would be very vexatious.

2043. Have not you young people there employed, under the same circumstances as in the bleach-works?—I think not, because the bleach-works employ females, and in the warehouses they do not; perhaps in the calendering process they may employ boys.

2044. Would not the Act be as applicable to establishments of that kind as to bleach-works?—They do not employ females.

2045. Would it not apply with regard to boys under 18?—A warehouse opens at eight o'clock, and the principle now is to close at seven. The principle does not apply with regard to boys in warehouses as it does to a great finishing establishment, such as a bleaching or dyeing work; the bleachers, more particularly, begin in the morning and work till eight, nine, or ten at night; I do not know the hours exactly.

2046. In your establishments, are they not working almost as late, and as irregularly as in the bleach-works?—I think not so.

2047. Do you concur with the opinion of the operatives that those establishments ought to be placed under legislative control?—I concur with them, if it is possible, but I do not think it possible to do it; it would be against the interests of the community.

2048. Mr. Davison.] Have they ever worked all night on any occasion in your establishment?—I think not.

2049. Chairman.] Will you tell the Committee how many people you employ?—I can hardly tell.

2050. Can you tell the Committee about how many women and boys are employed by you?—We employ no women.

2051. Have you any boys?—Yes.

2052. Can you tell how many in proportion to your adults?—I can hardly tell; we employ some boys to hook or fold up; that is a point which I have never looked at particularly; I should not like to state the number unless I referred to some document; we employ very few boys in our general warehouse; we employ some lads for packing-up, but I cannot state the number.

2053. Are the Committee to understand that you are against including the packing department in the operation of any Bill?—Clearly so.

2054. Would that apply then to the packing-up department in the bleach-works as well as your own?—That is a matter for the consideration of the Legislature. We in many cases are dependent upon the bleaching establishment; we are compelled by a necessity to pack the goods sometimes at night.

2055. Did I rightly understand you to say, that you thought that if the
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bleaching and dyeing operations were regulated by Act of Parliament, the effect would be felt even upon the packing department?—It would be felt in this way, that if the bleachers, for instance, were obliged to bleach their goods by a certain time, the merchants would get their goods probably delivered sooner than they do now in many cases; in that way the packing department would be got through earlier.

2056. Therefore if the hours of labour are shortened and regulated by Act of Parliament in the bleaching, dyeing, and finishing departments, am I to understand you to say that the labour, even in the packing department, would also be diminished?—Yes; it would be got through earlier.

2057. Did not you say that at present, under an unregulated system of labour, you, as a commission merchant, cannot tell the Committee how long it would take a bleacher to execute any particular order?—The usual time is from a week to a fortnight; that is I think the principle; but so much depends upon the class of goods, or even upon the bleacher. For a particular class of goods that we have ordered, we must get them done by a particular bleacher, and we must get them done at his time; we are at his mercy; but from some bleachers we cannot get the goods back for a fortnight, or even longer.

2058. The hours of labour which are to be pursued in these orders at present being unregulated, you cannot tell how long the bleachers will go on?—We cannot tell; it is our object to get the goods; and it is for the bleacher to consider whether he is doing right to keep the goods.

2059. If the hours of labour were regulated, would a commission merchant have a clearer knowledge of the time that would be required by the bleacher to execute the orders?—Decidedly so; we should then feel that we must give them a reasonable time; we should know that we could not push the goods beyond a certain point.

2060. Therefore, as a commission merchant, are you of opinion that if the hours of the bleachers were regulated you would know better what time is allowed for the execution of any particular orders that you sent?—We do know that; we should know better, because then we could not go to the bleacher and say, We want goods at a particular time, and they are to be delivered.

2061. Is not that arrangement still entered into in ignorance on your part as to the time that will be spent upon it by the bleacher?—It entirely depends upon how he is situated, whether he is busy or not.

2062. Under the proposed system of legal hours you would know how many hours the bleachers would be able to bleach?—We should know that, but we never should know whether the bleacher had a great quantity of goods to bring forward or not.

2063. *Mr. Davison.*] In fact, are not you dependent upon the information you receive from the bleacher as to within what period he would execute your order?—Quite so.

2064. And the change would, of course, leave you in the same position?—Certainly.

2065. *Chairman.*] I think you said, in answer to a question, that under the present system the bleacher cannot help himself, and that he is obliged to work those long hours; is not that so?—I will just give you a case; supposing you want to purchase a certain quantity of goods, and go to any of the houses that deal in those goods in Manchester, and you say, I want a large quantity, say 1,000 pieces, of a given article by a given day, those parties in their anxiety to effect the sale, say probably at once, We will undertake to do it, or they say, We will see the bleachers, and give an answer in the afternoon, and when they see the bleachers they tell the bleachers that they must have them up, and the bleachers are compelled to get them up, or lose the order, though there is no necessity for it; but that is the working very much of the present state of things.

2066. *Mr. Cheetham.*] Can you alter that state of things by legislation?—I think there will be less risk of it, as there are no regulations just now; the bleacher can work all night; he can tell his hands that there is an order which must be done by a certain day, and they would be obliged to work.

2067. *Chairman.*] Is there any prospect, in your opinion, of that necessity upon the bleacher being remedied, except by legislative interference?—I see great difficulty in the way of it. There is such competition that all parties are anxious to get business; that, except the workpeople themselves would make a stand, and say

say that they would not work the number of hours, it cannot be done; if they said that, the thing would be remedied. *R. Barbour, Esq.*

2068. Would not that be what is called a strike?—I think that they are not under the same risks of strikes as they were formerly. The masters find it more for their interest, where their workpeople are reasonable, to compromise the matter and arrange it. There is not that great line of demarcation between the working man and the master that there formerly was, and that there is a sort of sympathy between them, I believe; if the people are reasonable, I think the masters are disposed to listen to them.

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2069. Is it your opinion that such a request on the part of the working bleacher would be a reasonable request?—I think so.

2070. Is it your opinion that the masters would come to reason with their operatives, and would agree to it?—I think that the masters will be glad to have the hours limited.

2071. Would many of those masters, in your opinion, be willing to have arrangements for the shortening of the hours of their works, unless the whole of them did the same?—If the process was carried through, the others would be compelled to submit to it; the bleachers are not, as the factory people, in such great masses; there are a small number, and if the principle I am stating were established, the hands would not submit to work these extreme hours.

2072. *Mr. Cheetham.*] Have you ever known in your experience anywhere where they have made a resistance to those long hours?—I am not aware of any.

2073. You have stated as your deliberate opinion, that in any interference of legislation in this matter it should be proceeded with with the greatest caution?—Yes.

2074. That, as a principle, you are opposed to it, and that there must be some exceptional ground for it?—Quite so.

2075. You were examined by Mr. Tremenheere?—Yes.

2076. Did you express that opinion to him?—I do not remember; our interview was conversational, and he put down what he thought right, and asked me if I said that; that was merely a fraction of what I said.

2077. Do you mean to say that you might have stated to him your objection to legislative interference?—If he had put the question to me I should have said it; but I will not say that I did, because I am not aware whether he put such a question to me.

2078. Then you do not recollect whether you expressed to him such an opinion as you do now?—No.

2079. At all events, you are quite sure that no such expression of opinion is upon the minutes?—Yes.

2080. Is it common for the bleachers to have a quantity of stock beforehand?—Not at all; they may have a large quantity of goods waiting orders from the merchant, and the manufacturers may go thither with goods upon their own account, but they do not bleach upon their own account. I have heard that in Ireland it is quite different from the bleachers of cotton goods; they bleach on their own account. Many, of course, of the large home establishments in Manchester supply all sorts of goods.

2081. Is not it usual for them to have stock in hand, without submitting to this great risk?—Yes; they cannot keep themselves from stock; they bleach the goods when they please. For instance, the bleacher may have a quantity of goods belonging to a manufacturer, and the manufacturer may sell those goods perhaps to half-a-dozen different merchants, and each merchant probably has his own impress to print upon these goods, or his own ticket, or a variety of things that cannot be done till the goods are bleached. The bleacher cannot finish the goods until he gets instructions, either from the merchant or the manufacturer.

2082. Can they be placed in such a forward state that they could be more easily finished when the order came in?—I fancy they might; but I do not think that any bleacher would do it, because it would involve perhaps double the cost. If they were to put them through the first operations, and not go on, it would involve a great expense to the bleacher.

2083. *Mr. Butt.*] Did I rightly understand you to say that you thought that possibly the long hours of work could be stopped by the resistance of the workpeople themselves?—I do not see how they could; I think it is just possible that they might.

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2084. To do that, in the first place, the masters must yield, or else it would amount to a strike; is not that so?—Yes.

2085. In the next place, must not all the workmen in one establishment agree?—Yes, or the majority of them.

2086. Not only must that agreement extend to the workmen of one establishment, but it must extend to the workmen generally in the neighbourhood?—Yes.

2087. And it must be successful in every instance, inasmuch as one master who persevered in the long hours would gain an advantage over those who yielded?—Just so.

2088. Are you aware whether, in point of fact, that course has been tried in the cotton bleaching-works in Scotland?—I am not aware of that.

2089. Have you looked at Mr. Tremenheere's report?—I have looked at it, but I have not gone fully into the report.

2090. Was your attention directed to the fact that a large number of bleaching-houses in the west of Scotland signed an agreement to work short hours, if the others would agree, but that at last they came to the conclusion that it was impossible to carry it out without a legislative enactment?—I was not aware of that.

2091. Are you aware that in the dyeing of the hosiery of Nottingham a system such as you have suggested did, in point of fact, obtain, and broke down?—I was not aware of that.

2092. Did I rightly understand you to say, that there are nothing like the unreasonable hours for the work of women in the packing establishments that there are in the bleaching establishments?—No; they are not employed there at all.

2093. Do you believe that in the packing establishments anything like a system of continuous work for boys through most of the hours of the night prevails?—I think that in all the packing establishments the process is altogether performed by men; I think that they have no boys; there may be boys occasionally employed to feed the presses.

2094. In point of fact, there does not exist in the bleaching-works anything like the working of young boys through the hours of the night for weeks successively?—Not at all.

2095. If it were proved to you, that as a general system throughout the packing establishments, that did take place, would you consider it necessary to remedy that by a legislative enactment?—I think wherever there is a great crying evil, it ought to be remedied in some way or other; and if it must be remedied, then it is a mere question of the Legislature to come in and say that it must be done, though there was a loss to somebody as the result.

2096. Then is there not this fair distinction between the necessity for legislative interference with packing establishments and with these bleaching-works, that in the one case the crying evil does exist, and that in the other it does not?—It may exist to some extent.

2097. Would not the propriety of legislative interference depend upon the extent of the evil?—Yes.

2098. Would it be your opinion that it would be better to submit to a small evil than for the Legislature to interfere?—It would, if there was not any great crying evil.

2099. Must it not be a question of degree?—Yes, clearly so; and the great difficulty lies in the question that was put to me, which leads to drawing a very nice distinction. If the Legislature did interfere, they could only remedy the evil with regard to a certain class; there are a great many people who would not come under that class, and who are much aggrieved at present; for instance, the dress-makers are a class that are said to be most oppressed of all; but still it would have an influence upon all classes. If a certain class of females were protected, the influence would be felt upon the hours of those not protected by it, and thus their time might be limited also.

2100. Mr. Cheetham.] Has the influence resulting from protection of the women in the factory been felt in the case of milliners and others in the city of London?—There is a general improvement in the case of females, for the purpose of protecting them to a certain extent.

2101. Are you aware that a reduction of the hours of milliners and others in the city of London has not taken place?—I am not aware what is the case in London; in Lancashire there are great improvements in that direction; and I think

think that females are better off than they were; they are not so overworked as they were; the tendency is to limit them still more.

2102. In the case of Manchester, what has been done has been done without legislation; is not that so?—Yes.

2103. Mr. *Butt.*] You stated that there was a general feeling in favour of shortening the hours of labour?—Clearly.

2104. Do you think that that general feeling has been produced by the existence and operation of the Factory Act?—That may have given, perhaps, a commencement to the movement. Perhaps Manchester was the first town that made a great improvement with regard to the Saturday half-holiday. That has given another impetus to the shortening of the hours of labour, and the shopkeepers are beginning to close their shops on the Saturday afternoon and earlier in the evening than they used to do, and the tendency is to limit the hours of labour in all classes.

2105. Do you think that that is from the opinion which the Legislature adopted in the Factory Act, and that the experience of the effect of that legislation has contributed to spread that feeling?—I cannot tell, but I should think that it probably has.

2106. Would not that general feeling operate upon the masters to induce them not to work their men long hours?—The tendency is that way at present.

2107. Do not you think that it would operate with much less force upon the merchant, or any one giving orders to him, although the secondary consequence of the merchant giving his late order is to entail long hours upon the workmen?—I think that the merchant giving the late order does not think of the feeling of long hours; he does not look at it; he says, There, it is possible to bleach these goods by some chemical operation, by which they can get them up much quicker than they used to do, and that is all he thinks of.

2108. Still, I understand you to say that the effect of that upon the bleacher would be to cause him either to work longer hours or to lose the order?—Yes, or to introduce improvements in carrying out his work; he might lose it for a time.

2109. Is not the cause of that evil often the fact of a merchant giving a late order?—It may be, but the merchant cannot help himself; and if the bleacher said, "I cannot execute the order," or, "I shall run the risk of damaging the goods," the merchant would say, "I will not run that risk, and I will wait."

2110. I think you used the expression that the bleacher could not help himself if the merchant gave the order, but he does it because the salesman in some establishment says, "I must have them, or I will go to somebody else"?—

2111. Is not that the pressure which is put upon the master?—He is forced frequently.

2112. Then, however anxious the bleacher may be to have short hours kept in his establishments, is he not still subject to pressure from without?—He would be, no doubt.

2113. And a person who put that pressure upon him is one upon whom the feeling of short hours would not operate?—It is a question that does not enter into his calculation. If the bleacher were to say, "I cannot give you the goods without working all night;" I should say, "Do not do it." We know perfectly well that a piece of goods can be bleached in a day.

2114. Do you think that the inconvenience in the trade, arising from this measure, would be very trifling?—Yes.

2115. At present there is a physical limitation to the time in which the goods can be done?—Yes.

2116. That limitation would be slightly increased by the proposed enactment?—Yes.

2117. If there is a necessity, from moral causes, for that limitation being increased, would not the merchant accommodate himself to it, exactly as he does to the physical limitation?—I think so; there might be a little inconvenience, but I think that it would not be felt upon the trade of the country as a whole.

2118. Mr. *Davison.*] Did I rightly understand you in your answer to say, that the communication does not generally take place between you and the bleacher, but that you generally give the order to the manufacturer?—It is done both ways; we give orders often to the bleachers, and whenever we do, we give them as much time as possible; there are cases sometimes where we are hurried.

2119. Those cases you are obliged to hurry?—Yes; we ask the bleacher if he

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can finish the goods by a certain time, and the bleacher is very obliging, and he says he will do them.

2120. Are you aware that in the bleaching department during a great portion of the year they are not doing much work?—No; I mean that I think that many years ago that used to be more so than it is now; the trade of the country is more steady than it used to be, and it does not go so much by seasons as it used to do.

2121. Is it your opinion that the bleacher has a fair amount of average work every day?—I think that they are not subject to the extreme pushes that they were years ago.

2122. Is it not the fact that these pushes exist at the present day?—They always will exist as long as trade exists.

2123. In your packing operations do you employ steam machinery?—Yes, of late years: we did not do it until we were compelled to do it.

2124. Mr. Davison.] When you say that pushes always will exist, do not you mean that the manufacturer and the bleacher cannot control them?—We cannot control the trade of the country; the market gets glutted, and gets relieved, and the pressure comes suddenly upon them.

2125. Mr. Clark.] You said that legislation would lead to the merchant giving orders; would not the easiest way of remedying that evil be to have an enactment for obliging the merchant to give his orders?—It is not in your power to say, in this sort of way, that if we cannot get goods delivered by a certain time, we must send them by the following vessel; that is the fault, probably, of the merchant delaying in sending out his orders; but it will be most absurd to compel the merchant to buy goods, whether he chooses or not.

2126. Would it not prevent the necessity for legislation with regard to the trade if there is any legislation with regard to compelling the merchant to give a certain number of clear days from the date of the order?—I think it would be the most impolitic act that the Legislature of the country ever did, because improvements are going on from day to day, and from week to week, with regard not only to machinery, but with regard to the various processes used in the manufacture.

2127. Do not you think that it is impossible for the bleacher to do so?—In many cases; upon the other hand, the bleacher, if he takes the proper time, can do the work better; but it is often put off. We do not know what is the case of the bleachers, nor do they know how we are situated.

2128. Mr. Cheetham.] Do not you think that a legislation that would operate alike upon both parties, both being placed under different circumstances of pressure, would be more fair?—If you can have a principle that would work. There is great difficulty in legislating at all; but I think that the more it is kept within limits the better.

2129. Mr. Kirk.] With regard to the Irish linen bleaching; are you in the habit of making up Irish linen in your establishment?—We are not in the habit of making it up, but we are in the habit of buying it.

2130. Do not you, in that case, send over an order, and do not you make the contract either with the party at Manchester, who gives the order to the Irish bleacher on the other side of the Channel, or direct to the Irish bleacher, as the case may be?—Yes.

2131. Are you very particular as to the strictness of the time you give them?—We give them according to circumstances. Most of the Irish linen bleachers have stocks of goods; they do not merely bleach; they are merchants; and we presume that if we have an order that we want to be executed, that the bleacher may have the goods ready for finishing, and we send the order, saying that we want the goods; if they say that they cannot deliver them, we have no alternative but to wait, or to cancel the order, if the vessel is going out at once.

2132. Is not this the usual course, that if you send over to an Irish linen bleacher an order for a thousand pieces of a certain article, if he has it of his own property for the process of bleaching, he will say, I will try to have them, or I will endeavour to have them; or, I will have them positively?—That is quite correct.

2133. And does not it naturally happen that he will work extra time for the purpose of meeting the order?—It is quite possible.

2134. If the people in his making-up rooms work until seven or eight o'clock at night, do you think it would be right and proper to restrict him as to hours, while you leave the merchant and manufacturer at liberty?—In all businesses there must be exceptional cases; but when those exceptional cases give rise to any great evil, then

then it may be necessary, probably, for the Legislature to interfere, and to endeavour to remedy the evil. I think it is quite likely, in the case stated, that there should be some latitude allowed.

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2135. Supposing that people who worked in this establishment make no more complaints of the hours than your people do, do you think that it is necessary, because the English workpeople are included in the Bill, that therefore the Irish should be included in the same law?—It may not be; but if there are females employed in Ireland, I think it is very desirable that females, who have not the same constitutions as men, should be limited to a certain given time; and also that young children should be prohibited to a certain extent; but as to grown-up men and grown-up women, I think it is a nice question to interfere with regard to their position.

2136. I think you stated before, when you were asked as to that part of the factory system which enabled masters or employers to take persons into their employment under some certain age, that you did not wholly approve of it?—I think it would be better if those young persons were taken in at an age which would allow time for them to get their education before they went into the factory. They work half the day, or whatever the proportion may be, and then they are sent to the school jaded, and unfit for education; and I say that these children should go to school, for I am sure that it will be better if their energies were directed to the school, and that they should do no work until after they had been at school.

2137. Therefore do you think that it would be better that no child should be allowed to do any description of labour, or that the course of labour should be regulated, until they were at least 12 years of age?—I do not know the precise time; but it should be when they have finished their education.

2138. Do not they want time to get physical strength and mental improvement?—Quite so.

2139. Mr. Butt.] It has been stated to this Committee that, upon the whole, although what you have said was desirable, it was better to allow the children to be sent to work, with a provision that they should be educated at the same time, because otherwise, instead of receiving education, they would be neglected entirely: what is your opinion as to that?—I think that that would not be at all the working of it. We find parents now, the moment the child is capable of getting 2s. 6d. a week, send him from school to get that 2s. 6d., or whatever it may be. That does not apply altogether to the factory, because a boy may get work as an errand boy, or anything else, and that is just one of the great difficulties of carrying any legislative improvement. But my impression is that it would not work in the way stated in the question; that the children would not be sent to school. I think that if they were not taken into the factory, they would be kept longer at school; because parents, if they have not the same facility of getting employment for them which brings in some remuneration for their service, will send them to school.

2140. The opinion of the witness to whom I referred just now was, that it would be better for them to be sent to school, because it would secure their attendance for that time; do you agree with this opinion?—I say, it is better to get imperfect education than none, if the parents will not educate them. But I say that it would be much better if they employed their whole energies as long as their education was going on. What I say is, that the parents are much more alive to the benefits of education than they were formerly.

2141. Do you think that a legislative prohibition upon children being employed under a particular age would tend to promote education?—I think it would rather promote education. That would be my view of the matter.

2142. Of course, including in the condition of his being employed, his being sent to school?—Yes; including in the condition of his being employed, his being sent to school for a longer time.

2143. Mr. Cheetham.] Are the Committee to understand, that in the case of the boys employed in the bleach-works, you would rather legislate so as to exclude them altogether from labour, than give them this half employment, and send them to school?—Yes; I would rather improve the time, say from 10 to 12; I would rather finish their education first.

2144. Have you ever considered what effect that prohibition would have upon the circumstances of the families of the working classes?—I think it would produce great hardship in the case of many widows.

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2145. Would you think, under these circumstances, the Legislature is justified in interfering with private rights between a parent and a child?—The Legislature have interfered. It would be better, if it were not necessary, that they should interfere; but it is a question of degree; and my impression would be, that it would be better for them to remain at school a longer time.

2146. Is not it the case in the manufacturing districts generally that the sons of manufacturers are taken from school at a very early period?—You find that all parties connected with education in Manchester state that the master manufacturers do not keep their sons long enough at school.

2147. Do you think that the principle operating in that class should not be allowed to operate in the case of the lower classes?—Yes; but I think that applies to the higher branches of education. Take any of our educational establishments in Manchester, Owen's College, or the grammar school, for instance; you see that even in these establishments they complain very much that the boys are not allowed to remain longer at school.

2148. Can you state what is the reason why the parent in that case withdraws his son so early from school?—The reasons are two; one is, of course, that in many cases the parent says, "I do not want to give my boy much of a classical education; I shall put him to business as soon as possible;" and another case of a man who wants to get his son educated properly, says, "I will not educate my son at Manchester."

2149. Does not that arise from the opinion entertained among many manufacturers that a highly educated youth is unfit for business?—It depends upon what you mean him for. If you say that it is necessary to send young men to Oxford or Cambridge, I would say that it is not necessary. Parties may have an impression, of what they call education, giving a boy a fine classical education, and so on; but it appears to me that the great advantage in educating a young man is to get him to think; the great difficulty with young men is to make them think. The master says, "I have made my fortune without Latin and Greek, and my son can do the same;" but he should remember that it is not the Latin and Greek which is useful; it is the making the boy think.

2150. If he has a right to exercise his control in the education of his child, why should we prevent the inferior man from having the same liberty?—I would protect the working man. I would say to him, "It is for your interest to educate your child."

2151. May not the circumstances of the family really call for the education of their children?—It may; but there are now so many educational establishments, that there is no difficulty in getting a boy educated.

2152. *Mr. Kirk.*] Would not your feeling be, that no child should be employed in any manufactory if he could not, before he were admitted to his employment, read fluently?—Certainly. I remember, with regard to education, that when I came to Manchester many years ago, of the men that came to our establishments, the exception was, the man who could write his name; it was almost invariably the case that a man put his mark. The exception now is, the man who cannot write; all write now; they are compelled to write; parents find it desirable to give their children an education, so that they can write and read.

2153. *Mr. Cheetham.*] Has not that improvement which you have just pointed out taken place without legislation?—Clearly.

William Scott, Esquire, called in; and Examined.

W. Scott, Esq.

2154. *Chairman.*] WILL you be kind enough to tell the Committee what your occupation is?—I am a Manufacturer.

2155. I believe you gave evidence before Mr. Tremenheere, three years ago?—Yes.

2156. Has your attention subsequently to that time been directed to the case of the bleachers, the case which this Committee has been appointed to look into?—I have occasionally made inquiries, and the result of those inquiries is to confirm the opinions which I gave in the first instance.

2157. You have seen nothing since you gave evidence before Mr. Tremenheere to alter the opinion you then gave?—Not at all, but rather to confirm it in every respect.

2158. Are the Committee to understand that your opinion, on the whole, was not unfavourable to shortening the hours of labour in bleach-works?—Exactly.

2159. Will

2159. Will you have the kindness to state to the Committee the reasons upon which you, as a manufacturer, came to that conclusion?—I think I have stated my reasons in the report of Mr. Tremenheere; but if the Committee will ask me any particular question, I shall be glad to answer it.

2160. You have heard the various objections which have been made on the part of the trade to any legislative interference whatever?—Yes.

2161. Are you of opinion that any of those objections are so well founded as to justify the Legislature in not interfering?—No; I think that the interference on the part of the Legislature, to a certain extent, would be for the benefit of all parties concerned, both manufacturers and merchants, and bleachers, and all parties concerned under them.

2162. Will you have the goodness to state to the Committee to what extent you yourself think the interference ought to be carried?—I should think to the extent of an hour or two per day longer than the factory people have; I would give them a little latitude of an hour, or two hours; I have not considered that subject, but I think that there should be some interference on the part of the Legislature, and I think it would work well for all; and I think that when it should come into operation, if it were well considered, we should be scarcely sensible of it; I think that we should all then adapt ourselves to the altered circumstances; the merchant, when necessary, giving the order earlier to the manufacturer and the bleacher.

2163. You heard Mr. Barbour's evidence before this Committee?—Yes, I heard all of it.

2164. Speaking practically yourself, as a manufacturer, do you think, *mutatis mutandis*, that the same reason which induced him to speak favourably of legislative interference, as a merchant, would induce you to speak favourably of legislative interference as a manufacturer?—Certainly; I agree with most of Mr. Barbour's evidence.

2165. Mr. Butt.] Supposing that they increased the price of bleaching 10 per cent., do you think that that would have any serious effect upon trade in the goods?—No, I do not think it would.

2166. What would you take the average value of a piece of unbleached cloth at?—At 6s. 6d.

2167. The bleaching of that would be 9d., which would make 7s. 3d.?—Yes.

2168. Ten per cent. upon the bleaching would be 1d.?—Yes.

2169. So that 10 per cent. added to the cost of the bleaching would be an increase in the price of the same goods from 7s. 3d. to 7s. 4d. a piece?—Yes.

2170. In your opinion, as a merchant and manufacturer, would that increase of price interfere with the exportation of your goods?—Not at all.

2171. Are you employed extensively as a manufacturer?—Yes.

2172. Do you think that shortening the hours in the way that is proposed would add as much as 10 per cent. to the cost of bleaching?—No, I do not.

2173. Chairman.] Will you state to the Committee what the foreign markets are to which you are in the habit of shipping goods?—We do not ship any goods ourselves, but we produce them for the merchants, either by manufacturing or buying from other manufacturers; we send to all markets, more or less; there is scarcely any market in the world to which we do not send.

2174. Mr. Cheetham.] In saying that the addition of 10 per cent. to the cost would not make any addition to the price, have you ever compared the result as to foreign competition?—No; but 10 per cent. upon the bleaching is so slight, that I do not see that it would make any difference.

2175. Are you acquainted with the circumstances in Belgium?—No, I am not.

2176. Supposing there was a difference of 2½ per cent. between one bleacher and the other, would not one get a greater amount of orders than the other?—Yes, provided the work was the same; but you can very seldom find two bleachers whose work could be sold at 2½ per cent. difference.

2177. Assuming that they both competed upon the same terms, would not the one taking 2½ per cent. less than the other gain all the orders?—There are other things to be taken into account besides the price in bleaching; the quality of the work; the quantities a bleacher can do, and regularity of delivery.

2178. Assuming that both could supply the goods by the prescribed time, would not the one offering 2½ per cent. less than his neighbour obtain the order?—As a general rule, he would.

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2179. So that even 2½ per cent. is an object to the merchant?—Of course it is, everything else being alike.

2180. Much more is the 10 per cent.?—Yes, of course.

2181. So that if by any legislative interference the cost of bleaching were raised to 10 per cent. over what it is now, to that extent it would be objected to by the merchant?—Of course it would.

2182. Mr. Butt.] The result of that would be that the merchant would pay 10 *d.* for that for which he now pays 9 *d.*; 1 *d.* would be taken from his pocket that he would rather keep in it?—Yes.

2183. Suppose the merchant reimbursed himself by putting 1 *d.* upon the price of goods, would that seriously affect your market in foreign countries?—No, I think not.

2184. Would it affect it at all?—No, I think not.

2185. When you were examined by Mr. Tremenheere you said that “the work would be better done, and probably with less damaged cloth, and less break-down of machinery, because the operatives would be better able to attend to their work;” are you of that opinion still?—Yes, certainly.

2186. Did you also say that “there would be less running the steam engine at a great loss for small pushing orders”?—Yes.

2187. Then it would be a protection to the bleacher himself?—I think it would be better for the bleacher, as well as the operative, the merchant and the manufacturer.

2188. Have you been able, from personal observation as well as general knowledge, to form an opinion as to how the restriction of labour in the Factory Act has worked?—I hear very little objection to the restrictions.

2189. Is not it now the general opinion of the masters that it works well?—Yes, I think so.

2190. Do you think that the restriction of the hours of work of women and children would at all raise the price of bleaching?—No, I do not think it would.

2191. By the use of improved machinery?—Yes, and by one thing or another.

2192. I think that in your opinion, to bleacher, merchant, and operative, the restriction in the hours of labour upon that plan would be useful?—Certainly; my opinion of that is, that if it is not, the Factory Act ought to be repealed.

2193. Mr. Chcetham.] Then do you advocate restriction in the case of the bleachers because it has been made operative upon the factories. Because a certain class of the community have been legislated upon, would you extend that to the bleachers?—No.

2194. What is the cause of the irregular hours on the part of the bleacher; is not it the limited time which is given to execute the orders?—In five cases out of six, it is because, being allowed to work any length of time, they will make pushes; if one bleacher will not, another will. A manufacturer or commission agent will be obliged to give longer time when they find they cannot get it done.

2195. Does not the pressure in the first instance come from the merchant or the commission agent?—Yes.

2196. That is the cause which brings the master bleacher to his irregular hours?—Yes.

2197. Are you aware what is the rule in cases where the bleacher does not complete the goods even in the restricted way in which he is now obliged to work?—There are no particular rules; they only make agreements with the bleacher that he will get up a certain quantity of goods by a certain day, and if he does not do it they lose the sale of the goods; perhaps that would give them a claim upon him in consequence, if he made a specific bargain to get them up by a particular time; but if the bleacher keeps the goods beyond the regular time, the proper way is, not to send him any more, but to send them to the bleacher who will do them.

2198. Have not there been instances within your own observation in which the bleacher failing to deliver his goods within the prescribed time has been subjected either to penalties or damages?—Yes.

2199. And though in order to complete them within the limited time he may have worked irregular hours?—Yes.

2200. So that pressure is laid upon him, and it is not his own act or deed?—I dare say that may be the case; I have not known of such a case coming under my notice, but it is probable that it may be so; he may have undertaken to do a thing that he cannot do.

2201. In

2201. In your own case do not you generally lay down a positive rule as to the time in which the bleacher shall deliver your goods?—We endeavour to ascertain what is the regular time to give, whether 8, 10, 12, or 14 days, as the case may be, and we have an understanding with the bleachers, and if they cannot send them up in that time they must not take the goods; they must say we cannot get the goods up in a given time, and our remedy is to go to another bleacher.

2202. And of course, in order to secure your business, the bleacher is anxious to meet your time?—Yes.

2203. Have you any rule as to time in your establishment?—For different classes of goods a certain number of days are required; but of course it is the business of the parties who give out the goods to the bleacher to know what he can do; they know all the different finishes which can be done in seven days, and which in nine days, ten days, and so on, and it is their business not to send goods without a certainty of their being done in a given time. He should have an understanding with the bleacher to have the goods done regularly. He will not know his business if he sends the goods without knowing when they will be returned.

2204. I think you do business with Mr. Bridson?—Yes.

2205. Is not your rule with regard to that house to limit them to nine days?—I think it is, with certain classes of goods.

2206. They failing to complete the goods in the time, do not you debit them for the loss you sustain by their holding the goods over?—I think the case you refer to is this: they do some goods for us regularly; they undertook to do them in 9 or 10 days, and they took four, or five, or six weeks; and the consequence was we lost a considerable amount of interest on a great quantity of goods besides their own, five or ten times the amount that was in their hands; they broke the bargain to send up the goods in 9 or 10 days. We say, "This is a breaking of your bargain, and you must suffer for it; we have incurred a specific amount of loss; we send you the invoice of it."

2207. Perhaps this document may refresh your memory as to the particulars of that [*a paper being shown to the Witness*]?—That is perfectly correct.

EXTRACT from Messrs. Jones Brothers & Co.'s Letter of January 23, 1856.

"We cannot afford to have our goods kept in this manner; but before taking any steps for the bleaching and finishing of our cambrics and jaconets elsewhere, we wish to know, in writing, from your firm, whether you will undertake to put our cambrics, jaconets, &c., into work as you receive them, and deliver them back in 10 days, and occasionally make a push for three or four days."

Gentlemen,

Manchester, 24 March 1856.

We enclose invoice of interest we have charged you with, consequent upon your not sending up our goods in time. This is only a portion of our loss, as we have many goods in stock that should have been forwarded with those you have out. We have so repeatedly told you that we will not have our goods kept beyond the time, nine days, that you engaged to send them up in, that we have no other resource, for the time being, but this.

Messrs. Bridson & Co., Bolton,

Yours respectfully,
Jones Brothers & Co.
G. Watts.

We have not reckoned the deliveries of the 14th, 15th, which are due to day.

12, York-street, late 4, Mosley-street, Manchester, March 24, 1856.

Messrs. R. Bridson, Son & Co., Bolton.

Bought of Jones Brothers & Co.,
Spinners and Manufacturers, Bedford New Mills, near Leigh.

To loss of interest, &c., on V. lawns, &c., not sent up in time - - £. 3. 14. 7.

Cash less 1½ per cent.

2208. Were not Messrs. Bridson & Co. debited with interest for delaying the goods beyond nine days?—Yes.

2209. How would legislation remedy the state of things with regard to a case like that of Messrs. Bridson?—The bleacher must not break his promise; the bleacher must not make a promise that he cannot perform.

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2210. Could not a certain proper restraint on the part of the buyer insure ample time to the bleacher?—Yes. I dare say that is not a solitary case, for, I believe there may have been 10 or 12 previously, and this was a claim actually; We say to the bleacher, We will send you so much work regularly, provided you let us have it in the nine days; the busy season comes on, and some of the other manufacturers send them work, and they put ours aside, in this instance, for 14 days beyond the nine days.

2211. And so you tie them to a specific rule?—Yes; in this particular instance we gave them a day more than they asked; they asked eight days. Under pressure a bleacher will undertake to do goods in seven or six days, as the case may be, but we gave them a day longer than they required; and yet we have repeated instances of goods being kept back, simply because they had work from other parties, and they wanted to keep ours as well. Now our remedy would have been to say, "If you cannot do this work we must send it where we can get it done."

2212. Was there in this particular instance a pressure upon you equally as strong as upon the bleacher in having his goods completed?—We took as much time as possible; the pressure upon us was, that we lost the amount of interest upon 1,000 l. worth of goods.

2213. So that there was a pressure upon you as upon the bleacher himself; there was a pressure upon you to have the goods completed in nine days?—Yes.

2214. Would not it be fair and equitable that any legislative enactment which should operate upon the bleachers, in order to secure them the longer time, and prevent irregular hours, should extend also to your house, in compelling you to give a specific time to the bleacher?—No; I think, with Mr. Barbour, that it would be absurd.

2215. Are not the cases alike, the pressure acting upon you in the one case, and upon the bleacher in the other; should not the Legislature require you to give a certain number of days?—No; it is optional with us, when we take the order, to say whether we will do it in a month or two months, and it is our business to know whether we can get the goods finished in time; it is our fault if we make a mistake; if we cannot have the things done when they ought to be ready, the merchant goes into the market and buys the goods, and debits us with the difference he may have to pay.

2216. Is not there a great difference between bleaching and the manufacture of yarn, as regards the power of holding back?—Yes.

2217. If the manufacturer or spinner has produced an article, he can lay it by till it is wanted?—Yes.

2218. Does not that secure a regularity of employment, which does not exist in the case of the bleachers?—Yes; but the commission agent and merchant will probably keep a stock of bleached goods if he found a difficulty in getting them bleached.

2219. Why does not he do that now?—Because he can push the bleacher to any extent.

2220. Do not you want legislation to remedy both your own dealings and the bleacher's too?—I do not think it will do any harm, as it would be inoperative in our case.

2221. Mr. Kirk.] Would that have the effect of regulating your dealings with the bleachers?—Yes; it would come to this, those who made delivery of the goods most regularly would have the most attention from the bleacher.

2222. It is in evidence before this Committee that those bleachers who work short hours now get less to do as compared with those who work long hours; is that because they work shorter hours?—No; perhaps it is because their work may not be so good as other bleachers who work long hours.

2223. Did not you state here that shorter hours would be likely to improve the quality of the bleaching, because the man would be better able to do his work within those hours?—Yes; of course, if an operative works 12 or 14 or 16 hours a day, he cannot work as well as if he worked 10 hours a day.

2224. It is stated before us, that if they work 10 ½ hours a day, they get less to do than those who work longer; a bleacher himself gives that evidence; can you explain it?—There may be several causes why that is the case; he may not be doing as good work as his neighbours.

2225. Did not you say that he would do it better?—He may not, have the machinery for doing the work that his neighbour has.

2226. He

2226. He states that he has similar machinery, and he has not employment for the machinery eight or nine hours a day?—He may not do his work so well, or he may charge more for it.

2227. He states that he charges the same price as his neighbours?—I do not know how to account for that.

2228. Mr. *Cheetham*.] Do you recollect a particular case in your business with reference to an order being required to be executed, where, in order to enforce its rapid execution, you despatched a messenger with directions that he was not to leave the premises till the goods were completed?—Yes; that is very probable.

2229. Was not there a pressure upon you in that case?—Yes; we had undertaken to do them at a certain time.

2230. You must throw the pressure upon the bleacher?—Yes.

2231. Did not that take place subsequently to your giving your evidence to Mr. Tremeneere?—It is very likely.

2232. Do you think that merely putting a legislative restraint upon the bleacher will cure the evil, unless you put one upon the merchant also?—What I might do for my own individual interest in that instance may not be for the interest of the community if it were done regularly. It may be my individual interest to get the order executed in the time, and therefore I make all the push I can.

2233. Would not the same motive impel other merchants and agents?—Yes, it might; but the fact of our being able to get the pushing work done continually, only leads us to ask for more: it being done, we depend more upon getting it done whenever we are pressed for time.

2234. Would not that motive still be in existence, even after legislation, as before?—Yes; but if we should know that we could not get the pushing done, we should not promise it. We should only promise what we could do, and the merchant would be satisfied with that.

2235. Supposing the bleacher, after a legislative enactment is passed, should dismiss the young women and children to whom the legislation referred, and should carry on his work by adults; and supposing that that bleacher could do his work quicker than the others, would not you prefer that bleacher?—We are not in favour of pushing work. We know that the goods will not be so well done, and we know that the bleacher will not serve us so well if he is hurried, and therefore we give him, as a general rule, a regular fixed time mutually agreed upon.

2236. Was not your agreement with Bridson & Co. for nine days?—In that particular instance to which reference has been made.

2237. Supposing that by legislation those nine days were extended to 12 or 14, and that yet, by the non-employment of young people, Bridson & Co. could only carry on their work as before by adults, and complete it in nine days, three to five days earlier than other bleachers, would not they still, having that advantage, retain your orders?—Of course they would.

2238. In that case, would not the result of legislation be to continue and perpetuate long hours?—I dare say the bleacher employing adults only would have an advantage over those who did not; but that would have its effect; the limiting the hours of women and children in bleach-works to 12 or 14, or whatever it may be, would have an effect upon the hours of the adult work.

2239. Does not that show the existing difficulty of legislation as regards bleach-works, as compared with factories?—No; you may work adults in factories as well as in bleach-works.

2240. Are not you aware that the factory is much more closely identified with the labour of women and children?—Yes.

2241. So that when those are withdrawn, the adults are of very little service at all?—Yes, of course.

2242. Is that the case to the same extent with the bleach-works?—Perhaps not; I am not able to give an opinion upon that point.

2243. Mr. *Butt*.] Are you able to form an opinion whether the effect of shortening the hours of those women and children will be to cause their labour to be discontinued?—I should think it would in some cases; but I am not at all able to say.

2244. As to the amount of inconvenience likely to ensue to the trade from legislative interference; at present there is a physical limitation to the power of the bleachers to do work in a certain time?—Yes.

2245. Is not there also a legislative limitation from their being prevented from working on Sundays?—Yes.

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2246. Would not every argument as to the inconvenience to the trade from shortening the hours of work that is brought forward against the Bill for shortening the hours of labour, equally apply to the working on Sundays?—Certainly; if a bleacher can stop his work at eight he can stop it at six.

2247. Does not the prohibition against working on Sunday oblige the merchant to give his orders two days sooner?—Of course.

2248. Might not that interfere with an order being taken for foreign goods just as much as if the hours of work each day were shortened?—Yes.

2249. *Chairman.*] Are you conversant at all with the arguments which have been used during the progress of the factory dispute?—Yes.

2250. Did you hear anything of the danger of foreign competition if the hours of labour in the factories were shortened?—Yes, a good deal; in fact, most people were afraid that we should suffer from foreign competition.

2251. Have those fears been realized?—Not at all.

2252. Is there any more apprehension respecting the bleach-works that those fears will be realized, than the event has proved to be the case with respect to factories?—No, certainly not.

2253. *Mr. Cheetham.*] Has foreign competition with the factories been increased in a greater ratio since the passing of that Bill than it did before?—I have no doubt it has.

2254. Is that competition with those foreign countries where the governments have no restriction upon labour?—I have no doubt it is in many instances.

2255. Are you aware that at the present moment whilst there is a considerable amount of short time in your district there is no short time working on the Continent?—No, I am not.

2256. *Mr. Davison.*] Did I rightly understand you to say that you thought the factory hours were not applicable to the bleaching and dying trade, and that you thought they should be extended an hour and a half or two hours?—I have not given that part of the subject much consideration; but it appears to me that there is a distinction between the manufacture of goods in a factory and the bleaching of goods in bleach-works, if the subject is fairly considered, and that bleach and dye-works should be allowed to work one-and-a-half to two hours per day longer than factories.

2257. *Chairman.*] Would not you say that an Act, something about midway between the Factory Act and the Print Works Act, should be adopted?—Yes, something of that kind.

2258. *Mr. Cheetham.*] Are you aware that subsequent to the legislation upon factories this question of legislation upon the bleach-works was entertained, and evidence was given upon the subject?—No, I am not aware.

2259. And that the proposal for legislation was, after that evidence, withdrawn?—No, I am not.

2260. Are you practically acquainted with bleaching in its various operations?—No.

2261. Or with the class of persons employed in it?—No, I am not.

2262. Do you merely say that because you hear no complaints from the factory owners of legislation, you think that the same principle might be applied in this case?—Yes.

2263. Are you not of opinion with Mr. Barbour that such legislation is always to be avoided, if possible?—I object to legislation with respect to labour, but I think we cannot get on without it.

2264. Then you agree with him that such attempts to legislate between the employer and the employed are to be looked at with great jealousy?—Yes, particularly with regard to those who cannot take care of themselves, say women and children.

2265. Did you state that opinion to Mr. Tremenheere?—I do not know that I did.

2266. Have you read the evidence which you gave to Mr. Tremenheere, as reported in his report?—Yes, I read it over this morning.

2267. Does it include the whole that you stated to him?—I should say it does.

2268. *Mr. Butt.*] May we take the statement of Mr. Tremenheere as a fair representation of your opinion as expressed to him?—Yes, it is very fair.

2269. *Mr. Cheetham.*] With regard to the finishers and packers-up of Manchester, do you agree with the opinion of the operative who was examined the other day here before this Committee, that the Legislature ought to act upon all those establishments, as well as upon the packing-rooms in the bleach-works?—

I think

I think that where there is calendering and making up simply, such as the bleacher or the dyer does, they ought to be included.

2270. As employing the same class of labour?—Yes.

2271. Would you make a distinction between the calenderer of Manchester and the mere packer?—Yes; but I think it will be difficult to draw the line; generally speaking, the people employed in warehouses are quite able to take care of themselves, there being very few women and children.

2272. Would you say that only adults are employed in packing the goods at the warehouse?—There are not many boys now; and that is the distinction between the factory operative and the Manchester warehouseman; the Manchester warehouseman is quite able to take care of himself; but his employer does not desire to employ him above a certain number of hours a day; he knows that he can get more out of him by working him eight or ten hours than by working him 12 and 14 hours a day, and he can get his work better done.

2273. Is not it now some years ago when, without any legislation, the Saturday half-holiday was established in many warehouses at Manchester?—Yes.

2274. Was not it done by agreement between the warehouseman and the employer?—Yes.

2275. Is it your opinion that any attempt to do away with it would be at once promptly met by resistance on the part of the warehousemen?—No doubt.

2276. What is your opinion as to the possibility of the operative bleacher, if he desired short hours, taking the same course as the warehouseman?—The operative bleachers all work by the piece, I fancy; of course if he has only 10 hours' work a day he gets 10 hours' wages; if he has 16 hours he gets 16; that appears to be an inducement for him to continue, and it is rather in favour of long hours: every man likes getting great wages whether he works long hours or not.

2277. Is it your opinion that long hours are partly the result of a voluntary decision on the part of the workman?—Yes, I have no doubt of it.

2278. And that they are not exactly compulsory on the part of the masters?—I fancy the operatives are generally rather pleased with them, because they get greater wages; I am aware that in the warehouses the people are paid by the month or the week, and if they work 10 hours they do not get more than if they work eight.

2279. Has not Mr. Jones, your partner, a cotton factory in the neighbourhood of Bolton?—Yes.

2280. Is it within your knowledge that any of his workpeople have left the mill to go to the bleach-works?—Not that I know of.

2281. Do you know whether any young women employed in the bleach-works have left in consequence of the long hours, and have gone to Mr. Jones's mill, in consequence of the shorter hours there?—I am not aware of it; it might be the case, but it is very doubtful whether I should hear of it.

2282. Are you aware that in the neighbourhood of those bleach-works there are cotton works conducted under legislative restriction?—Yes.

2283. So that if the people object to the long hours, they have other means of employment?—Yes.

2284. Are you aware whether they avail themselves of those means?—I think the operatives are as much to blame as the masters; they like the long hours on account of the extra pay.

2285. You do not concur in the aspersions that some people throw upon the employers of labour?—Not at all.

2286. Is not your desire to restrict the parents?—I think it is the parent that requires legislative interference, because, while he can get his 3s. or 4s. a week for the child, it is a great inducement to him to send him to the bleach-works.

2287. Supposing the legislation applied only to the bleachers in Lancashire and Cheshire, in what position would that place them as regards the bleachers in Scotland and Ireland?—I fancy the bleachers in Scotland and Ireland do altogether different work to the bleachers in Lancashire and Cheshire, and my opinion certainly is, that if the thing were properly regulated, we should be better able to compete with those in Ireland and Scotland; even if we had the proposed Act we should do the work better, and quite as cheaply as now, in my opinion.

2288. You do not think that evil results would follow to the Manchester bleachers and dyers from excluding from the operation of the Act Scotland and

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Ireland?—I do not know what it might lead to; they might try the Manchester finishes, but I do not think that they would be able to compete with them successfully.

2289. *Mr. Baxter.*] Are you aware that the process in the west of Scotland is precisely similar to that of Lancashire and Cheshire?—I dare say the same processes may be carried on, but I fancy the finishes are different. The English finish might suit the merchant, and the Scotch or the Irish finish might not suit him at all; I think they should all be put upon the same footing, certainly. Of course the Lancashire bleacher would say, if you permit the Irish bleacher to work 18 hours a day, or as long hours as he likes, he may be taking my business, because he can regularly make pushes of any kind.

2290. *Mr. Davison.*] So far as Ireland is concerned it is the bleaching of linen, and you are speaking of the bleaching of cotton?—Yes.

2291. Are you aware that in the bleaching of linen they do not employ children, and that there are no children employed?—I am not able to say.

2292. Supposing that to be the fact, is it your opinion that the limitation should extend to Ireland as well as to England?—I am scarcely able to form an opinion.

2293. *Mr. Butt.*] Is it your opinion that very often the overwork on the part of the bleacher is caused by so short a time being given for the order?—Yes.

2294. Might not it arise from another cause, namely; that he undertook to do more than he should have taken?—Yes, of course.

2295. From which cause do you think it more frequently arises?—There are a variety of causes why the bleacher finds he cannot bring up his work in the time he promised, over which perhaps he has no control.

2296. Supposing the bleacher to take more orders than his works will fairly enable him to do, may not that cause him to work overhours?—Yes.

2297. Does not it often proceed from that?—Certainly.

2298. Is the overwork in a bleacher's establishment oftener caused by the merchant pressing him at too short a date, or by his own taking too much work?—I do not know the bleacher's business; but I think that very often our goods are delayed, because other people's are pushing to be done.

2299. I see that in your report to Mr. Tremenheere you suggested that the limitation of labour should not take place at once; that for the first year the works should be reduced from six to eight; the second, six to seven; the third, six to six; is not that so?—It appeared to me that if that was done, any alteration would be better done gradually, and that the bleacher's business could accommodate itself gradually to the change without any particular loss.

2300. Are you of the same opinion still?—I am not prepared to say whether it should be 12 hours or 11, but I think that there should be a change. I am in favour of a change.

2301. *Mr. Cheetham.*] You were asked whether the fault was not due more to the folly of the bleacher in undertaking work, when he knows he has not time sufficient to do it, than to the merchant; do you remember this letter, written by your firm: "Manchester, 26th March 1856. Messrs. Ridgway, Bridson & Co., Bolton. Gentlemen, We shall be much obliged by your saying if you are still willing to perform your promise to us, 24th April 1855, viz. that you would send up our goods in eight days, as a rule, and never to exceed nine days"?—I dare say it would be so.

2302. Is not this the principle of the operation of an establishment like your own, that you want to have a rule, and the rule in most cases to be as limited in its duration as possible?—Of course.

2303. So that the pressure is laid upon the bleacher, in the first instance?—Yes; in Bridson's case, we were first given to understand that they never would exceed eight days; but they gave us a great deal of trouble in not sending up our goods according to that arrangement; afterwards they promised never to exceed nine days, which promise they wilfully and repeatedly broke, without informing us when we sent them cloth, that they could not deliver in nine days; in short, they kept their promise just so long as it suited their convenience to do.

2304. Are you aware that seven days is the shortest period in which they can complete such a class of goods as yours?—The bleaching is done in less time than that frequently; but it is done at the expense of the bleachers, with an extra amount of labour or drugs.

2305. Did not those eight days, of course, involve the regular long hours that you speak of?—I dare say it does.

2306. *Mr. Kirk.*] Is not it the fact that where goods are bleached very rapidly there are necessarily intervals of labour; that they are first put through one process, and

and then through another process, and that those who put them through the first process must wait till that process is repeated?—Yes.

2307. And that therefore there is not merely a certain amount of cost in the extra stuff, but a certain amount of cost in the loss of labour?—Yes, I dare say there is.

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John Slagg, Esq., called in; and Examined.

2308. *Chairman.*] I BELIEVE you are a Manufacturer of Cotton, and a Commission Agent?—Yes, I am; and a commission agent for the sale of cloths.

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2309. Your occupation I suppose gives you considerable opportunities of knowing how the people employed in bleach-works are affected by the present system?—Yes, considerable; I have not so much as Messrs. Scott or Mr. Barbour, but we have considerable dealings with bleachers.

2310. Have you had your attention recently called to the subject-matter before this Committee?—I have.

2311. Will you state to the Committee what is your opinion upon the proposed legislative interference with respect to the hours of labour in bleach-works?—I must first observe, that the report of the conversation that I had with the commissioner, Mr. Tremenheere, though perhaps strictly correct, is not altogether what I said; at least it is not strong enough. I remember I stated to him very distinctly that I had a strong objection to any legislative interference with the labour market; that the question would arise, whether the Legislature should interfere with women and children; but that, in my opinion, it was a question whether the remedy might not be greater than the disease; and I think, on reading my evidence, that he does not state it so strongly.

2312. Would you wish, as it were, to supplement what appears in this blue book by any fresh observation?—No; but I would express myself in stronger language than he uses. I am considerably engaged in a factory, and, of course, I have felt the operation of the Factory Bill for many years.

2313. Would you have the kindness to state to the Committee whether you are in favour of legislation being applied to the hours of labour in bleach-works to affect women and young persons?—I am not sufficiently conversant with the matter to state whether I am, but my feeling is not to interfere.

2314. Will you have the kindness to tell the Committee whether that feeling on your part arises from general principles, or from your belief that it is not required in the case which we are now discussing?—Perhaps my feeling would be upon general principles.

2315. Did you hear the last witness say that, upon general principles, he was opposed to interference, but that he thought in this particular instance the evil was so great that it ought to be met by legislative interference?—Yes. I cannot say that it would be so; there are, certainly, many evils attendant upon working these long hours in bleach-works; I can say that.

2316. Will you tell the Committee what those evils are?—There are the late hours for young children, which interfere with their physical powers chiefly, and prevent them from getting an education; and then there is another evil, which perhaps might be named; I think that the turning out of the young people at all hours of the night and morning may lead to little irregularities, which would otherwise be avoided. That is the extent of my objection.

2317. Are the Committee to understand that you think that the present system deteriorates the physical strength of the young children; that it prevents them obtaining a due amount of education, and that it tends to moral evils?—I should say so.

2318. Supposing that, in your opinion, legislative interference ought to be applied to any trades or professions, do you know a trade or profession to which it might be more reasonably applied than the labour of those young persons and children engaged in the bleach-works?—I should say that, if the Legislature considered it necessary to interfere with the factories, it is necessary to interfere with the bleach-works. I give that as my deliberate opinion, accompanied by the previous observation, that I do not consider the Legislature ought to interfere at all.

2319. *Mr. Cheetham.*] Did you state so to Mr. Tremenheere?—Yes, but more strongly than he puts it in his report.

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2320. Have you read his report of the evidence that you gave to him?—Yes, I have.

2321. This is your answer, I think: "I dislike the idea of legislative interference in matters of trade, but if a case is made out requiring it, I consider it justifiable." Is that what you said?—I do not remember saying that; of course I am not prepared to say what I said exactly.

2322. So that this report by Mr. Tremenheere of your evidence does not go to the extent that you went?—I think not.

2323. *Mr. Baxter.*] Did not you state that the women and children in bleach-works required to be protected?—I did not state that; I stated, as I did just now, that if it is necessary to interfere, as regards the factory operatives, with women and children, it is necessary to interfere with bleach-works. I consider my objection is stronger than it is stated in the report.

2324. *Mr. Cheetham.*] Is your opinion upon this question of legislative interference with bleach-works founded on the legislation in factories?—That is so.

2325. Do you mean by that that there ought to be a fair and equitable legislation in all cases where young people are employed?—The question is, whether the remedy is not greater than the disease; but I certainly feel that they should be protected, as I am a great advocate for education.

2326. Then you think that the Factory Act, which secures a certain amount of education to those who are employed, is so far valuable?—Yes; I think it raises the standard of education, at any rate.

2327. Do you think that upon that bare ground the principle ought to be extended to all classes of the population?—Yes; taken as a matter of principle, I should say, yes.

2328. So that the exemption in the case of agricultural children implies an inequality?—Decidedly; and my strong opinion is, that if you interfere with factories or bleach-works you ought to interfere with the agricultural classes.

2329. If the Legislature will not interfere with all classes, is it your opinion that it ought not to interfere with any?—Yes.

2330. You object to exceptional legislation?—Yes.

2331. *Mr. Kirk.*] Would you be of opinion that the hours of work should be prolonged after seven o'clock at night?—It is difficult to draw a line.

2332. *Mr. Butt.*] Is the Committee to understand your opinion to be, that legislative interference would always be likely to produce a greater evil than it seeks to remedy?—There is danger of it.

2333. Do not you think there is an existing evil?—I think so.

2334. Are you at all acquainted with the hours that are now worked in the bleach-works?—Yes.

2335. Are you of opinion that those hours of work are excessive?—Yes, they are very excessive, occasionally.

2336. Would you consider them injurious to the health of the children?—Yes.

2337. And interfering with their moral and intellectual culture?—I do.

2338. Therefore, if legislative interference be at all justifiable, is not a strong case made out in this case?—Yes; as I have stated before.

2339. Do you think that if, whether by legislative interference or voluntary agreement, those overhours of work were given up, it would interfere with the trade to any extent, or would inconvenience the merchant?—We should accommodate ourselves to it.

2340. Would it entail on you great inconvenience?—I do not think it would.

2341. Is it your opinion that if any legislation were adopted it would not interfere with the export trade of bleached goods?—It is difficult to say; I am an advocate for producing everything as cheaply as possible, to enable us to compete with other countries; but we generally accommodate ourselves to circumstances, as a proof of that (and perhaps some of the bleachers will remember it), about 20 years ago they raised the price of bleaching 20 per cent., and we paid it.

2342. Did you find that interfere with your business?—No; the price of bleaching was very low, and the price of the articles which they use rose very much, and they raised the price 20 per cent.; and they were able to combine, so that we had to pay it.

2343. Do you think that if the bleachers worked short hours they would be obliged to raise the price of bleaching?—Perhaps they might, in the first instance.

2344. To

2344. To what extent do you think that would be?—I cannot say, because of the many valuable improvements in machinery which occur.

2345. Supposing that the bleacher stopped at six instead of working on to twelve or one, and supposing his machinery ceased to work at the same hour, do you think that 10 per cent. would be an adequate allowance for that?—I should say that that is a liberal allowance; and that if improvements took place he could reduce it to less.

2346. Have you heard the evidence which Mr. Scott gave as to the effect that a rise of price in bleaching has upon the price of goods?—Yes.

2347. Do you agree in that?—To some extent. Mr. Scott is a dealer in fine goods; 10 per cent. upon bleaching them does not affect him much; but I am connected with the lower priced goods.

2348. Will you state to the Committee what would be the effect of the bleaching upon the goods you have?—From $\frac{3}{4}$ d. to 1 d. a piece.

2349. What would be the average price of a piece?—From 6 s. to 8 s.

2350. Supposing that you are selling goods in the foreign market for 6 s., and the price of bleaching be raised 10 per cent., it would raise them to 6 s. 1 d.?—Yes.

2351. Would that rise of price interfere with the sale of your goods in the foreign markets?—I should think not; of course every penny helps so far to meet the competition, for we have great competition.

2352. Would that be a rise that would affect you?—I should think not; but it is only an opinion.

2353. Mr. Packe.] You have been asked with regard to the employment of agricultural labour; do you know any instance where women and children are employed more than 12 hours a day in agricultural labour?—I cannot say, not being much in the country; but I think if I were to try I could remember that a little; but I cannot just from memory state it now.

2354. Chairman.] Does not nature pass a 10 hours' Bill as to agricultural labour?—I do not know.

2355. Mr. Cheetham.] I think that a question was put to you relative to education; are you aware that an attempt was made to legislate in that direction, to give the agricultural boy the advantage of it, and that such an attempt failed, as being an improper interference between the father and the child?—Yes, I think I do remember something of that; of course it would be so.

2356. If the principle is valid in that case, do not you think it is equally valid in the case of a factory?—Yes.

2357. Do you consider the present system an unfair system of legislation?—Yes; as regards factories, I think it is so.

2358. Chairman.] Has your attention been called to the Bills which have been brought before Parliament for the regulation of the hours in bleach-works?—I cannot say that I have read them through.

2359. Are you aware that there is no attempt to make education compulsory by those Bills?—No, I was not aware of that.

2360. Mr. Butt.] Would you consider that no amount of overworking of children would justify the interference of the Legislature?—That is a very strong question; I could not say so; it is a very difficult thing to say how far it should go; we, as factory occupiers, think that the Legislature has gone too far already. The first Bill did no harm; but now we say that they have gone too far.

2361. Would you go the length of saying that no overwork of the child by the parents would justify the Legislature in interfering to prevent what might occur?—I should say, that if it was proved that there was a systematic overworking of a child by its parent, the law ought to touch the parent and also the master.

2362. Then it would of course, in every case, come to a question of degree, whether the overworking was so gross as to call for legislative remedy?—Yes, and whether the remedy will be worse than the disease.

2363. You state that it requires a strong case to justify that interference?—I think it does.

2364. And that nothing but a strong case would justify it?—Yes; nothing but a strong case would justify it.

2365. Supposing that it were proved that for weeks at a time young women and boys were worked for 18 hours, barely getting two or three hours' sleep, would you consider that such an extreme case as to justify legislative interference?—

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Yes, it would require some interference; I consider that a very gross case; I know it does happen in bleach-works occasionally.

2366. Would not you consider that the parent working the child those extreme hours for the sake of gain was committing a crime?—Yes.

2367. A crime that he ought to be punished for?—Yes.

2368. If the master allowed that child to work should not you say it was a crime in the master, and that the punishment ought to extend to him?—Not quite so; I think the child's parents generally are to blame; I must observe, that among the operatives, at least from my experience, a parent will force his child to work for the sake of the gain; and that any operative would work with good will 20 hours a day for wages, and make his child work 20 hours a day for wages; therefore I think the masters ought not to bear all blame, but that a good deal is to be put upon the parents themselves.

2369. Would not you say that the greatest blame fell upon the parent, as having a greater obligation to the child?—Yes.

2370. Would not you also consider that the master who is a party to the over-working of the child for 17 or 18 hours a day for weeks successively is also guilty of a moral crime?—He is to a great extent guilty, but he is only one party to the contract, and from what I have seen as to the working class, which has been a long experience, they are quite able to take care of themselves.

2371. Are the children able to take care of themselves?—The children are not, but the parent ought to be made accountable for them.

2372. In order to hold the parent accountable, would not legislative interference be necessary?—I cannot say whether it would or not.

2373. I think you have a strong objection to legislative interference at all, but you are disposed to think that in the bleach-works occasionally things have occurred which would call for legislative interference?—If it were a systematic rule it would; but as to the legislation of the Factory Act, they legislated upon that subject, looking at what the customs of the trade were 30 or 40 years before, and, in my opinion, they legislated in great ignorance, and they ought to be cautious now.

2374. *Mr. Packe.*] Supposing the parent were to refuse that his child should go to be over-employed by the master, and that the master were to discharge the parent in consequence, do you think he ought to be restricted from doing that in future?—That would be interfering between the rights of the man producing the labour, and those of the master employing the labour; I do not know that you ought to go so far as that.

2375. *Mr. Baxter.*] Are the hours in the bleach-works so long as they used to be?—I have not been lately so much among them; I do not think they are so long as they used to be.

2376. Is it your opinion that there is a gradual improvement going on?—I think there is improvement going on among them.

2377. *Chairman.*] Is that improvement subject to interruption from occasional pushes, as they are called, or is it a permanent improvement?—I do not think that those pushes exist to the extent that some gentlemen think; I do not think they exist to a great extent, judging from my own knowledge.

2378. Would not this general improvement be subject to occasional interruptions from those pushes?—I should think it would be so.

2379. *Mr. Butt.*] To what would you attribute the long hours of work in the bleaching establishments, assuming that pushes do not occur so frequently as is thought?—Partly to competition; a desire on the part of the bleachers to secure a larger portion of the business to themselves, and partly from the necessary pushing of the buyers, or their employers; and a good deal is owing on that score, in my opinion; as far as my experience goes, with very little attention (and we do business very largely, perhaps as largely in general articles as any house), we can give time enough for the bleaching.

2380. In fact, I understand you to say, that the order to the bleacher is put off, merely because the merchants know it can be done in the time?—Very often indeed.

2381. *Chairman.*] Putting on one side for the present, all questions as to the principles of interference, do you, as a merchant and an employer of bleachers, think that the trade would not be harmed by the hours of the bleaching-works being shortened?—I should say not, or very little indeed.

2382. *Mr. Kirk.*] Do you think that any child should be employed at any labour before

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before he is able to read fluently?—As an employer, and as a man, I should say, that no child should be employed in any labour until he has attained a certain education, testified by proper parties; that should have been the rule when the late Factory Act passed.

2383. Is not it within your own knowledge, that so far from there being a pressure from the master upon the workman to employ the young children, any pressure that there is, is from the parent of the child on the master?—I should say so.

2384. Is not there a considerable amount of pressure of that sort?—I should say there is; in the factories you find the people will perjure themselves, and call the child older than it is.

2385. Have you ever thought of the proper age at which a child should be permitted to be employed?—There is a great difference in physical formation, so that I cannot tell; but I should say 12 or 13, as a rule.

2386. *Mr. Butt.*] Did I rightly understand you to say, that you would be an advocate for legislation for the non-employment of children before they had received an education?—Yes, if legislation is necessary, but I should like to do without if it was possible; we are fond of the voluntary system in Manchester; we do things without legislative interference there, either as regards education or anything else.

2387. *Mr. Clark.*] Would you rather leave things to that, than legislate at all?—I cannot say that I have weighed the thing sufficiently to answer that question.

2388. *Mr. Butt.*] At present must not the child going to the factory receive an education?—They are obliged to send them to school part of the day.

2389. Do you think that, taking the working classes into consideration, and the way in which children are treated by their parents, it would, upon the whole, be better for the child to be in the factory, upon the condition of receiving there a partial education, than to be excluded entirely from work, with no provision for his education, except that given by the parent?—I cannot say; but I should say that they ought to have an education before they went there, and that their time should not be divided; but that does not answer your question.

2390. Would the practical effect of prohibiting the employment of young children be likely to place them in a worse position than they are in the factory with regard to education?—I am sorry to say that the parents do not take pains with the education of their children. If the parents would take any pains with their education, the children would be better off, because their wages have been advanced by the Factory Act; because the fewer young people there are, the higher their wages will be. If the parents did their duty, I should be content to leave it to them.

2391. Considering what you know of the habits of the working classes, would you consider that the child was better off, being allowed to work on condition that it should be partly educated, or by being left to the parents' discretion?—I could not give an answer; I am not a very practical man.

2392. *Mr. Cheetham.*] Have you known the bleach-works for many years?—Yes.

2393. Are you able to compare the state of the bleach-works at many years distance with their present state?—Yes.

2394. Do you think that there are any improvements in the mode of conducting them?—Yes; I should say great improvements.

2395. Should you say that the hours are not so long as they formerly were?—I am fully inclined to think that they are not so long.

2396. Has the education of the children at all benefited from what it was some years ago?—I know several establishments which have taken great pains, and I think upon the whole it is better. I think we are all better educated. The workmen themselves are better educated. There is an improvement in the master, and that begets an improvement throughout.

2397. Has not all that improvement taken place without any legislation?—Yes.

2398. Do you think that in the bleach-works such gradual improvements might continue until the results were obtained without legislation?—I cannot give an answer to that; we have gone on improving. *Mr. Barbour* I think made an observation about the porters, which I remember very well indeed, that no one could write his name formerly; and now I think there is not a man who cannot do so; they are greatly improved in education.

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2399. Is it your opinion, that in Lancashire generally, there is a growing feeling in favour of restraining the working of long hours?—I rather think there is in all classes, from the bookkeeper to the porter.

2400. Does that feeling exist in the bleach-works?—Yes, I think generally.

2401. You have stated that the prevailing feeling in the bleach-works, is a desire on the part of the men to have long hours?—I think many men in bleach-works would prefer to have long hours,

2402. If this principle spread among bleach-works, do not you think that they would wish to have long hours?—Yes.

2403. And might not we assign a time when those long hours would be done away without legislative interference?—I cannot say; I should be glad if it were so; we are better without any legislative interference.

Henry Sagur, Esq., called in; and Examined.

Henry Sagur, Esq.

2404. Mr. Butt.] I BELIEVE you are a partner in the dye and bleach-works of Messrs. Sumner, Dewhurst & Co.?—Yes.

2405. Those are the Broughton Dye-works, near Salford?—Yes.

2406. Will you state to the Committee what class of goods you dye at those works?—Fustians and calicoes are the principal work done at bleaching.

2407. Do you carry on finishing and packing on your own establishment?—No, we do not.

2408. Do you bleach?—Yes.

2409. But you do not pack?—We do not pack.

2410. Is not it at those works that you have voluntarily adopted the system of short hours?—Yes, for the last eight or ten years.

2411. Will you state what are the hours that you adopt there?—From six to six.

2412. Is that invariable throughout the year?—No, we in some instances stay from six to eight.

2413. Does that include the time for meals?—Yes.

2414. What are the times for meals?—Half an hour for breakfast, an hour for dinner, and half an hour for tea.

2415. Will you be good enough to state to the Committee what the result of your experience of those short hours has been, as to the effect upon your trade?—I do not know that we have suffered anything from it; but it is a decided improvement.

2416. In what respects are you able to say there is an improvement?—Both in the quality of our work and in the getting a greater proportion of it.

2417. Are we to understand that you find you are capable of taking in better work?—Decidedly.

2418. I need scarcely ask whether that is better for the bleacher?—No doubt of it.

2419. You have heard the evidence to-day; I suppose you have heard before of what are called pushes?—Yes.

2420. Do you object to pushes?—Yes.

2421. How do you provide for a push?—By taking only a certain limited quantity.

2422. You do not take orders which you cannot execute with your short time?—No.

2423. At what hour do you leave off on Saturday?—Four.

2424. Can you give the Committee an opinion whether the regular working of these hours is more expensive than if you worked irregularly long hours?—The regular working is the cheapest.

2425. Do you find any inconvenience from invariably stopping your works at a certain hour?—There is an inconvenience attending it.

2426. Is that inconvenience a serious one?—Yes, and it is attended with a little more cost.

2427. Can you by any act mitigate or meet that inconvenience?—No, not very well.

2428. Will you give us an idea of how much that would add to the cost of bleaching?—A very trifling amount.

2429. Would it be ten per cent.?—No.

2430. Would it be five per cent.?—I should think not.

2431. So

2431. So that you, having adopted short hours, are able to say that it would not add five per cent. to the cost of bleaching?—I should say not. *Henry Sagur, Esq.*

2432. At present you are not able to put the five per cent. upon the customer?—No. 19 June 1857.

2433. So that you lose five per cent. upon the work?—We have remodelled our process for the last 10 years, and we are now upon a principle that gives us a little advantage.

2434. Do you think that without inconvenience to your trade, a general legislative measure might be passed, enforcing the hours that you have adopted?—I cannot say; I have not an opinion upon that.

2435. *Mr. Clark.*] Do you find it prejudicial to your interest to refuse orders?—There is not a question that it is prejudicial to refuse them.

2436. As far as regards, not so much the actual loss of the orders you refuse, but so far as regards disobliging the customers, do you find that if you refuse an order it comes back again?—No, if it gets into other channels, and we lose the connexion often.

2437. Then it is prejudicial?—It is prejudicial.

2438. You do not work extra hours?—No.

2439. And you say that the additional expense, in consequence of not having those extra hours, is not more than five per cent?—I think not.

2440. We have it in evidence now, that the expense is 10 per cent.; do you think that the gentleman who gave that evidence was in error?—I should say that he was; it would depend upon what principle they were working upon to some extent.

2441. Do you find that you lose a great number of orders in consequence of your working short time?—No.

2442. You do not find that you are obliged to refuse a large amount of goods?—No.

2443. *Mr. Butt.*] It was stated to *Mr. Tremenheere* that you managed to reconcile your work with your short hours in this way, that if work is absolutely required, with a specified time for a certain ship, you often manage to put aside other goods that are not so urgent, which enables you to execute the order; is that so?—Yes.

2444. Is not it a matter of management, which, generally speaking, is not difficult?—It depends upon the business you are in.

2445. I believe you are a finisher?—Yes; I do not know that there is anything particular in our business in that respect.

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2446. *Mr. Butt.*] I BELIEVE you are the Member for Bolton?—I am one of the Members for Bolton. *Joseph Crook, Esq., M. P.*

2447. Have you any great acquaintance with the bleaching trade?—I am not practically acquainted with the process of bleaching, but with the part of it in connexion with the mercantile trade I have some acquaintance.

2448. What is your own business?—My own business is a cotton-spinner and manufacturer.

2449. Do you send your goods to the bleacher to be bleached?—We send the bulk of our goods to be bleached.

2450. Would you state to the Committee what your opinion would be, as a practical man, of the effect of an Act limiting the hours of labour for women and children?—I look upon an Act of that nature mainly as affecting the health and morals of the women and children employed therein.

2451. Have you any practical acquaintance with the hours at present of labour pursued in the bleach-works?—I have some acquaintance, so far as my own observation goes, with the extremely late hours that they work at night at the bleach-works; and from inquiry of the workpeople I find that the women and children are employed extremely long hours, unreasonable hours, and that they are employed extensively at night.

2452. Can you state to the Committee what the result of your inquiries has led you to believe as to the length of the work?—It varies, I believe, from a very limited number of hours in the day when the bleach-works are slack, to 12, 14

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and 16 hours a day, for several days and weeks in succession, when very full of work.

2453. Is the work to the extent of 16 hours, in your opinion, carried on for several days in succession?—Yes.

2454. I need scarcely ask you what the effect of that is upon their health?—I am not prepared at this moment to give instances; particular instances have been brought under my notice, but I am not prepared here to day to state to the Committee the nature of those instances.

2455. Are those instances of the quantity of suffering produced?—Yes; I have letters in my possession, at Bolton, from workpeople and the friends of workpeople, complaining of the physical suffering they have endured, and are victims to, in consequence of their protracted hours of labour.

2456. Has your attention been turned to the effect upon the morals and intelligence of the workpeople?—As regards the workpeople in the bleach-works at Bolton, I consider them inferior in intelligence and morals to the workpeople in the town, and especially so since the Factory Act came into full operation.

2457. At what ages are women and boys employed those long hours?—I believe in bleach-works they are taken in occasionally very young; but I think that is the exception. I believe they are not found of much practical use till they are 10 or 11 years of age.

2458. As representative of Bolton, probably you are well acquainted with the feelings of the working classes?—The operatives are decidedly, I think, in favour of a restriction of the hours of labour by legislative enactment.

2459. Do you think that that is a general feeling among the bleachers?—I think it is the general feeling among the bleachers; naturally, as long as the opportunity exists of working longer hours, and obtaining for the time higher wages, they will take advantage of it.

2460. Would they wish that the opportunity were taken away from them?—They are quite willing that the opportunity should be taken away from them.

2461. Is there, in point of fact, a considerable anxiety among the operatives that such a Bill might pass?—Decidedly so.

2462. Have not they formed societies to obtain it?—They have.

2463. And subscribed money to it?—And subscribed money to it.

2464. And held meetings, and presented petitions?—They have held meetings and presented petitions, and have taken other steps to promote the enactment of such a measure, by appointing and supporting delegates to London, to represent their interest and wishes to the Members of the House of Commons, urging upon the Members of the House the importance and necessity of such a measure.

2465. Do you find that any of the operatives entertain a different opinion?—I think that the numbers who entertain opinions unfavourable to legislation are extremely limited. I have no reason myself to know that there is such an instance.

2466. Do you, in point of fact, know that any among the operatives would be averse to legislation?—I do not personally know, and I never heard of such a person.

2467. Then, as far as you know, the unanimous feeling of the operative bleachers is in favour of legislative restriction upon the hours of work?—Yes, as far as I know.

2468. You, as a manufacturer, are, of course, capable of forming an opinion of what the effect upon your trade will be of a restriction upon the hours of work in the bleach-works?—Yes.

2469. Do you think that a restriction of the hours of work would be the cause of any sensible inconvenience to you?—Certainly not; I think the consideration of the effect upon trade, of a restriction of the labour of women and children to ten hours a day, is altogether unworthy the attempt to collect a great amount of evidence upon it. The mere bleaching or washing the cloth is in itself of little importance compared with the manufacture of it, and that is already affected by existing law; that is to say, a far more important question of the same nature is settled by the Factory Act.

2470. And, therefore, you say that it is not worth considering?—It is utterly unimportant. I have every reason to think that the bleachers themselves, practically, have not much strength of conviction upon that point. The best evidence that

that I can give of that is, that they are very indifferent with regard to their delivery of goods, though they know the orders are pressing. My experience is, that the bleachers put off one merchant's cloth for another's, just as may suit their convenience or their caprice. They let a merchant or a manufacturer wait for his cloth being delivered, rather than be acted upon by any pressure of a mercantile necessity.

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2471. Then, in point of fact, you do not think that you would suffer any sensible inconvenience in having your orders executed, if there was a restriction upon the hours of labour in bleach-works?—Not at all. I may give some practical instances. We have a considerable amount of bleaching with Mr. Ainsworth, who, I believe, is one of the most active opponents of legislation; and I could show that he does not attribute much importance to our foreign orders. I may state, that I find within the last few months we have had cloth delivered in eight or nine days frequently; but, as a general rule, it has varied from nine days to 51 days. There is one instance of between 600 and 700 pieces which, though we were pressing for them, were kept 51 days; that was, of course, for the bleachers' convenience; those goods were ordered to be shipped by the next steamer for America; but there has not appeared any evidence of a fear of losing their business by foreign competition, or else they would make provision for the delivery of cloth with greater punctuality.

2472. Is it your opinion that you could accommodate your trade to the altered state of things?—Easily.

2473. In your opinion, would it add materially to the cost of bleaching?—I do not think it would at all; the cost of bleaching at present, and for many years, has been more influenced by a combination among the bleachers than by the cost of bleaching. It may rise, as cotton-twist rose in price after the Factory Act: the consequence was to limit the production of twist, and to increase the price considerably more than the increased cost of production.

2474. Supposing that there is a rise in the cost of bleaching of five or even of 10 per cent., do you concur in the opinions expressed, that that would materially interfere with the cotton trade?—Not in the slightest degree.

2475. Is the cotton trade capable of sustaining a rise even of 10 per cent.?—The rise of a penny in price is nothing; our prices vary from 6 *d.* and 9 *d.* to 1 *s.*; they vary a few pence just as generally as any other marketable article does in the market. A penny is put out of our calculation either as a temporary or as a permanent step.

2476. Mr. Clark.] Do not you think that if the operatives are very anxious for short hours, they have it very much in their own hands?—No, I do not think they have.

2477. Suppose they were to refuse to work more than 10 hours, what would be the result?—They would be put out of work; they could not get a situation anywhere. At present the competition between master bleachers is such that they must have people to work long hours.

2478. If a man refused to work long hours, is it your opinion that that man would be dismissed?—Yes; and he could not get work if he made that a condition anywhere, except at Mr. Seagar's and a few other places; therefore that man must starve. Of course this Bill affects only women and children, and they are more helpless than men.

2479. Do the employers oblige children to work in that manner?—Certainly; they are indispensable to the process.

2480. Mr. Packe.] If a child were taken off the over-work, would that involve the discharge of the parent from the bleach-works?—Yes; the children must necessarily conform to the customs and rules of the bleach-works, or else be immediately discharged, just as in mills; before the mills were regulated, we had mills working for from 12 to 16 hours, and of course the children had to submit.

2481. Mr. Butt.] You can, of course, speak as to the effects of the Factory Act?—Yes.

2482. Will you state to the Committee what, in your opinion, those effects have been?—The effects have been beneficial in every respect to all branches of the trade; and as evidence of that, I may state that not even the masters complained; not a murmur has been heard as to its detriment upon the foreign trade of the country. Dreadful cries were uttered before the Bill passed, that the trade would be ruined, and the country would become a waste almost, if the Factory Act passed; but since it has passed the masters have themselves been convinced

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of its utility, of its benevolence, and of the good that has resulted, and no one of them has questioned its operation.

2483. Do you think that if they still had the option of the Factory Act, they would wish to get it repealed?—I am not aware of such a case. I have heard gentlemen express themselves against the principle of legislation, but I have not heard them say that they wished the Factory Act to be repealed. I may observe with regard to the improvement that has taken place among the workpeople and the masters, that the Factory Act has had an effect upon both. The masters have had more time, after their business hours, to devote to self-improvement. It used to be the case, that they would work in their offices until eight or nine o'clock at night, in consequence of the mills working till half past seven or eight, or nine, so that they were only a sort of privileged white slaves, until the Factory Bill passed. Another instance of it is the more friendly feeling that exists between master and man, and the improved policy of the working people in their trades unions. The trades unions are managed with much greater tact, and with less acerbity and ill-feeling than used to prevail.

2484. *Chairman.*] Are there any strikes with you?—There are occasionally strikes, and desperate ones. We have only just got out of one at Preston, which continued for six months; but still it was conducted with much better temper, and with less irritability of feeling than any strike of that length that I remember.

2485. Do you work chiefly for the foreign trade or the home trade?—Chiefly for the foreign trade.

2486. Was not it with respect to the foreign trade that these dismal predictions were most in vogue when the Factory Bill was under discussion?—It was.

2487. But you, working for the foreign trade, have not found out that those predictions were well founded?—No; but the fair inference is, that if the foreign trade were destroyed, the home trade would not be very prosperous. The competition in the home trade would be such as to make it scarce worth following.

2488. In the case of the bleaching trade, supposing inconvenience was to result to any of the manufacturers who employed the bleachers, would it be felt by the manufacturers who worked for the foreign trade, or the manufacturers who worked for the home trade?—If any inconvenience were felt, it would affect both.

2489. Being engaged largely in the foreign trade yourself, you are perfectly willing to run any risk of inconvenience from the limitation of the hours of labour in bleach-works?—Perfectly; in fact, I am quite satisfied that the measure will be an unmixed benefit to every branch of the trade. I am sure there is no element in it that would be more benefited by it than the masters; the business would be better done, I think much better done in quality, and that would compensate for the difference of cost; upon that ground they have no reason to fear competition, and I think that the business being to some extent limited, and subject to the incidents of a measure like this, would be much pleasanter, much easier, and much more satisfactory and prosperous than it is now.

2490. Did the master manufacturers themselves object to submit to similar regulations under the Factory Act?—Yes, I think that factory property may be looked upon as a decided proof of the prosperity and greater regularity that are sure to succeed to a measure of this kind, but if there were any doubt about it, I am convinced that the morality and physical necessity of the measure are so urgent that if there were any commercial reasons for hesitating, they are dissipated at once by its imperious necessity.

2491. *Mr. Butt.*] Are you able to speak as to how the master bleachers are disposed to such a measure generally?—I have not had an opportunity lately of conversing with many of them; there are a few that are very resolute in opposing this Bill. I believe the number is increasing of those who are favourably disposed.

2492. Is not there a considerable opinion among the masters in favour of this Bill?—There is.

2493. Do you know of any attempt being made to effect a voluntary arrangement?—I have not heard of such a thing; I should not give a moment's encouragement to such a scheme, it is utterly impracticable: I think experience proves that any attempt at voluntary arrangement upon a question of this kind is utterly preposterous.

2494. Are you aware of something of the kind having been attempted in the west of Scotland?—I am aware of evidence being given in Mr. Tremeneere's report, which I have no doubt is correct.

2495. Is not the great majority of masters in your district favourable to restriction?—I believe they are.

2496. And of the impossibility to make a voluntary arrangement?—Yes.

2497. And there is a concurrency of opinion as to its utter impracticability?—There are few people to be found who would entertain the idea that such a scheme was practicable.

2498. *Chairman.*] In your own experience, were those voluntary arrangements ever attempted to be entered into previous to the passing of the Factory Act in your trade?—There were many attempts by individual masters, and a few of the workpeople, but they were always attended with certain failure; and I remember the late Mr. Fielding made a great sacrifice himself to carry it out individually, but of course the thing was altogether impracticable; he only victimised himself and his workpeople; without law it cannot be done.

2499. *Mr. Butt.*] Is there any other point upon which you wish to give information to the Committee?—It strikes me, that the principle of this Bill is not one that involves an attempt to regulate trade; it is simply a philosophical and a moral question. It is clear that women and children cannot be employed these unreasonable hours with impunity, and that it is simply a question claiming the attention of the Legislature as a special evil requiring a remedy.

2500. Do you consider it a crime on the part of the parent, to work his child in such a way as to affect its physical condition?—I do consider it a crime against the natural laws.

2501. Would not you consider the master who was an accessory to that, also guilty of an offence?—I must exonerate the master; under the present arrangements, competition obliges him to do what he believes to be wrong; many masters do it, and admit the wrong.

2502. In point of fact, do you know that masters have expressed that opinion, that they were doing wrong, and that they were forced to do wrong in these hours of over-work?—I do not remember hearing that confession from any of my personal friends, but it is broadly stated by one of the master bleachers in Scotland; I do not remember his name; I have no doubt that feelings of that sort are entertained by some of my personal friends.

2503. Do you regard this Bill not as an interference with trade, but as an interference of the Legislature to prevent the parent committing a crime against his child?—It is not so much to prevent them committing a crime, but to provide for the health and morals of the rising generation. There are people that do not like legislation; that are fond of mud; you cannot get their sewers cleaned, and they resist legislative efforts. Even if they are up to the neck they would rather stick in the mud than that you should get them out by law; but it will not do for the Legislature to be governed by this sort of people; it is necessary for the welfare of the people, and even for our own personal welfare, that those notions should be overcome; that the law should over-ride them, and this mud should be cleared away; and it is this mud of ignorance that is entertained by the master bleachers, and it must be cleared away, although they are unwilling.

2504. Do you think there is danger in those over-hours of work of a deterioration of the population?—I think the physical condition of the population is deteriorated by over-hours of work already, and it is to stop that deterioration that I advocate the matter.

2505. Have not you in Bolton, a number of mechanics' institutes and educational institutions formed by the workpeople themselves?—We have one mechanics' institution and one public library, to which the working classes have contributed handsomely.

2506. Do you perceive any difference in the part taken in those by bleachers and by other classes of society?—There is scarcely ever a person connected with the bleach-works who subscribes to the funds of the mechanics' institution; the people from the bleach-works attending the mechanics' institution are extremely few in number in proportion to all the others.

2507. Do you attribute that to the long hours of work?—I do.

2508. Are the bleachers as a class naturally less intelligent than others?—Not naturally; but the long hours of work make them so.

2509. Do you think that if they had equal advantages with the other operatives they would avail themselves of the means of education?—Certainly.

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2510. Have you had complaints of their not being able to get the means of education?—I have had complaints made by men, women and children of their being deprived of the opportunity of improving themselves.

2511. Were those complaints frequent?—To myself, not very frequent; they have occurred on the occasions when I have had occasion to mix with the work-people of bleach-works, at their meetings especially.

2512. You have, I believe, taken an active part with the working classes in the agitation of this question?—I have taken the chair at their public meetings in Bolton, and have lent them any assistance in my power.

2513. Were those meetings well attended?—They were very well attended; they were attended exclusively by the working classes, except a few clergymen and two or three master bleachers.

2514. Were there many master bleachers who attended those meetings?—Not many; Mr. Heywood was there.

2515. Did those meetings confirm the opinion you have expressed, that there is a strong anxiety among the working bleachers for the measure?—Yes, in an unqualified manner; there were resolutions in favour of it.

2516. Was the feeling expressed a very strong one?—Very strong; there was a great deal of enthusiasm at the meetings in favour of this measure.

2517. You have said that the clergymen attend those meetings?—Yes.

2518. Do you know whether the opinion of the clergy in the neighbourhood of Bolton is in favour of the measure?—I think the clergy, as a body, are most of them in favour of it.

2519. Can you tell us the opinion of the medical men?—I think there is scarcely an exception to be found among them as to this measure.

2520. You probably have seen the petition presented to this House from Bolton from the medical men and clergymen?—I have seen it in Mr. Tremenheere's Report.

2521. You of course are able to form an opinion of the names attached to it?—Yes.

2522. Will you look over those names, and state, from your knowledge of Bolton, what you think of that expression of opinion (*Mr. Tremenheere's Report being handed to the Witness*)?—I should say those names may be taken as a decided preponderance of opinion on the part of those two classes, the ministers and the medical gentlemen.

2523. Are you well acquainted with Manchester and Salford?—I am not very conversant with them.

2524. Are you acquainted with the merchants and commission agents at Manchester?—I have some acquaintance with them.

2525. Will you look at page 10 of Mr. Tremenheere's Report, which contains this passage: "Those names will at once be recognised as comprising nearly the whole of the principal mercantile firms in Manchester, the nature of whose businesses causes them to be in frequent communication with the bleachers, and acquainted with the peculiarities of their trade." Do you see the names in the immediately preceding column?—Yes.

2526. Would you consider that those are the "principal mercantile firms in Manchester, the nature of whose business causes them to be in frequent communication with the bleachers, and acquainted with the peculiarities of their trade"?—Yes; those are some of the leading firms in Manchester, and I should think they are a very fair test of the opinions of the merchants in Manchester, who are in contact with the bleachers.

2527. Would you say that that was a fair representation of the classes of merchants who come in contact with the bleachers?—Those are some of the largest merchants.

2528. If their opinion was that this restriction of the hours of work would do no harm to the trade, may we say that the opinion of the merchants in Manchester is in favour of it?—Yes.

2529. Mr. Kirk.] What do you mean by the use of the words "the mud of ignorance"?—I mean that it is the attachment that certain gentlemen have, in their minds, to the customs in which they have been brought up, and to the institutions by which they are surrounded.

2530. Do

2530. Do you mean to say that it is the attachment to ancient customs?—It is the attachment to bad customs in this case. Joseph Crook, Esq.,
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2531. Do you think that attachment to ancient customs is “the mud of ignorance”?—Yes.

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2532. Then, I suppose, that as Sunday is an ancient custom, you would think that the attachment to the Sabbath was necessarily “the mud of ignorance”?—No; it depends upon my opinion of the utility of the institution. I think it is a good thing that a bleacher should bleach goods; I do not think it is a bad notion of his that he must bleach goods in order to get his living. They have been long attached to that notion, and I think that that notion is not “the mud of ignorance.” But I think it is “the mud of ignorance” to be working in the night at bleaching, or at all events to employ women and children in the night. I should not like my own wife or my child to be going out of the house and along the road through the town at all hours of the night. I think the necessities of commerce do not require such unreasonable arrangements, and I do not think that they can be placed upon the same footing as the institution of the Sabbath.

2533. Have not you a special regard yourself for the Sabbath?—I have.

2534. Have you never advocated working on the Sunday?—I never did.

2535. Did you never countenance working on the Sunday?—I never did, at anything that could be avoided.

2536. What do you mean by that distinction?—I mean that in cotton works it is occasionally necessary, in order that the works should go on on Monday, that some repairs should be done on Sunday.

2537. Would you, therefore, advocate that work should be done on Sunday?—I would advocate working to that extent. It is necessary in the cotton mills that men should work on Sunday to keep the rooms dry and warm, and so on, in order that the people should be able to work on Monday morning.

2538. The people need not work on Monday morning?—Certainly not; but I think that that is one of the institutions to which they are wisely attached.

2539. You do not think that “the mud of ignorance”?—No.

2540. Is not your own opinion the standard of what you consider “the mud of ignorance”?—Yes, it is.

2541. I believe you live in Bolton, in the neighbourhood of these bleach-works, and are familiar with their operations?—I am familiar with their operations so far, that I see them taking in cloth and sending it out again bleached, and I see them lighted up late at night.

2542. Do you often visit the bleach-works?—Once or twice a year.

2543. How often have you been in a bleach-work in your life?—I should think about 10 times.

2544. Is not your information upon the subject derived from the committee of working men?—No; it is derived a good deal from letters which I have received from the friends of the operatives and the workpeople, and from the intercourse with the workpeople at their meetings. I have taken a good deal of pains to make myself acquainted with individual cases by occasionally speaking with them at their meetings, and at other times when I have had an opportunity of intercourse with them. I used to live very near to Messrs. Bridson’s bleach-works, and as a young man I had more practical intimacy with them than I have had of late years.

2545. Did you never advise these persons not to send their children to the works to be so cruelly treated?—No; because it would be “the mud of ignorance” to do so; they are under the necessity of having a small income from their children’s labour, and are compelled to submit them to the rules of the bleach-works; working long days and during the night is such a prevailing custom, that the workpeople cannot set it at defiance.

2546. Do you mean to say that any workman cannot set prevailing customs at defiance?—He can only do it at the expense of much personal suffering and inconvenience; he must have a less income if he keeps the child at home.

2547. Do you mean to assert, then, to this Committee, that it is “the mud of ignorance,” as you term it, for a parent to send his children to school?—No; I do not think so, if he can afford it.

2548. Whether he has the means or no, will not 1 *d.* a week, or 2 *d.* a week enable him to get the children educated?—Yes, it will; but he cannot dispense with the 2 *s.* a week that the child brings in.

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2549. Why cannot he dispense with that?—Because he probably has a wife and four children to support.

2550. Supposing that he has two children, do you think that it is “the mud of ignorance” to send his children to school?—My supposition was, that he had four children.

2551. Mr. Butt.] Did you mean to say in your answer that it would be the “mud of ignorance” upon your part to suppose that you could have prevented parents from sending their children to work?—I do not remember the meaning of the question and my answer.

2552. Mr. Kirk.] Supposing that the father earns 20 s. a week, and the mother earns 6 s. or 7 s., so that the income of a family with two children is 26 s. or 27 s. a week, do you mean to tell the Committee that you think that they could not or ought not to spare the 2 d. a week that would educate their children until they were able to read with fluency?—I think they ought; but unfortunately the great mass of the workpeople in Bolton having four or six children, only have 14 s. to 20 s. a week coming in.

2553. You were speaking of a library in Bolton; do the rules of your library preclude workpeople taking out books to read?—Certainly not; there are, I think, 10,000 volumes at their service.

2554. You say that you are acquainted with the bleach-works; supposing that one of the workpeople should take a book out, are not there intervals of labour in which that man may read it if he likes?—There are intervals; but the uncertainty and irregularity of that kind of employment indisposes a man altogether to reading. The inducement to self-culture arises from more orderly habits. A man who is employed in a very irregular manner is not regular in any thing; it disorders and demoralises all his habits.

2555. How will this new law make the work more continuous?—By distributing the work; first, by limiting the number of hours during which women and children may be worked, which will to some extent make it necessary to spread the business over a greater number of days.

2556. How would you do that?—Instead of working three days for 16 hours I would have them work four days for 10 hours; 16 hours of course includes the meal times.

2557. Supposing that to be the law, would there be any clause in the Bill to prevent Messrs. Bridson from extending their works and employing additional hands?—Not at all; I think that would be the result.

2558. And then would there not be the same amount of interference with labour and rest as there is now?—If this Bill were passed, and they put up additional machinery, of course a greater number of people would be employed at more regular hours, having more regular habits, and a great benefit would result.

2559. Supposing that to be the case, does that in the slightest degree benefit the people who work by the piece, and who are not paid by the day as they are in the cotton mills?—They are not paid by the day; the great bulk of the workpeople in the cotton mills are paid by the piece, and though they worked by the piece they were exceedingly anxious to have the Factory Act. Evidence had been given since I came into the room in favour of the impression (and it is unquestionably true), that the workpeople get as much wages for 10 hours as they used to do for 12.

2560. Is the principal expectation about Bolton that they will get the same amount of money for 10 hours, as they do now for 16?—I have no doubt that that is one motive, and in my opinion a legitimate one, seeing the benefits of the Factory Act. But their leading object is a social one. They wish to have some social comforts, by being able to spend their evenings at home with one another. Their next reason is, that it will improve their position in society, and their financial resources.

2561. If a man could only earn a certain sum of money by working 16 hours a day, and in consequence of that work he is able to educate his children, will his being able to work only 10 hours a day if he is paid in the same way, enable him to get more money and to educate his children better?—The effect of the Factory Act has been, that the wages of the man himself have been raised.

2562. Has there not been a general rise of wages throughout the empire owing to

to the introduction of free trade?—No doubt that will have acted very materially upon the condition of the factory operatives.

2563. Do not you think therefore, that it is not owing to the Factory Act, but to the introduction of free trade, that that rise has taken place?—It is partly owing to the institution of the free trade policy, no doubt.

2564. With whose bleach-works are you most familiar?—I think with those of my neighbour, Mr. Makant.

2565. Have you been often in Messrs. Bridson's works?—I have not; it is now a good many years since I have been there.

2566. Are you aware that Messrs. Bridson & Co. have a reading-room supplied with books and periodicals for their workpeople?—I am not aware of it.

2567. Have you never heard it?—I do not remember now that I ever heard of it.

2568. Did you ever hear that Messrs. Blair & Co. have a reading-room supplied with books and periodicals for their workpeople?—I do not know that I have heard of it.

2569. So that though you live in the neighbourhood of these people, is it not the fact that you have taken evidence only on one side of the question?—I do not think I have.

2570. Do not you live in the neighbourhood of those people?—Yes. My inquiries have naturally been directed to the evils that prevail, and to the most practicable mode of remedying those evils. I have not associated the mechanics' institution or the public library with the question of the policy or inpolicy of working women and children long days, and during the night, and therefore have had no motive to inquire as to the number of books that they had in the bleach-works in the neighbourhood; I do not think the men appreciate these things: an independent workman would not like to be pauperised by having books provided for him by his master. If I were a working man I should wish to be in an independent position, and buy books, or subscribe to a library, altogether independent of my master's supply.

2571. May I conclude from your answer that you are opposed to the masters of factories providing education for the children of their operatives?—Not at all, so far as they have been required by law to go to school; we are not compelled to provide the education; we are merely forbidden to employ them for more than one day till we have secured their attendance at some school; but the schooling must be paid for by themselves.

2572. Is Mr. Makant's establishment a very large establishment?—Not very large; it is a moderate sized one.

2573. Do they work very long hours there?—Not very long hours.

2574. What hours do they work?—I think that some days they work a very short time, but at other times, I believe, they work up to 12 hours; but I think, as a rule, Mr. Makant is one of those benevolent masters who will not undertake to do work which requires him to go into extremely long hours.

2575. Have you been to any other bleach-works, except Mr. Makant's, lately?—Not lately.

2576. How many years is it since you have been in any bleach-work except his?—It is not more than three years, I think, since I was through the principal part of the works of Messrs. John Slater & Co.

2577. Did you think it necessary, for the purposes of this inquiry, that you should make yourself acquainted with any but one side of the case?—I think I have made myself acquainted with both sides of the case. One side of the case I look upon to be the existence of a great evil, and the other the provision of a sufficient remedy.

2578. Would it not have been desirable for you to have made yourself acquainted with the processes in the different bleach-works, in order to suggest a proper remedy?—I have made myself acquainted with them. I was shown through Mr. Makant's works a short time since, and my impression was, and is now, that there is no practical difficulty in the bleachers confining themselves to the same hours as in the factories.

2579. Did you satisfy yourself by one walk only?—Within the last few years that was the case. Mr. Makant has expressed an opinion to me favourable to short hours, but opposed to the principle of legislation. He takes fright at what he calls the principle of interference.

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2580. He is a great friend of yours, is not he?—He is a personal friend of mine.

2581. Did not he support you most strongly in the last election?—He plumped for Mr. Barnes, and did not vote for me.

2582. Has his change of opinion arisen in any way out of the present inquiry?—His change of conduct towards his friend arose from finding that his friend was such an ardent supporter of a measure of which he disapproved. He disapproved of our principle, and he declined to vote for me.

2583. Then does Mr. Makant disapprove of this in principle?—He does not like the principle of legislative interference in regard to trade.

2584. Do you consider him one of those who are in “the mud of ignorance”?—He is to that extent; I should not hesitate to tell him so if he were here.

2585. Mr. Cheetham.] Do you know that his opinion is to this effect, that the hours of labour can be shortened by voluntary arrangement?—I do not think he entertains any such notion as that; I should hope not.

2586. From what you know of his opinions, he objects strongly to interference on the part of the Legislature?—He does.

2587. Are there many cotton factories in the neighbourhood of the bleach-works at Bolton?—There are.

2588. Do you know any instance of the various workpeople in these bleach-works leaving the bleach-works and going to the mills?—I do not know any instances, I hear there have been; it is very natural that it should be a temptation to women who can bear to stand for 16 hours in the day, if they find that they can get a few shillings more by working at the bleach-works.

2589. Have they gone from the mill which is under legislative restriction with regard to hours, to the bleach-works where there is no such restriction?—Yes.

2590. Do you know of any instances in which the people have gone from the bleach-works to the mills?—I do not know of any instances on either side that could be referred to.

2591. Is not that the only practical mode in which the workman can give expression to his objection to long hours?—Certainly not.

2592. What other modes are there in which he can do it?—A man may be an advocate for working eight hours a day, just as Mr. Fielding was when he was a spinner. He tried eight hours a day; but he afterwards became a convert to the necessity for legislation, and put his mill on to 12; he once thought that he could influence the customs of society.

2593. Is there anything to prevent a man leaving the bleach-works and going to the mills?—There is this to prevent, namely, the situation in which they are placed. Their families are resident in the neighbourhood of bleach-works, and bleaching is more in accordance with their tastes than the factory; they do not like the factory smell, or they do not like the factory customs, or they do not like the factory wages. More depends upon a person's education and customs than anything else.

2594. So that, upon the whole, they prefer these long hours to seeking shorter hours?—I do not think that they do.

2595. Does not their remaining there give a practical testimony that they do?—No; the practical testimony that they do not is their having assembled in large numbers at Bolton, when I took the chair at their meetings, to express their opinion in favour of short hours.

2596. Would not a more practical testimony be given by their leaving the bleach-works where they are so restricted?—It would, but the thing is impracticable.

2597. Why is it impracticable?—Because it is impossible that they should succeed (with any useful result); they would only be personal victims by doing violence to their tastes, their customs, and their weekly income, by any such attempt; there is no motive for it. Certainly, personal sacrifice is the best test of sincerity.

2598. Do you suppose that they prefer better wages in the bleach-works, and long hours, to lower wages and shorter time?—Some do; but the best test of factory employment is the fact that there is no scarcity; we can get plenty of workmen at from 17s. to 20s. in the factory.

2599. Is

2599. Is not there considerable extension going on in the factories?—Very considerable. Joseph Crook, Esq.,
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2600. *Chairman.*] Have you any difficulty in finding labour in the factories?—I do not know of any at this moment.

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2601. Is it certain that if all the people from the bleach-works were to throw themselves upon the factories they could get employment?—I do not think they could.

2602. Would not they have to unlearn the business to which they were accustomed, and to learn a business to which they were unaccustomed?—They would; great inconvenience would be incurred by a change of this sort.

2603. *Mr. Butt.*] You were asked about a rise of wages having generally taken place since the introduction of free trade; are you acquainted with the wages in the bleach-works for the last 10 years?—I am not.

2604. Then you do not know whether they have fallen or not?—I do not.

2605. Have you heard whether they have fallen?—I have not heard anything upon the question; nothing upon the subject of wages has been stated to me.

2606. *Chairman.*] Are you of opinion that any other cause has affected the rise of wages besides what is called the introduction of free trade?—I do not recognise any important causes acting upon the demand and supply of labour, except the limitation of the hours of labour, and the free trade creating a demand for labour.

2607. Do you restrict these observations to your own business and neighbourhood?—I restrict my observations to my own business and neighbourhood.

2608. Do you intend the Committee to understand by your answer that you do not apply these observations to the agricultural interest, or any other interest not connected with your own business?—I conceive that wages generally are influenced by the demand for the productions of labour, mainly for the foreign trade; that acts upon the home trade, drawing off labour to some extent from the home trade, so as to raise its price, and to enhance its value.

2609. Are you still restricting your observations to trade?—No; I extend them to the agricultural districts; I think that free trade, by increasing the demand for the production of labour of all kinds, agricultural and manufacturing, there being a more steady and more vigorous and remunerative demand for labour of all kinds, has given an impulse to labour, agricultural as well as manufacturing.

2610. *Mr. Cheetham.*] Is it your opinion that at the present moment you have a surplus population in the neighbourhood of Bolton sufficient to fill the new mills that will be erected there?—I think we have, or we may expect workpeople to come there when the mills are got ready. I am giving a practical proof of my belief, for I am building new works.

Martis, 23^o die Junii, 1857.

MEMBERS PRESENT :

Mr. Baxter.
Mr. Cheetham.
Mr. Clark.
Mr. Cobbett.
Mr. Davison.

Mr. Kirk.
Lord John Manners.
Mr. Packe.
Mr. Turner.
Mr. Wise.

LORD JOHN MANNERS, in the CHAIR.

Albert Bowley, called in ; and Examined.

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2611. *Chairman.*] WILL you state to the Committee what occupation you follow?—I am a Bleacher.

2612. For whom do you work?—Messrs. Spencer & Harrison.

2613. Where are their works?—At Nottingham.

2614. What branch of the business do they carry on?—The finishing.

2615. What class of goods do they bleach?—Cotton goods.

2616. Can you tell us the number of people, men, women and children, that are employed in those works?—I should think about 50, or from that to 60.

2617. Of those how many will be women, how many children, and how many young persons under the age of 18?—I should think there are perhaps a dozen or 14 under the age of 18.

2618. And how many of those are women?—The greater part of them are females; there are about a dozen women altogether.

2619. What are their usual hours of work?—At the present time we work about 13 hours; but it is not so much as what we in general work.

2620. Do you mean by that 13 hours of work, or 13 hours partly work and partly time taken up for meals and resting?—It is work; it is about 15 hours, including meals.

2621. And you say sometimes those hours are exceeded?—Yes, generally.

2622. Can you tell the Committee the greatest number of hours of continuous work that you remember?—I have known them to work nearly nine days in a week.

2623. Will you state to the Committee at what time the work begins on Monday morning?—They generally begin about six o'clock in the morning.

2624. How many hours do they work continuously?—I have known them to work till eleven and twelve, and I have known them to work till two and three; that would be two or three on Tuesday morning.

2625. At what time do the people who have been working till two or three o'clock on Tuesday morning come back again to work?—Six o'clock the next morning.

2626. Until what time do they work?—Till ten or eleven or twelve the next night; perhaps longer.

2627. Then they go home; at what time will they begin again on Wednesday?—They begin again about the same time: they continue that about the week through. I have known them to work so late that they have not gone home; they have laid down upon the pieces to rest themselves the few hours they have had to rest.

2628. Do you mean that they have not gone home for the week?—I have known them not to go home for two or three nights.

2629. You have stated already that the great majority of those employed in these works are females?—Yes.

2630. Can you tell the Committee what the effect upon the females so engaged has been?—I have known many of them to suffer very much from it; they have been

been laid up with it; and some have been obliged to leave the works on account of working so many hours.

2631. Were those cases which have occurred recently, or are you speaking now of the state of things some years ago?—It has been till about twelve months ago. This last twelve months we have not worked so long a time as we always have done since I have worked there before.

2632. Do you know what has brought about that change?—I have thought it might be on account of the expectation of this Bill.

2633. Has there been any conversation at all between the masters and the workpeople upon the subject of this Bill?—Yes; they have spoken about it many times.

2634. Have any arrangements been proposed on the one side or the other?—No; they do not seem willing to give way at all; they said it might be so provided if there were some steps taken so that all could be placed in the same position.

2635. Can you tell the Committee whether the feeling among the people employed in the bleaching business is in favour of restricting the hours of labour?—Yes, it is, very much.

2636. Was that feeling expressed to Mr. Tremenheere when he was taking evidence in Nottingham?—I am sure I cannot say.

2637. Are you aware of the nature of Mr. Tremenheere's report?—I am not.

2638. Is machinery used in your works?—There are rollers; but I believe they are not, generally speaking, used in the finishing branch, though we use them.

2639. In your finishing department rollers are used?—Yes.

2640. Can you tell the Committee what the ordinary heat is in those rooms in which you work?—We vary from about 80 to 110 degrees, I should think.

2641. Can you tell the Committee that 80 is about the lowest?—Yes; I do not know that ever I have seen it under 80.

2642. Do those women and young persons work the number of hours you have described in that temperature?—Yes, and they complain very much of the heat.

2643. When you tell the Committee that they complain very much, have you known cases in which they have had to leave the works in consequence?—Yes; they have been recommended by their medical advisers to leave, or otherwise it would shorten their days.

2644. In those instances have they come back again to the works, or have they left for good and all?—There are some we never knew to go back at all.

2645. Can you tell the Committee in what way they suffer; is there any particular disease which they are subject to?—I have known some who have suffered very much in their feet.

2646. Have the bleachers and finishers of Nottingham ever petitioned Parliament to be included in the operation of any Bill which should be passed upon this subject?—I believe they have.

2647. You have described the effects upon the physical condition of the women and children who work these long hours; can you tell the Committee anything about their education?—I believe the greater part of them are altogether uneducated.

2648. At what age will they generally be taken into the works?—We have had some under 13; but I think we have none at present; they are taken in from 13 upwards.

2649. Before they come to the age of 13, do they receive no education?—None at all.

2650. Why is that?—Because they do not seem to attend to it.

2651. You say that children are seldom taken into the works before they come to the age of 13; why are not they educated up to the time when they enter the works?—I should suppose that there are instances of some who get educated, and some perhaps do not. They cannot care much for it.

2652. Are the grown-up people who are working educated at all?—No, I think very little; in fact, if they do not get it before they come there, they do not seem to get it there.

2653. Do they attend any places of religious worship, generally?—I believe not at any time; I have frequently spoken to them, and asked them if they did not go to a place of worship, and they said they could not, they were so tired of

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working so many hours that they were compelled to lie in bed on the Sabbath to rest.

2654. Can you tell the Committee on what hour on the Saturday you usually leave off work?—Now, we leave off between seven and eight o'clock; but I have known them to work until half-past eleven; we first spoke to the master about letting us give over earlier on the Saturday night; and he has told us that if we would come sooner in the morning and work without any tea, we might give over between six and seven; but they often were later than that.

2655. If you accepted that offer and went to the works between six and seven o'clock on the Saturday morning, at what time would you have left the works on the Friday night?—Perhaps nine, ten, or eleven o'clock; it is generally about nine or half-past nine now.

2656. You have told the Committee that few of the workpeople attend any place of worship; do you wish to tell the Committee what your practice in that respect is?—Before I went to work I used regularly to attend; I never used to miss it, in fact; but since I have worked there I have been so tired with the labours of the week that I have not been able; I have been almost compelled to lie and rest all day on Sunday.

2657. Is that the ordinary practice of those with whom you work?—I believe it is, generally, from what I hear.

2658. *Mr. Cheetham.*] Were you aware of Mr. Tremenheere being in Nottingham?—No, I was not.

2659. Were any of your fellow-workmen aware of his presence?—I cannot say; they have frequently heard that the House of Commons were about to legislate for the regulation of the hours, and they have been very much agitated about it, hoping that it would come to pass.

2660. Do you know that his report specially exempts Nottingham from any prospective legislation on the subject?—No, I am not aware of that.

2661. Do they employ boys and girls there?—We have scarcely any boys at all.

2662. What is the youngest that you have?—I do not think we have any under 13 at present; they are very small, but they could not be possibly under that age.

2663. Have you any females in your works?—Yes.

2664. What would be the proportion of females in your works?—We have, I should think, 14, perhaps a few more, perhaps a few less, under 18 years of age; I do not ask them any thing about their age, and of course I only go from their appearance.

2665. Is not it the custom in the lace trade, generally, to work long hours, day and night?—Yes.

2666. You have given an opinion about the education of the children of Nottingham under 13, stating that they are not educated?—I was speaking only of those who work with me; I have found that they were not able to read or write.

2667. Is that the case with those who come above 13?—Yes, many of them.

2668. Is not it the fact that there are a great number both of day and Sunday schools in Nottingham?—Yes, it is.

2669. Do you know of anything which should prevent the children to whom you refer attending those schools before they attain this age?—I do not know of anything which would prevent their getting education before that age, except it was that the parents do not take an interest in it.

2670. What are the earnings that these boys and girls in your establishment get?—We have no boys, except one or two; but the girls get 2 s. 6 d., 3 s., and 3 s. 6 d. a week.

2671. Is that all they would get for those long hours?—They are paid for overtime.

2672. What would be their total earnings?—I am sure I cannot say what they would get altogether.

2673. What class of working people would get that?—The females.

2674. Do you mean to say that there is any female in Nottingham working for 3 s. a week?—Yes, a great many of them.

2675. What do the young females in the warehouses who bind the lace get?—

I cannot

I cannot say exactly what they get; because it is a question that we seldom speak of among one another.

2676. Is not it the fact that there is not a more expensively dressed population than the young women in Nottingham who work in such establishments as that in which you work?—I do not see a great amount of dress about us.

2677. Mr. *Kirk*.] Are they paid by the day or by the piece?—They are paid by the day.

2678. What number of hours constitute a day?—Nine and a half hours.

2679. When they work from six in the morning until 12 at night, what quantity of time does that reckon; is it a day and a half or a day and three quarters?—We should reckon from eight to seven a day.

2680. You spoke of beginning at six; would that be extra work?—That would be an hour and a half over.

2681. Is eight the proper time to begin?—Eight is the proper time to begin; but we seldom begin at that time.

2682. Supposing you were about to work for a day only, at what time would you consider that day's work to begin, and at what time would it end?—I should begin at eight and give over at seven.

2683. Then you begin at eight o'clock, after breakfast?—Yes.

2684. What intervals of rest would you have for food?—We should have an hour for dinner, and half an hour for tea.

2685. From eight to seven would be 11 hours, and an hour and a half out of that would leave 9½ hours?—Yes.

2686. Then 9½ hours is a day's work?—Yes.

2687. What wages do you yourself get for these 9½ hours?—I get 3 s. per day.

2688. Suppose you work till 12 at night; how much more would you get?—I should get 2 s. 2 d.

2689. Then you would get for working from eight o'clock in the morning till 12 at night 5 s. 2 d.?—Yes.

2690. Are not those extraordinarily high wages the reason why persons are induced to work those overtimes?—I am sure I cannot say whether that is the inducement; they are compelled to do it; they would rather get less, and work less time.

2691. What do you mean by the words "compelled to do it"?—If they did not do it the master would get rid of them.

2692. Would there be no other means in such a place as Nottingham by which they could obtain employment?—There are a great many out of work, and there would be great hazard in getting any work.

2693. Do you mean to say that the labour in Nottingham that is paid so highly is surplused; is there more labour than demand?—There are a great many people out of work, and they remain out of work a long time when they once get out.

2694. Is not there any other employment for women and children of a lighter kind in Nottingham?—Yes, there is other employment.

2695. Is not it exceedingly plentiful for that class of labour?—I cannot say that it is plentiful; I seldom get to see much of other people on account of my having to attend to my own business.

2696. Are you one of the short-time committee at Nottingham?—No.

2697. Is there a short-time committee there?—I am sure I cannot say.

2698. To what place of worship did you go when you were an attendant?—I went to the General Baptists.

2699. Is not there a large Roman Catholic establishment at Nottingham?—I believe there is.

2700. Mr. *Cheetham*.] You have stated in answer to a question put by an Honourable Member, that your total earnings for a day's work and overtime amounted to 5 s. 2 d. a day?—Yes, I think that would be about it.

2701. Did I rightly understand you to say, that whilst you earn 5 s. 2 d. a day, a female in the same establishment, going through the same hours, earns only 3 s. a week?—Except their overtime.

2702. Nine and a half hours is her day's work?—Yes.

2703. What does she get for that?—Half-a-crown a week.

2704. What would she get for the extra hours?—She would, perhaps, get a halfpenny an hour; I cannot say exactly what they do get.

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2705. What would her overtime be daily; would it be 2½ hours a day?—She would work nine hours and a half, and her overtime would be about a half-penny an hour over.

2706. So that if she works seven hours overtime, that would be 3½ d. a day?—Yes.

2707. Do you mean to state to the Committee that a female working in a temperature from 80 to 110 degrees, those long hours, 12, 13 or 14, would only earn about from 7½ d. to 8 d. a day in the town of Nottingham?—Yes.

2708. Are you competent to speak upon that?—Yes.

2709. Can you give me a case?—I know several cases in our own place.

2710. Would you give one case in detail, and give the name of the party?—In our own place we have so many that I do not know scarcely any names except the first name; for it is not the habit to call each other by the full name, so that I am not prepared to state the full name.

2711. Do you know the earnings of females in warehouses?—I do not.

2712. Do you know that they are earning 10 s. a week?—I am sure I cannot say.

2713. Do you still repeat to the Committee your statement that a female working in the same establishment that you work in, and working the same long hours, would only earn 3 s. a week?—Yes, or somewhere thereabouts.

2714. *Chairman.*] I think I understood you to say that she will earn 3 s. for her 9½ hours a day?—Yes; from 2 s. 6 d. to 3 s.

2715. Can you tell the Committee at all what would be the earnings of the same person if she worked at lace, for instance, in her own cottage, in the course of a week?—I do not know.

2716. *Mr. Davison.*] Is not it your opinion that the non-attendance of children under 10 years of age at any place of worship on Sunday arises from the neglect of the parents?—Yes, I dare say it may be so.

2717. Is it not further your opinion that the working those extra hours arises from the cupidity or desire of the parent to get more money?—No, I think not.

2718. What do you think it proceeds from?—We have spoken to our masters upon the subject several times, and I think that it might be done provided that they all were on a level.

2719. Several witnesses who have been examined here have all concurred in the opinion that it arises from the cupidity of the workpeople themselves. Do you differ from that view?—I am rather of a different opinion to that.

2720. You seem to think that it is from necessity?—Yes.

2721. And that necessity, according to your view, arises from the difficulty of getting other employment?—Yes; I believe that is correct.

2722. Do you mean to say that if the workpeople did not work the extra hours, or if any one of two of them declined to work the extra hours, they would be discharged?—Yes.

2723. *Mr. Packe.*] Have you known any instances where it has been done?—I have known many that have left on account of working so many hours; I cannot say that any have been discharged, but it is my opinion that they would be.

2724. *Mr. Davison.*] You do not know, of your own knowledge, of any being discharged?—I am not aware that any have been.

2725. *Mr. Packe.*] Do you know of any who have been threatened to be discharged if they would not work?—Yes.

2726. What master can you name as having done so?—I have known some in our own place, in the establishment where I work, that have been told that if they could not attend to the time they must go.

2727. *Mr. Davison.*] Have you known more than one instance of persons being told that if they would not work the time they must go or be discharged?—I do not know of any other establishment, but I have known it to be done repeatedly in our place.

2728. Did I rightly understand you to state that you have known an instance in your own establishment where the workpeople have been threatened with dismissal if they did not work extra hours?—Yes, in our own place.

2729. Name any one person that you have so known?—I have known it myself.

2730. Has that been said to yourself?—Yes.

2731. Do

2731. Do you know any other?—I have known some of the girls to be so treated, but I am not prepared with their names.

2732. Mr. *Clark.*] On that occasion had you refused to work extra time?—I have told him that I have not felt that I could stand it; or I have been late in the morning, and I have expressed a desire to give over a little sooner, and they said that if any one could not stand their time they must get a fresh situation.

2733. Mr. *Davison.*] You were late in the morning?—Yes; I have often been late in the morning.

2734. Was it upon an occasion of that description that your master remonstrated?—Yes.

2735. And he said that if you could not abide by the hours you must leave the work?—Yes.

2736. Had not that clearly a reference to your not coming at the fixed ordinary time for work?—Yes.

2737. And that is the instance in which you yourself were threatened?—Yes.

2738. Is that the only instance in which you were threatened?—No; we have been told of it many times; in fact, I have thought of another party in the same place.

2739. Was that from not coming at nine o'clock in the morning?—Yes; he remained so late at night that he could not come so soon.

2740. Did not those threats that you speak of arise from not coming at an early time in the morning?—I have known them go away early at night, and they have been threatened with the same thing.

2741. Is that in your establishment too?—Yes.

2742. Was it the foreman, or any of the partners, that said that?—The master himself.

2743. Name him, if you please?—Mr. *Harrison.*

2744. Mr. *Turner.*] If you had been discharged upon that occasion should you have been afraid of not being able to get another situation?—Yes.

2745. Is there a surplus of that kind of labour in Nottingham; are there many men out of employment?—Yes.

2746. Why should not your master, instead of working such unreasonable hours, avail himself of some of this extra labour; why should they not work you 9½ hours, and have other men to work the additional time when additional labour is required?—I cannot say why they should not do it; we think it might be done.

2747. You get about 5 s. 2 d. a day when you are working long hours?—Yes.

2748. Is that a common thing among these men?—No; there are very few, I think, that get that.

2749. What do they ordinarily get?—I am hardly able to answer that; for it is a general thing among workpeople not to explain to one another what wages they get. I know that we have some that are getting 12 s. a week, and there are some that have more.

2750. Why should some be only getting 2 s. a day and others 5 s.?—They are not able, perhaps, to take the same parts of the work.

2751. Are you rather a skilful man in the trade?—Yes; I have been used to it more than some of them have.

2752. You would say that wages range between 12 s. a week and upwards of 30 s.; what is the ordinary wages obtained by a well-skilled workman for moderate times?—I should think 1 l. or 25 s.; there may be more or less; I cannot say particularly.

2753. To what kind of employment do the parents generally send their girls in Nottingham?—I know there are a great many who send them to these places.

2754. There are a great many occupations in Nottingham, and the people are peculiarly well dressed there; how do you think the women manage to make such a respectable appearance in Nottingham?—I am sure I cannot tell; I often think that the girls have not wages sufficient to support the body.

2755. Do you think that they lay it all out in finery?—I think the greater part of it.

2756. Is not that a high state of decoration to produce out of 5 s. a week?—Those that are getting to that state that they have an amount to spend for dress are getting more than 3 s. a week; those are children that I spoke of as getting 3 s.

2757. At what age?—From 13 to perhaps 16 or 17, or something like that; the elder hands get more money.

Albert Bowley.

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2758. What do they generally get at 17?—Five or six shillings.
2759. *Mr. Davison.*] Up to what age do they get that?—From 17 to 25; some get more than that, perhaps.
2760. *Mr. Turner.*] Why do not the fathers of families send their children into the lace-works or warehouses, where there is abundant occupation for such young women?—I cannot say.
2761. Is there a great superabundance of labour of females in Nottingham, and are they generally pretty well employed?—I think the females are generally well employed.
2762. If one of those young women who gets her 3s. a week were dissatisfied with her situation in the finishing works, would she have any difficulty in getting another situation, where she would get better paid?—I cannot say; I have so very little knowledge as to what her employment may be.
2763. Those fathers of families may get from 20s. to 25s., and in your case 30s. a week; why are they so eager to send their children to undergo those long hours for half-a-crown a week?—I believe many of the masters request them to send them; I think so.
2764. Why should they not previously send them to school?—I am sure I cannot answer that question.
2765. Is that the fault of the master or of the parent?—I should be inclined to think it was the fault of the parent.
2766. Can you attribute the fault to any one else but the parent?—No, I cannot.
2767. *Mr. Davison.*] When you say the master requests them to send the children, do you mean to say that it is quite voluntary?—I have known instances where, if they had not sent their children, they would have been obliged to leave themselves.
2768. Generally speaking, when they request them to do so it is a request?—Yes.
2769. If the fathers of families did not send them to work, but sent their children to be educated, are there not plenty of people wishing to get employment?—Yes.
2770. Are there not plenty of extra hands, according to your account?—Yes.
2771. Therefore would the master have any difficulty in getting hands if the parents did not send them?—No, there would not be any difficulty.
2772. *Chairman.*] Are those parents who seem to be so indifferent about sending their children to school tolerably educated themselves?—I believe not; they prefer going to sit in the public-house and spend the money that would educate their children; there are a great many of that class.
2773. Do many of the bleachers and finishers hold gardens in Nottingham?—There are many that have gardens.
2774. *Mr. Davison.*] Do I rightly understand you that it is the general practice for the working classes of Nottingham to spend their Sundays in the manner you describe?—Many of them do.
2775. Are there as many of them who do it as there are who do not?—I am sure I cannot say.
2776. *Mr. Cheetham.*] Is your employment very changeable and fluctuating?—No.
2777. Are you employed in your establishment throughout the year?—Yes, with the exception of about six weeks or two months in the year; we are rather slack in the autumn; but we have always plenty to go on.
2778. What length of time would you work during that six weeks or two months?—We should perhaps be making our full time then, 9½ hours a day.
2779. *Mr. Davison.*] Is it not the fact that the more money the parent gets from the working of his children, the more he will be able to enjoy himself on the Sunday?—Yes.

John Shelbourne, called in; and Examined.

John Shelbourne.

2780. *Chairman.*] WHAT is your occupation?—A Finisher of Hosiery.
2781. In whose employment are you?—In Mr. Burton's.
2782. Where does he live?—At Old Baisford, near Nottingham.
2783. How long have you worked there?—Ten years.
2784. At what age did you first begin to work?—Eight years old.

2785. Had

2785. Had you received any education before you went into the works?—None at all.

2786. For whom did you work when you first began?—Mr. Milnes.

2787. Where does he live?—At New Baisford.

2788. Do you remember those early days sufficiently to tell the Committee what were the hours of work that you worked at Mr. Milnes's works?—Yes, I think I could.

2789. Will you tell the Committee what they were?—I think I worked from six in the morning till 11 or 12 at night, eight months in the year; and the other four months we were generally rather slacker.

2790. Were there women and young persons and children working those hours at Mr. Milnes's?—Yes.

2791. In what sort of proportion to the adult men?—I think there were about three women and children to one man.

2792. Did those women and children work the hours that you have described?—Yes.

2793. How many years ago would this be?—It was up to within five years ago.

2794. You were not in Mr. Milnes's employment then?—No; I worked for Mr. Milnes 10 years, and then for Messrs. Hard & Hurst 10 years, and from Messrs. Hard & Hurst I went to Mr. Burton.

2795. Did not the long hours at Mr. Milnes's, that you have described of your own knowledge, take place a considerable time ago?—Yes; they remained so for 26 years, until within the last five years.

2796. Can you speak of that of your own knowledge?—Yes; they remain the same.

2797. For whom have you worked since you left Mr. Milnes?—For Messrs. Hard & Hurst, the same bleach-works; Mr. Milnes died, and Messrs. Hard & Hurst continued them.

2798. How long did you work there?—Twenty years; 10 years with Messrs. Hard & Hurst and 10 years with Mr. Milnes.

2799. Were the same long hours continued after Mr. Milnes's death?—Yes.

2800. And the women and children working in the same way?—Yes.

2801. What year would it be when you left working at those works?—I think 10 years ago, now.

2802. For whom did you work when you left those works?—Mr. Burton, of Old Baisford.

2803. That is where you are working now?—Yes.

2804. Will you tell the Committee what were the hours of work when you first joined Mr. Burton's establishment, and what are the hours now?—The first five years we worked until 11 and 12 o'clock at night, generally; sometimes one and two if they were very busy.

2805. Beginning at what hour in the morning?—Beginning at six, and sometimes five.

2806. That was for the first five years?—Yes.

2807. Then what occurred afterwards?—All the working people of Old Baisford formed a kind of union to do away with working so many hours.

2808. What was the result?—We came to a stipulation to work from six in the morning to eight or nine at night; we managed to carry it on for four or five years till the masters broke through this union, which they did; and now they are continuing the same thing again, working from 11 to 12 at night, except the master that I work with now, who will not allow it; he will not allow us to work after nine, but the other firms go on on the old system of working from 11 to 12.

2809. Are the Committee to understand that that union of which you speak comprised the workpeople of several works?—Yes, all the trade in that district.

2810. And that at first all the masters of the district came into the terms proposed by the men?—Yes.

2811. But you say now that many of them have broken through those terms?—All except two, I believe.

2812. Can you tell the Committee at what hour the people leave work in all those works with the exception of the two you have mentioned?—Yes; I believe that, generally speaking, in heavy times of working, they are working from six in the morning till 11 and 12 at night, sometimes all night.

John Shelbourne.

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2813. Do you mean for days together?—For weeks together, and months together in the winter season.

2814. Now with respect to Mr. Burton's works; what are the hours of labour at the present moment at his works?—Just now it is the slack time, and we are working from six in the morning until seven or eight at night; but he does not allow us to work after nine at any time; he says he thinks it too bad to work so many hours.

2815. Can you tell the Committee what the effect upon the women and young people working those long hours was, according to your own experience, from what you saw?—I believe it was a great injury to some of them; I have seen some grow ill sometimes, but not in many cases; the work did not injure all; some it did, and some it did not.

2816. In what sort of temperature is the work carried on?—In summer-time it would be 80 or 90.

2817. Are there any processes carried on by machinery?—Yes; there are engines and machinery in the bleaching department.

2818. Have women and children to work what is called against machinery in this department?—No.

2819. Is it all done by adult men?—By adult men and young boys.

2820. Of what sort of age will those boys be?—From 14 to 18.

2821. Are any of them now taken in as young as you yourself were?—Yes, in one department; there are two departments, the bleach-yard and the finishing department. In the bleaching department they require young boys only eight years of age, and when they get older they are put higher in the works.

2822. What number of hours will those young boys be worked?—At our works they work them from six to nine in the heavy time; now they are working from six to seven in our works.

2823. What hours are allowed for meals and resting?—Half an hour for breakfast, an hour for dinner, and half an hour for tea.

2824. *Mr. Packe.*] Do you know any child as young as seven years of age that worked from six to nine?—Yes, there are some working not above seven years old; seven and a half.

2825. Do you work from six to nine?—Not at our works.

2826. What is the length of time at your works?—From six to seven in the slack time, in the summer.

2827. Are there any boys of that age?—Yes; I believe there are two or three from seven to eight or nine.

2828. Are there any earlier than eight years of age?—Only one in our place.

2829. *Chairman.*] Have you had any communication with Mr. Burton at all upon the subject of this Committee?—Yes; I told him I was to come up here; I asked him for leave to come up here: he said, "Yes; you must go and tell the truth when you get there, as far as you know." He said, "The system pursued by the masters is abominable." He said, "If the masters will go on with this sort of system, working people all night, they must expect to be legislated upon; it will serve them right."

2830. Can you tell the Committee how many workmen Mr. Burton employs?—I think there are about 400.

2831. Of that number, can you tell us how many are women?—I cannot exactly; there are two works, one at Baisford and one near Nottingham; at Baisford there are about 60 females.

2832. Not really working you imagine yourself?—Yes.

2833. *Mr. Davison.*] Are the continuous hours of work in all the different stages of bleaching, or do they apply to some one department in particular more than another?—No; generally speaking, when the heavy time comes they all work late hours.

2834. What is the occasion of the nightwork?—The pressure of work.

2835. Does that arise from orders coming in from merchants?—Yes.

2836. Are those young children that you speak of as in some instances being employed, in all the departments, or only in some particular branch of the trade?—They are only in one department.

2837. What is that department?—The finishing department.

2838. What are the ordinary hours of work, irrespective of pressure?—In the winter season the ordinary hours are from seven to seven, and in summer it is from six to seven.

2839. Does

2839. Does that include the hours for meals?—Yes.
2840. There is an hour for dinner, half an hour for breakfast, and half an hour for tea deducted?—Yes.
2841. That is two hours?—Yes.
2842. Mr. *Turner*.] Will you be so good as to inform the Committee at what description of work a boy of seven years of age is engaged 13 hours a day?—He turns stockings on his arm; it is very light work; they are bleached in the bleach-yard, and they have to be trimmed, and this boy turns them; it requires a little boy to turn them, that they may not be strained.
2843. *Chairman*.] Is there any difference between turning and tacking?—Yes.
2844. Will you explain to the Committee in what that difference consists?—The tacker takes them by the top of the toe before they go into the bleach-works, that is the first process; and then they go to the bleach-works, and then the finishing department, and those boys turn them.
2845. Mr. *Turner*.] He turns them inside out?—Yes.
2846. *Chairman*.] Are boys employed in the tacking?—Yes; they turn them round for the tacker.
2847. Mr. *Cheetham*.] Did Mr. Tremenheere visit your establishment?—Yes.
2848. Did you make any statement to him?—I was called up, and he asked me what time I was working, and I told him that our hours were from six to nine; I think it will be found in the book.
2849. Do you know whether he saw any other workman in the establishment?—Yes, he saw one.
2850. Did you state to him the evidence that you have stated before this Committee?—That was all I stated; he asked me what time I was working, and I told him the hours.
2851. He made no inquiry as to the agreement?—Not of me.
2852. Mr. *Davison*.] Did you know the object of his visit?—No, I did not; the master sent for me up, and he asked me before him what the number of hours was that we worked, and I told him.
2853. Mr. *Cheetham*.] Did he tell you he was a commissioner appointed to make inquiry into your condition?—No, he did not.
2854. Mr. *Davison*.] Did I rightly understand you to say that you had a union among the different workmen for the purpose of shortening the hours of labour?—Yes.
2855. Was that before Mr. Tremenheere went?—Yes.
2856. Was it broken up before he went?—It is now, but it was not then.
2857. Did he know all the facts that you have stated to-day with regard to over-hours, and that the union was formed to do away with the late hours?—No.
2858. How was it that you did not tell Mr. Tremenheere that?—I told him that we met together for the hours from six to nine.
2859. Mr. *Cheetham*.] Are you aware that in his report he has recommended that all the labour in Nottingham should be exempt from any legislation?—I was not aware of that.
2860. What is your own feeling, and that of the workmen, on that point; do you concur with Mr. Tremenheere?—Just as Mr. Tremenheere was down we were giving over at nine o'clock at night.
2861. Do you agree with Mr. Tremenheere in his recommendation that there should be no legislation on that point?—Yes, if it had been carried on as it used to be; but now the thing is broken up, we say that the long hours of work are a case for legislation.
2862. Then at the time that the union was in existence, you were satisfied with the arrangements that were made?—Yes, we were.
2863. Were not the arrangements made voluntarily between you and your employers?—Yes.
2864. Cannot you effect an arrangement again in the same way?—I do not know.
2865. Mr. *Davison*.] What were the hours that this union fixed upon?—From six to nine; then we take about three hours a day, or four hours.
2866. Would the trade have been perfectly satisfied with working from six to nine?—Yes.
2867. Mr. *Clark*.] Was the union broken up through the intervals of employment?—Yes, it was.

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2868. What was the way that they abolished it?—There came a depression of trade, and then they broke the union up altogether; and as soon as they broke up, the masters made their own hours.

2869. Would not that be the very reason why they would not press you to work extra hours?—If they had nothing to do one night, they would make the people work the next night to get the work done, if there were any orders.

2870. *Mr. Cheetham.*] Do you know the earnings of the females of your establishment?—Yes, of many of them I do.

2871. What are they per week?—I think they average for women about 8s. or 9s. a week.

2872. And what for the boys?—The boys vary; some 3s., some 2s. 6d., some 2s., some 1s. 6d.

2873. Did you hear the evidence of the previous witness?—Yes.

2874. Do you believe that any females that work in the lace finishing establishments obtain only 3s. per week?—I am sure I cannot say; it depends upon what size they are.

2875. Did you ever hear such a statement as that before?—No; I do not know that I ever did.

2876. *Chairman.*] Is the Committee to understand that your union was broken up by the masters?—Yes.

2877. That having been so, do you and your fellow-workmen think that this question of the hours of labour for women and young persons engaged at those works could be permanently and satisfactorily settled without legislative interference?—I think not; I do not think it could.

2878. Do you speak of your own opinion, or have you had conversation upon the subject with others engaged in the same trade as yourself?—I believe we petitioned Parliament last year for the Bill, women and children and all under work in the bleach-works.

2879. Do you tell the Committee that the feeling in general among the women and children engaged at those works is in favour of legislation?—Yes.

2880. *Mr. Davison.*] Supposing the trade had continued prosperous at that time, is it your opinion that the union would have been broken up?—I do not think it would.

2881. Would not the fact of the trade not being prosperous necessarily cast people out of employment?—Yes.

2882. Were not the people dissatisfied with that state of things?—Yes, they were.

2883. Do not you think that that would naturally lead to a demand for employment?—Yes.

2884. Do not you also think that that would be as reasonable a way of accounting for the breaking up of the union, as the masters wanting to force the people to work when they had no work to give them?—It was the masters and nobody else that broke it up; it evidently had regulated the trade for four or five years, and those four years were as heavy a time as I have ever known in the trade.

2885. *Chairman.*] Are you aware of any practical difficulties that were experienced by the employers in executing the orders they received in those four years?—Not any at all; the work was all done and sent home according to orders during that time, with few exceptions.

2886. That arrangement was carried on for four years continuously?—Yes.

2887. *Mr. Davison.*] Those hours being from six until nine?—Yes.

2888. *Mr. Cheetham.*] I think I understood you to say that during the time the union was in existence, your regular hours were in the summer from six to six, and in the winter from seven to seven; that was the day's work?—Yes.

2889. And anything beyond that was overtime?—Yes.

2890. *Chairman.*] Was not that, at the time of the union, restricted to nine at night?—Yes.

2891. *Mr. Cheetham.*] When you had overtime did it include your young people, the boys and women, as well?—Yes.

2892. Could you carry on the bleach-works without them?—Not very well without them.

2893. They must go on together, boys, women and men?—Yes.

2894. Can you tell the Committee whether, in any legislation, the workpeople would wish those hours to be maintained, or would they wish still more stringent regulations?

regulations?—I believe their opinion is to work as they do now; they think from six to six now is long enough.

John Shelbourne.

2895. Mr. *Davison.*] Do you think that would apply to all the branches of trade where people are employed in large numbers?—I do not know; it would apply to our trade.

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2896. You are not able to form an opinion as to whether it would be a proper provision with regard to other trades?—No, I am not.

2897. Mr. *Kirk.*] When you say from six to six, do you mean that those are the hours the whole week through?—Yes; except Saturday, and then we go home at four o'clock.

2898. Then you mean from six to six five days in the week, and from six to four on Saturday?—Yes.

2899. Would there be the same wages throughout for each day?—Yes.

2900. Do you expect that there would be any increase of wages in consequence of the decrease of hours?—No, I do not; I think it would regulate labour, but I do not think the wages would increase at all.

2901. What is your present time for a day's labour?—From six to seven.

2902. What are the intervals for meals?—Half an hour for breakfast, an hour for dinner, and half an hour for tea.

2903. Then your present day's labour consists of 11 working hours?—Yes.

2904. For how many days in the week does that last?—Five.

2905. What time do you go on Saturday?—On Saturday we stop at four o'clock.

2906. With what intervals?—Only for breakfast and dinner-time; that is, breakfast half an hour, and an hour for dinner.

2907. Your present week's work is 63½ hours?—Yes.

2908. By the arrangement which you propose, how many hours a week would you work?—We propose 10 hours a day.

2909. Would you still expect to get half an hour for breakfast, an hour for dinner, and half an hour for tea?—I should think we should go on from dinner-time till we finished, very likely.

2910. You would throw off the half hour for tea?—Yes.

2911. At what hour on Saturday would you stop?—Four o'clock.

2912. Mr. *Clark.*] The last witness stated that in working ordinary times he earned 3s. a day, and for extra work 2s. 2d. a day; do you think that the operatives, as a body, would be satisfied to give up the extra pay of 2s. 2d. for the extra time?—I think they would; that is the general feeling I heard before I came up here.

2913. Does not that almost amount to half a day's pay?—Yes.

2914. Do you think, as a body, they would not only consent to it, but wish for it?—I think they would.

George Betts, called in; and Examined.

2915. *Chairman.*] WHAT is your occupation?—Bleaching.

George Betts.

2916. In whose works are you employed?—In Mr. Fox's yard, it used to be; I believe it is Mr. Tebbet's now.

2917. Where is that?—At Old Baisford.

2918. How long have you worked there?—Twelve or 13 years.

2919. Was that the first place that you worked at?—No, it was not.

2920. Where did you first begin to work?—At Mr. Farren's.

2921. What age were you then?—Ten or 11.

2922. What were the hours of work when you first began working for Mr. Tebbet; first of all, what were your ordinary hours?—A day's labour was from seven till seven.

2923. How long were you working overtime?—For overtime, sometimes we were working from seven o'clock at night till, perhaps, twelve or one, or two in the morning; that would be very frequently the case.

2924. For how many days in the week would that be?—I have done that for six months running; and I have gone on all night occasionally.

2925. Do you mean that you have been engaged for six months working from seven in the morning till 11 and 12 at night?—That has been so.

George Betts.

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2926. Were any of those who so worked, women and children?—There were some boys, about eight, from nine to nine, and the females as well were working those hours.

2927. Did you, during that time, ever hear complaints from the women or children about those long hours?—Yes; they were always fatigued, and ill sometimes, with working those long hours, and they stopped at home at different times.

2928. Were any of those people working against machinery, or not?—No; there is no machinery there.

2929. How long ago did this state of things exist that you are describing?—Thirty-two years ago.

2930. What is the state of things in that respect now, in your own experience; will you give us the hours which you are working now at Mr. Tebbet's?—Our hours are now from six till six for a day's work in summer-time, and from seven till seven in the winter; that is our time.

2931. Do you ever work overtime now?—Very rarely. When our union was established, we made an agreement that we would begin at six and end at six, for a day's labour, and were never to be allowed to work longer than eight.

2932. Does Mr. Tebbet still adhere to the terms of that union?—He is still satisfied with the terms that we were on then.

2933. He has not departed from the engagement which was entered into a few years ago?—No, not at all.

2934. Are you aware whether that is the case with respect to most of the bleachers?—I believe that most of the bleachers are working long hours again, the greatest part of them.

2935. Can you tell the Committee what those hours are?—From 10 to 11 and 12; and occasionally all night.

2936. What heat will the rooms be at in which those long hours are worked?—I am not able to state the heat of the rooms; they are the getting-up rooms, and I do not work in them; I am working in the open yard; but I have heard some say that it is from 70° to 80°.

2937. *Mr. Cheetham.*] That is where the females are working?—That is where the females are working.

2938. *Chairman.*] Is the labour of those women and children piece-work, or not?—Yes, the greatest part of the females work piece-work; the ironing, and part of the finishing-work is piece-work.

2939. In the works of those masters who have departed from the terms of the union, are the women and young people worked those long hours that you speak of?—Yes; I believe they do at the present time.

2940. Did you give evidence before Mr. Tremenheere some two years ago?—No, I did not.

2941. Did you hear of his visit to your master's?—Yes.

2942. Did he examine any of the workpeople?—I am not aware that he did at our firm.

2943. At that time were not the terms of the union in full vigour?—Yes, I dare say they were.

2944. Have any petitions been presented from the working bleachers of Nottingham upon the subject?—Yes, I believe there have.

2945. Can you tell the Committee whether they have been numerously signed?—I believe they have.

2946. Have you heard much conversation between your fellow-workmen upon the subject?—Yes; I have heard a great deal; the men we left pressed upon us to get rid of the long hours system if we could; they are not satisfied with working from seven to eight; even an hour of overtime they were not satisfied with; they would rather work the regular hours, and not work the overtime.

2947. Is that feeling shared by the women and children as well as the adult males?—Yes; I believe it is right through.

2948. Do the women and young people who express that opinion understand that they will not be paid the same as they were for working the overhours?—I am not aware that that question had been put to them.

2949. *Mr. Cheetham.*] Are there any establishments near yours that work these overhours?—Yes.

2950. Have

2950. Have you had any example of people leaving your establishment to go to those working long hours?—None; I believe we have some who have come from other establishments; we have three or four in our room; they have come to our establishment through the working of over-hours.

2951. Have you had any conversation with them?—I have not spoken with them upon the subject further than this; I have said, "Working long hours;" and they have said, "Yes;" that is all.

2952. They have given this reason to you for coming to your establishment?—Yes.

2953. Then your master, from working these long hours, has not lost any of his people?—No, not at all.

2954. *Chairman.*] Have you had any conversation with your master previously to coming here?—Yes; I showed him the summons, and he said that he was quite willing for me to come, and he wished me to speak the truth, and I came.

2955. *Mr. Davison.*] Do you complain of the present hours in your own establishment, from six to six in the summer, and from seven to seven in the winter, deducting the hours for meals?—They are satisfied with that.

2956. Are you also satisfied?—Yes.

2957. Do you think that those are fair and reasonable hours?—Yes, with two hours' meal-time out of every day.

2958. When do you quit on Saturday?—We give over sometimes at one o'clock, and sometimes at two; we very seldom are later than half-past two; the regular time should be four o'clock, but we give over as soon as we can.

2959. So far from experiencing any difficulty, there is no difficulty in getting plenty of hands when they want them?—We can get hands when we want them.

2960. *Mr. Packe.*] Is there any difficulty, if the people leave for working long hours, in their being able to get employment where they work shorter hours?—There are two firms that work shorter hours; but those two firms cannot employ every one; perhaps another case, if a party happened to leave one firm that was working the long hours to go to a master who was working the long hours, and gave the reason that he had left for working long hours, that master would not employ him, and it would be an impossibility for that man to come on.

2961. Then there would be a difficulty in some cases, if they left for working long hours, to get employment?—If they went from one firm to another where they were working long hours, and gave that as the reason why they did leave, perhaps they might not get put on there.

2962. *Mr. Davison.*] Do you know whether Mr. Tremenheere went to your establishment to examine any one?—I am not aware that he examined any one.

2963. *Chairman.*] Did you ever hear this subject discussed this year or the year before in Nottingham?—Yes; we have had a committee in Buisford.

2964. Are you aware of the nature of Mr. Tremenheere's Report?—No, I am not.

2965. *Mr. Cheetham.*] Have you ever heard any of the workmen state to you that your employment was not included in the last Bill before Parliament?—No; they never stated so much as that to us, for we thought we were so.

2966. *Mr. Packe.*] Was there ever any petition from Nottingham praying to be included in that Bill?—Yes, I believe there was; I think from most of the bleach-works petitions went up.

2967. *Chairman.*] Did you take any steps besides petitioning to get your trade included in the Bill?—I am not aware that we did, further than what I have mentioned between ourselves and the employers.

2968. *Mr. Cheetham.*] Do you know the employment of finishing lace?—No; I do not know anything of that.

2969. *Mr. Kirk.*] How are you paid at the bleach-works of Mr. Tebbet?—We are paid by the piece.

2970. Then the harder you work the more wages you receive?—Yes, if we have the work to work at.

2971. Have not you constant employment at Mr. Tebbet's?—Yes; it ebbs and flows a little; some weeks perhaps we have a little less than we have in other weeks; we cannot say we have all weeks alike.

2972. Does not Mr. Tebbet finish for others?—Yes, for many of the hosiers in Nottingham.

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2973. Is not he liable to be asked sometimes to do more work at a certain time than at other times?—Yes.

2974. How do you manage to keep the hours under those circumstances?—We generally work an extra hour.

2975. What do you call an extra hour?—From six to seven.

2976. Then you do work extra time on your own work?—That is according to our rules that we have drawn up; but we are not satisfied with the extra hour; we are not satisfied with it at all; there is an impression in favour of 10 hours.

2977. Your impression is that you should work no more than 10 hours a day?—Yes.

2978. And do you expect that you will receive as much wages for the 10 hours as you are now receiving for 11?—We seldom work above 10; we do not expect to get quite as much, because we shall not have as much work to do.

2979. Do you expect that there will be the same amount of employment at the bleach-works whether you work shorter or longer hours?—I am hardly able to answer that question.

2980. What is the reason that other firms work overtime?—I am not able to answer for other firms.

2981. Do not the parties who work overtime receive more wages for that overtime than for their ordinary day's labour?—Of course they must receive something extra for the overtime.

2982. What inducement has the master to work overtime?—I cannot tell; our master does not find any fault; he is well satisfied with the time that we work.

2983. *Mr. Packe.*] Do not you in your establishment bleach and finish hosiery manufactured in the counties of Leicester and Derby, as well as in the county of Nottingham?—From Derbyshire I believe we do; from Belper; I cannot tell you whether they do it in other firms.

2984. *Mr. Kirk.*] Was not the arrangement that has been made by the trade considered by the trade as satisfactory?—Our masters were quite satisfied with it, and the people as well.

2985. When did they first begin to be dissatisfied with their hours, which appeared to be reasonable?—It was not that they were dissatisfied; they had been employed, and were satisfied.

2986. Do you want a reduction of the hours of work in your own establishment?—Not from six to six; we want the 10 hours, and no more.

2987. Do you do more now?—No, except at heavy times.

2988. Do you want to put a stop to that?—Yes.

2989. Is it the fact that you are satisfied with the ordinary hours of work of your establishment, but that you want to stop extra work?—Yes.

2990. Will not that affect the adult population very considerably?—I am not aware that it will.

2991. Do you think they will get the same wages if they do not work extra hours?—If they work extra hours they will get extra pay for it.

2992. Supposing they were not allowed to work extra hours, would they get less?—I have no doubt they might get as much.

2993. Do you think that whether they work long or short time they will get the same?—No.

2994. Is it your impression that by limiting the hours of work, and preventing extra work, the people will get as much wages as they do now?—It is my view, as far as it goes, that they will be satisfied with it.

2995. But in case there is a sacrifice they are quite ready to sacrifice the extra money they would get; do you think the opinion of the trade is that it is better they should not be allowed to do extra work at all?—Yes; but I have known the time, in the place where I worked, when my wife had been at work from two to three o'clock repeatedly, and then had to get up again at 12 o'clock on Sunday night, and I believe that might be the case again if you do not prevent it.

2996. The people would rather not have the extra work; and their reason is, that without doing the extra work, they would earn as much wages under a Ten Hours' Bill; is not that your opinion?—I should hardly fancy it; they might not get as much, but the difference would be trifling.

2997. *Mr.*

2997. Mr. *Packe*.] Do you think that the operatives in Nottingham would be more regular if their hours were restricted?—Yes, I believe they would; it would regulate the work more at the different employments.

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2998. Do you think that by that means the wages would be as good as they are now, since the workpeople would have more regular work, and would not have such a long time to work as they have now?—Yes.

2999. *Chairman*.] Supposing the Bill restricting the hours of labour is passed, and in consequence of that the people engaged in the bleaching business do not get quite as much pay as they get under the present system of working the extra hours, do you believe that the workpeople would wish that change to take place?—Yes, I am quite confident they would.

Mr. Thomas Frederic Brownbill, called in; and Examined.

3000. *Chairman*.] WILL you state to the Committee what you are by profession, and what your present engagements are?—I am a surgeon.

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3001. Where do you reside?—At Salford; I am the medical inspector of the Salford Union Workhouse, and I have a few honorary appointments.

3002. Are you the Chairman of the Sanitary and Nuisance Committee?—I have been so for the last 15 years.

3003. Have you had many opportunities of observing the conditions of women and children and young persons engaged in bleaching?—Not so much in bleaching as in dyeing; I believe there are only one or two bleach-works at Salford, but there are a number of dye-works; I cannot speak so much to the bleaching department.

3004. Will you state to the Committee what is the impression produced upon your mind, by what you have witnessed, of the state of the women and young persons who have been engaged in the dyeing works?—From the opportunities I have had at various times of seeing the cases that I have been called to, the women particularly, I should say, that they have been labouring under a slow form of fever, perhaps begun with a little fatigue or lassitude or loss of appetite and thirst, and if the case went on further it assumed the form of low fever; some of them have rheumatic fever. In some other cases I have found that they had inflammation of the chest, or their breath has been affected.

3005. Can you ascribe those symptoms to any particular cause?—In many of the cases I cannot say; but often it has arisen from over pressure of work, from long hours in many cases, and from the heat of the place where they work.

3006. Have those observations which you have made, induced you to inquire at all into the nature of those hours of work?—Yes, I have inquired at different times, but not particularly now; I have, for some years back, not only in this, but in the factory system, had opportunities frequently of having such cases under my care; that has been for years back, before the Factory Act was passed.

3007. In the statement which you have made respecting the diseases to which those young people are subject, have you confined yourself to dye?—Yes.

3008. Have you made any inquiry as to the hours which those young people are subject to?—Yes, I have.

3009. Will you tell the Committee what the result of your inquiry has been?—They have varied from 12 to 18 hours upon an average.

3010. Between what ages were those children who had worked those long hours?—I have seen them under 10 years, I believe, but most of them from 10 up to 15 or 16.

3011. Will you tell the Committee, as a medical man, what in your opinion would be the extreme number of hours which young people of that age could work with due attention to their health?—I should think 10 or 10½, but I do not extend that of course to some of the children; their constitutions could not stand so much, inasmuch as they have tried it, and they had to discontinue it, while the others could get through it with comfort.

3012. What would be the effect upon the constitution of a young child of ordinary strength, of working those long hours?—It would debilitate the system, more particularly the nervous system, bringing on premature old age, and perhaps bringing on diseases of a character which are not brought on till a later period of life; for instance, some of them have inflammation of the lungs, and the disease assumes afterwards a chronic form, and in many cases the disease remains with

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them long afterwards; they become asthmatical, or troubled, as we may call it, with chronic bronchitis.

3013. Do you think that this system has a tendency to deteriorate the physical condition of the people who are subject to it?—Yes.

3014. Have you ever signed any petition to the Legislature praying for interference in this matter?—I did, about two years ago, and every medical man in Salford signed the same petition.

3015. Do you give that petition as expressing the opinion now, as it did then, of those medical men?—Yes.

3016. Has any thing occurred since to induce you to change the views which you expressed in that petition?—No.

3017. Would you, as a medical man, be glad to see those long hours of labour altered by Act of Parliament?—Yes.

3018. Mr. Davison.] Are you in the habit of attending the factory children now?—I am not inspector of factories.

3019. Do not you frequently see cases of the description you have referred to?—Yes.

3020. In your experience, do not you meet with cases of low fever among them, notwithstanding they are only working 10 hours?—Yes.

3021. And I suppose you have found loss of appetite among them?—I have found it among people working long hours. I have always asked the question how the symptoms set in, and I have invariably found want of appetite and increased thirst are the premonitory symptoms.

3022. Have you seen, in your attendance upon those factory children, cases where there has been low fever, loss of appetite, and thirst existing?—Yes.

3023. Are not those very common symptoms in a variety of cases?—They are.

3024. In those cases, without making inquiry from the parents of the children, were you of opinion this was the result of long-continued labour?—Nothing would induce those symptoms more than loss of rest and over-work.

3025. I think you used the expression that the constitutions of children vary very much?—Yes; I have known cases where there have been two or three in the same family working perhaps; one could stand the work, and another could not; and they have taken the child from work that it had been previously occupied upon, and put it to work of a lighter sort.

3026. Have you known some cases, with regard to certain pursuits in life, where children who were too delicate for them have been removed from them, and have got quite well?—Yes.

3027. Chairman.] With respect to females, are there a great number engaged in these processes?—From my own experience, I think there are a very few females engaged in those works in Salford. I had an opportunity of going through a large dye-work the other day, where there were 400 hands, and where there were only eight women engaged, and of them only one under 18 years of age.

3028. How many boys were there in that work?—From 80 to 100, and the remainder were men.

3029. I think you said that you have looked into the factory question a little?—Yes.

3030. Have you observed any change in the condition in the young women engaged in the factories since the passing of the Ten Hours Act?—Very much so indeed.

3031. Will you state to the Committee in what direction the change has taken place?—In their general appearance; I may state that I have now under my care in the workhouse, a number of people who were formerly employed in a factory, and who were disabled, from various causes, from following the employment; they are so now, and have been for many years.

3032. What is the present condition of the young people engaged in the factories?—Much better now than it was some years ago.

3033. Are you aware whether your opinion is shared by the great body of medical gentlemen of Bolton?—I am not; I speak only from my own experience, as regards their condition, and from having had so many opportunities from the cases I have had under my notice.

3034. Mr.

3034. *Mr. Davison.*] Are the different factories that are established in the town where you reside dyeing, and cotton, and spinning and silk works?—Yes; and there are many people employed in warehouses in various departments.

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3035. Have you ever made any analysis of the comparative healthiness of the different branches of trade that you have met with in the course of your experience?—I have not lately.

3036. Have you ever published anything on that subject?—No; no further than some reports that I bring out for the Board of Guardians, containing statistical returns.

3037. Do you consider that, in legislation, the medical opinion of any gentlemen as to the unhealthiness of a particular trade would be a safe ground for the Legislature to proceed upon?—My opinion is, that if it is applied to one trade, it should be applied to others.

3038. Do you believe that if it is extended to one trade, it should be extended to all?—That is my opinion.

3039. *Mr. Kirk.*] In the large dyeing establishments where there were so many boys, what were the ages of those boys?—There was one that I asked the age of, and he was eight; I think that was the youngest; and the others seemed to be from 12 to 16 or 18; perhaps 14 or 16 would be the average; some were younger.

3040. Is it within your experience that those girls who were unable to work in the dye-works, or became unhealthy in consequence of such employment, went to a factory, and became healthy and strong there?—No; I never knew a case in which they went from a dye-works to a factory; I am not aware of a single case; they would not think they would be in a better condition by going to a factory. I have known them go to a silk mill, as they prefer that to the factories generally; it is a lighter work, and a cleaner occupation.

3041. Is a girl attending at a cotton factory in a peculiarly healthy position?—Generally, I think, they are rather paler in complexion than some of the others who work in other works.

3042. Are they more healthy in their general appearance, and have they better general health than those in dye-works?—I should say not so good, from my own knowledge.

3043. Has the cause of that come within your experience?—I think it is from the confinement in the mill; they are not so much closed up in the dye-works as they are in a factory.

3044. That is to say, they have more air and purer air?—They have in the dye-works.

3045. Do you think, therefore, even those dye-works are more healthy places for young persons than the factories?—That is my opinion.

3046. You spoke of persons who had been injured in factories for life; what did you mean by that?—I may state that many years ago there was a factory at Pendleton, and they got a number of children from a distance that were bound apprentices until they were 21 years of age; many of those are in the workhouse at present, and many have died; but they were certainly, soon after they were out of their time, unable to work at any regular employment; either distortion of the limbs, or disease of the lungs, or some physical disease that prevented them from earning their livelihood.

3047. How many years is it since that system ceased?—It is many years ago; I should think it is between 35 and 40 years; there are some of them in the workhouse now; I do not say the age, but they were quite young when they were bound, until they arrived at the age of 21, to work in the factory.

3048. By whom were they bound?—I do not know that I could state that.

3049. Were they charity children sent from the workhouse?—They came from a distance; I believe a great number of them came from Wales; I will give the Committee the gentleman's name and that of the factory if it is necessary.

3050. Do you give it now as your deliberate opinion that the employment of children in dye-works is a more healthy occupation than that of a cotton-mill, even with the present regulations?—Yes.

3051. *Mr. Cobbett.*] I believe you are connected with the Salford workhouse?—Yes.

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3052. It has come before your eyes, as I understand, to know the condition of some of the older workers in the factories?—Of some of them, not all.

3053. How long ago is it since you observed any one of those children that had been apprenticed for many years?—They are getting into years; there are some in the workhouse now who are 50 or 60 years of age, and some are younger.

3054. You say that the generality of those that are unhealthy had been unable to continue any longer in the employment, on account of their limbs being distorted?—Yes; every case that has come under my care in the workhouse has been in consequence of their not being able to pursue their employment from disease.

3055. Have you, upon inquiry from them, ascertained that those were apprentices under the old system?—Yes, I have in every case.

3056. Do you see any such case as that arising among the factory people of the present day?—No, I have not seen any for a long time.

3057. Do you attribute that difference to the circumstance that the Legislature has interfered with the long hours of work under which apprentices became distorted in the manner you have described?—Yes.

3058. Therefore I presume you are generally in favour of limiting the hours of labour where they are found to be excessive, when it is practicable to do so, by legislative interference?—Yes; not only in the dye-works and bleach-works, but in other works as well, where it is carried on to that extent.

3059. Do you carry on your profession at Salford?—Yes, in Salford and Manchester.

3060. Is not a large part of your practice at Salford, among the people who work in the factories?—I attend many of them.

3061. Have you seen a great deal of them?—Yes.

3062. From what you have seen, is it your opinion that legislative interference ought to be adopted?—Yes. I should state, that being medical officer of the Salford Union, I have had several thousand cases under my notice, and I have an extensive private practice; and I am medical officer of several friendly societies, which gives me an opportunity of going among the operatives of various classes.

3063. And from your experience you have formed your opinion?—Yes. It is not from anything that I have prepared now, for I only knew on Saturday that I was coming here to-day; it is just from the facts that I have known, for the length of time that I have had the appointment and have been in practice.

3064. Mr. Kirk.] You used, in reply to a question put to you, the words, "other works;" what did you mean by that?—I was not alluding to any particular place; I was only alluding to any trades which work any children and young people beyond a certain number of hours.

3065. What do you mean by the word "child"?—I consider it to include boys under 18 years of age.

3066. Do you call those children?—They are not men or women under that age; they may vary; I am not fixing any particular year.

3067. Do not you know that the Factory Act recognises two classes of persons, one is called "child or children," and the other "young person or persons"?—I do not. It may be very proper to call them young persons; I am not a medical officer of factories, or an inspector; I do not know the ages to which they limit the term.

3068. Are you of opinion that it would be better that they should not go to any of these employments in the factory which you think are unhealthy until they are 11 or 12?—Twelve or thirteen is early enough; my opinion is that they should not, any of them, go younger.

3069. Mr. Baxter.] Would you extend the legislative restriction in the case of long hours to all trades and employments whatever?—Yes, where the length of time is great.

3070. Mr. Cobbett.] You would do that where it is practicable?—Yes.

3071. Mr. Kirk.] I suppose you would not go so far as a medical gentleman that has been before us, who thought that it should extend to maids of all-work?—No, I do not think I should.

3072. Mr. Baxter.] Do you advocate the same regulation in the case of grown men?—It depends a good deal upon what any one can stand.

3073. Mr. Kirk.] Would you extend it to farm servants, for instance?—I question

question whether their occupation is such that you would be able to extend it to them; they are not continually working as the factories and mills are; there is not that confinement, therefore.

3074. Mr. *Baxter*.] Then you would except certain occupations?—My observation went more to children, the ages that they are employed in those bleaching works; I am not speaking at all of grown-up persons.

3075. Mr. *Clark*.] Do you find that the parents of these children object to long hours?—As a general rule I do not.

3076. Then is not it as much their fault as the master's?—In some cases I think it is.

3077. Do you think the parents would be disposed to oppose any legislative measures that would restrict the long hours?—I could not say; I have never had any conversation upon it with them.

Mr. *James Gilbroy*, called in; and Examined.

3078. *Chairman*.] WILL you be good enough to state to the Committee your occupation?—I am the principal manager of Messrs. James Young & Sons' works.

3079. How many people are employed there?—There are upwards of 300 there just now.

3080. Among those how many are women and children and young persons?—There are about 200 women, I think, just now; we have sometimes more.

3081. Mr. *Kirk*.] Where are Messrs. James Young & Sons' works?—At Auld Housefield, in Pollockshaws.

3082. What are your present hours of work?—Our regular hours of work are from six to seven each day, generally for five days in the week.

3083. Do you ever work over-hours?—Yes, we do.

3084. When you work over-hours what are your hours of work?—They are regulated very much according to the necessity for doing so.

3085. Do you allow no other limit than the limit of necessity?—Yes, we do; it is a very important case if we go beyond 11 o'clock at night, or sometimes 12.

3086. Will that be for many days together?—We endeavour if possible not to exceed three successive days in that way; from six in the morning till 11 or 12 at night.

3087. Would the same people work the three days and three nights up to 11 o'clock?—We have done that frequently; but we do not wish to do it if we can avoid it at all.

3088. I believe you gave evidence yourself before Mr. Tremenhære?—Yes, I did.

3089. Have you any observations which you wish to make to the Committee upon the evidence which appears there, reported as having been given by you?—No; I think it is substantially correct.

3090. Has anything occurred in the trade, or in any of the processes of it, since you gave that evidence, to alter any of the opinions you have given?—No; the practice is a little altered now from what it was then, in so far as we had an arrangement to work only 66 hours a week.

3091. Has that arrangement been departed from?—That arrangement has been departed from.

3092. How many hours are you working now?—We are very much upon the old system now; we still adhere to 66 hours as being a week's labour, for which we pay a week's wages; but we do not confine ourselves to that, and say they shall not work for more than 66 hours a week.

3093. Is the Committee to understand that you have departed from that arrangement now, and that, with the exception you have stated to us, you would hardly have any limit to the number of hours you work?—We should not, in almost any case, exceed 12 o'clock at night; but that is, I think, only owing to pushes.

3094. At the present time, does it happen that the women and young children are employed in your works from six in the morning till 11 or 12 at night?—Yes, at occasional times; but just now we can scarcely keep going regular hours.

3095. Mr. *Baxter*.] Do you work the same number of hours now as when you gave evidence to Mr. Tremenhære?—That arrangement was entered into pretty largely

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largely with a number of the masters; but a good many of them fell gradually through it, and we followed the rest. If we got an order which was not quite so large as to enable us to employ a complete night-shift, that is to say, an entire relay of hands, we made up the additional work that we had to do by working the hands that we had a little longer.

3096. *Chairman.*] What is the heat of the rooms in which those females and young children are employed?—We have various heats.

3097. Will you state to the Committee what those various heats are?—In the larger houses they range from 80 to 100, and we have one or two more of the departments of work as high as 120; but I should say from 90 to 110 is the more general average.

3098. Taking that as the general heat, are there women and children employed in those rooms?—Yes.

3099. Is the Committee to understand they may be now employed from six in the morning until 11 at night in that temperature?—Yes.

3100. How many hours for rest and meal times will they have?—When the hands are working from six in the morning till 11 at night they have an hour and a half between six in the morning and seven at night; and then if the hands go on till 11, we do not work at all between seven and eight, and we go on from eight till 11 o'clock.

3101. That is to say, they have 2½ hours altogether out of the 17?—Yes.

3102. May I ask you what the effect upon the women and young children so engaged is?—We find, in our experience, that when it comes to be required to work a third night in that way, there are a good many absentees upon the following morning from the work, which I dare say may be from fatigue, from this long working; at least, it occurs frequently that they are absent.

3103. *Mr. Baxter.*] Do you think that habitual overtime is profitable to the employer?—No, I do not.

3104. *Chairman.*] Could you state to the Committee what is the effect in the production of work?—We can produce a great deal more in working the greater hours; but I have no doubt that if we had regular hours, from one year's end to the other, we could produce more than we do at present in our uncertain way.

3105. Do you think the quality of the work is at all deteriorated by long hours?—If we have particular work to do we do it always in the day; we select that work for day-work, generally.

3106. *Mr. Baxter.*] Why do you do that?—Because it is not so well done at night.

3107. Why is it not so well done at night?—There are various causes that combine, but very often we are pushed; there may be a great hurry; they may be wanted the next morning before they can work, so that we must get out the goods at night, and the next day we finish the fancy goods, printed muslins and such like, at the time of those great pushes; goods are put out at night to be in the next morning, and of course it is hard work to get them in.

3108. *Mr. Cobbett.*] Do you think that those pushes cause bad work?—Yes, we cannot look so much to it.

3109. And when done is it as well done as if they worked more regularly?—If we are working more regular hours, the people certainly do it better; they come every morning fresh to the work.

3110. *Chairman.*] Are the Committee to understand that you are in favour yourself of some restriction of the hours of labour?—I have always held the opinion that a restriction upon the hours of labour would be a good thing.

3111. I think you have stated in detail that recently you did not work those long hours, owing to an arrangement which you have come to with your work-people?—We have had an arrangement, I think, for more than a year.

3112. But you have given it up at last, in consequence of the other employers of labour departing from a similar arrangement?—Yes; we heard no more word of it; the workers said nothing about it, neither did we. We work as we find the necessity come on; at the slack season we forget our former arrangements.

3113. Has the question been at all mooted among the employers of labour in the business whether a restriction could be produced by voluntary arrangement?—I have heard that that is talked over among meetings of the masters.

3114. In the instance you have described, it has been tried and has failed, and having

having been tried, the masters have given it up?—It was reported to us that such and such a one had given it up, and so it went on.

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3115. Mr. Cobbett.] That is to say, they have broken their arrangements?—They have broken their arrangements; I may perhaps make the remark, that although it was understood that 66 hours was the week's work, it was not definitely fixed that we were only to work 11 hours a day.

3116. Mr. Baxter.] Are the masters generally in the west of Scotland in favour of restricting the hours of labour in bleach and dye-works?—I could not speak of the majority; some of them are and some are not.

3117. Are you aware that they have not sent up deputations to London when the Bill was before Parliament, nor taken any active part against them?—They have taken no active part.

3118. Does not that show that they are indifferent to the matter?—Yes.

3119. Whereas the employed have been very anxious for the Bill?—Yes; they are very anxious for the Bill.

3120. Mr. Kirk.] Do you infer from that that the masters acknowledge that evils at present exist?—Yes; I think some do so.

3121. At all events they are not unwilling that the present remedy should be applied?—Yes; I am of opinion that the masters, many of them, would say that a Bill, or any such definite arrangement, would be a good thing for the trade, for this reason, that it comes in a shape that they could depend upon.

3122. Are all the works in the west of Scotland, the cotton bleaching and dyeing works, like those in Lancashire and Cheshire?—No, there are different descriptions of goods.

3123. Are not the processes much the same, and the hours of working?—They are done in a different way in Lancashire; there their heavy goods are finished in a different mode; they are finished in a different way; there is a different finish upon them, and they are handled in a different way altogether.

3124. Are not the temperature of the rooms and the hours of labour very much the same?—I am not aware that the temperature would be the same; the goods require a different finish, and they are not finished in houses of the same description.

3125. Is the temperature lower or higher?—I fancy that a good deal of the Lancashire work would be done at a lower temperature than ours.

3126. Are you aware that in Lancashire and Cheshire they have exceedingly long hours of labour, and the system of overtime not much unlike your own?—I have heard that it is so, but I am not aware of it.

3127. Are you personally acquainted with the dye-works?—No.

3128. You do not know whether it is desirable to extend the provisions of the Bill to works of that description?—I could not say that.

3129. Mr. Cobbett.] You spoke of having entered into an arrangement among yourselves to limit the hours of work; have you done that more than once?—The time that I remember myself, particularly, was the time when they made it 66 hours a week.

3130. When was that?—It was in 1855.

3131. Was there any memorandum?—Yes.

3132. A number of the masters signed their names to that document?—I believe they signed their names at the time they entered into the arrangement.

3133. Was your firm among them?—Yes.

3134. Did I rightly understand you to say that you broke through it ultimately yourselves, because you found the others did it?—Yes; we were not the first to break through it; we kept it faithfully for a year or more, but we were not bound down to 11 hours a day; we might work the 66 hours in five days a week, and allow them to go idle the other day; so it was overtime.

3135. Of course, as you are in favour of the limitation of the hours of work, you do not fear that any damage will occur to your goods by leaving off when the process has begun at a certain hour, and resuming it again the next day?—I have not the least apprehension of any danger in that way; we could regulate the work as we do now, to stop at the hour we do stop at.

3136. When you gave an account of the hours of work in the trade, I suppose you were speaking of your own establishment?—Yes, entirely.

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3137. Have you connected with your establishment what they call a women's house?—No.

3138. Do you know that there are places of that kind?—No.

3139. There are women's houses in Pollockshaws, are not there?—I am not aware that there are any now; I believe they had at one time a women's house connected with our establishment, but that was before I went to it.

3140. Is there one in the neighbourhood of Pollockshaws?—They have them in the neighbourhood of Paisley.

3141. How far is Pollockshaws from Paisley?—About six or seven miles.

3142. Mr. Baxter.] Are not there works in the west of Scotland besides those for the bleaching and dyeing of cotton fabrics?—Yes; they are principally engaged in the finish of silk goods and woollens.

3143. Do they bleach and dye woollens and silks in the same works that they bleach and dye cottons?—We do not bleach and dye much in our works; we generally finish; the bleaching and dyeing is connected with that description of work.

3144. Is there not a great deal of silk goods bleached and dyed in Scotland?—Yes, there are a good many dyers of woollens; there are two or three piece goods' dyers, but they work principally woollens.

3145. Mr. Davison.] Does part of the evidence you have given apply to the woollen business as well as to the cotton?—Yes; we were very extensively in the woollen trade, but we have given up that branch of the business for some years.

3146. But other houses continue it?—Yes.

3147. Chairman.] Would you tell the Committee what your opinion is as to including or excluding the houses that bleach woollen goods from the operation of the Bill?—I think the woollen trade could be included as well as any other.

3148. Mr. Cobbett.] What are the woollen goods that are made in that part of Scotland?—Mostly garments for ladies; some of them cotton, and woollen, and plaids, and shawls, and cloths; but they are scoured before being printed.

3149. Does not that constitute a large part of the trade?—Yes, in some districts.

3150. Is not it so in Paisley?—Yes; Paisley does the shawl trade as well as woollen.

3151. Mr. Baxter.] Are plaids made in England as well?—Yes.

3152. Are you not aware that there are a great many making in Manchester now?—There are more than there have been for many years.

3153. Mr. Davison.] Is it your opinion that the woollen trade should be included in the Bill as well as the cotton trade?—Yes, certainly.

Lunæ, 29^o die Junii, 1857.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr. Baxter.
Mr. Cobbett.
Mr. Davison.
Mr. Kirk.
Lord John Manners.

Mr. Massey.
Mr. Turner.
Mr. Wise.
Mr. Dalglish.

LORD JOHN MANNERS, IN THE CHAIR.

Mr. *Daniel Richmond*, called in; and Examined.

3154. *Chairman.*] WILL you state to the Committee your occupation?— *Mr. D. Richmond.*
A Surgeon.

3155. Where is it you reside?—In Paisley.

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3156. How many years have you practised your profession in Paisley?—
Twenty-three years.

3157. Has your experience during those 23 years enabled you to give an opinion to this Committee as to the nature of the employment of women and young persons in bleaching or dyeing establishments?— I may state that I have been since infancy residing in Paisley, where there is an extensive manufacturing population, where we have factories of almost every description. My father was a medical practitioner, so that I have had opportunities of knowing the condition of the working population for a very long time; and I held an appointment for a short time under the Factory Bill, so that I am somewhat acquainted with the nature of the operation of the Factory Bill. I have attended patients connected with almost all the bleaching fields in the neighbourhood of Paisley, and I have had the exclusive charge of one of the largest bleaching establishments of the neighbourhood of Paisley. I refer to Blackland Mill.

3158. Who were the proprietors of those works?—Edward Hamilton & Son, I think, is the name of the firm.

3159. Can you tell us how many persons are employed in those works?— I believe the Blackland Mill Company employ upwards of 300 workers.

3160. Of those, how many would be women and children?—On an average upwards of 300 are women and children; I think about 300 is the average number of females.

3161. I think you told us you are the appointed medical attendant of those works?—I have acted in that capacity for upwards of ten years.

3162. Will you give the Committee the benefit of your experience during those 10 years as to the effect of the occupation on the health and condition generally of the women and young persons so employed?—The workers, in my opinion, were exposed to four evils. The first unfavourable condition of their employment was their being constantly working in the erect position; they were constantly on foot; the second was the great artificial heat to which they were exposed while employed.

3163. Will you state to the Committee what the artificial heat was?—It varied from 90 to 130 degrees, according to the quality of the cloth; light cloth required a lower temperature, heavier cloth required a higher temperature; so it varied on an average from 90 to 130 degrees.

3164. What is the third?—The third is the sudden transition from heat to cold; the temperature of the place where they work; the sudden transition is what I refer to; leaving work during meal times, at morning and night, and upon other necessary occasions, going out from an apartment at from 100 to 130 degrees into the open air, perhaps in winter; and fourthly, the long hours to which they were exposed.

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3165. Will you state to the Committee what those hours are that you complain of?—I believe the average time at present is about 11 hours a day, but formerly the average time was 12 hours a day; but, on occasions, they were forced to work for a much longer time; sometimes continuously for 16 hours a day. At other times they would work 12 hours for three days a week, and 18 hours a day for the other three days of the week.

3166. Do you mean that the same persons will work 12 hours for three days in the week, and 18 hours for the other three days?—The same persons.

3167. And do those hours obtain now, or are you speaking of a state of things which has altogether passed away?—I believe that, in consequence of the representations of the workers, the masters have met them in a friendly spirit, and that they have voluntarily agreed to an alleviation of those hours; but it is now reduced to 11 hours a day, with the mutual consent of masters and workers.

3168. Does that consent obtain in other establishments, or are you speaking merely of Messrs. Hamilton's?—No, I believe it has been a very general arrangement; and I am personally acquainted with most of the master bleachers in that locality, in the neighbourhood of Paisley, and I believe they are all willing that the time should be limited to 10 hours a day. I believe that feeling is very general.

3169. Before you came up to London, had you any opportunity of conversing with Messrs. Hamilton on the subject?—I have not conversed lately with them on that subject, but I believe it was the general feeling.

3170. And among the workpeople whom you attended, what is the general feeling among them?—I believe the feeling among them is this, that they feel on better terms with their employers in consequence of the concessions that have been made. In speaking of the exertions of Parliament, I believe they have had a favourable effect upon the population in the neighbourhood of Paisley. Paisley has been rather notorious for being a place where ultra-radicalism has prevailed; but I believe the feeling now is, that they can look to Parliament for the redress of every just grievance, and that has had the effect of attaching them to the British Constitution, and a feeling of loyalty is, I may say, universal amongst our manufacturing population.

3171. Have you had any opportunities of knowing what are the feelings of persons engaged in the bleaching-works with respect to any proposed legislative enactment interfering with the hours of labour in their own employment?—There is, in the first place, a profound feeling of necessity.

3172. Do you believe that there is no difference of opinion among the working classes upon that subject?—I am not aware of any among the working people; there is very little difference of opinion even looking at the employers; the most benevolent of the employers are most anxious that they should be protected against the cupidity of a sordid few.

3173. You have given the Committee the four points to which you think the unrestricted system of working in the bleaching-works is prejudicial to the health of the persons so engaged; what are the effects produced by these four causes upon the health of the persons?—First, in reference to the erect position, I would say that varicose veins, that is, a swollen condition of the veins of the leg, is a very common complaint. It is a complaint to which shopkeepers are liable from their constant standing position, and to which workpeople in the factories are subject, but it is still more frequent in bleaching-works in consequence of the great heat. I know that varicose veins, and swellings of the leg, and extensive ulcerations are very common; and sometimes those ulcerations eat into the veins, causing very extensive and dangerous bleeding. I have known the workers bleed almost to death in a very short time; one young woman in particular has been twice at the gates of death in consequence of these ulcers eating into the varicose veins of her leg. Rupture is another thing that is very common amongst them in consequence of the constant standing. Then next, as to the artificial heat, most of these females are young girls from the Highlands, and from Ireland; they frequently come with a plump and healthy appearance, but that very soon disappears; they become pale, and thin, and weakly; they become subject to dyspepsia or indigestion; they become subject to constipation of the bowels, and to bilious complaints; they become subject to nervous diseases, hysteria, irritation of the spinal nerves, to severe neuralgic headache; and one thing which I found to prevail almost universally

sally among them was a derangement of those functions peculiar to them as females. Again, from the sudden transition from heat to cold they were very liable to inflammatory complaints, generally to sore throat, bronchitis, inflammation of the lungs, pleurisy, inflammation of the liver, and other abdominal viscera, chronic and acute rheumatism, particularly in the foot. I found that was a very common complaint, from the excessive heat of the apartment where they work. They were often employed without shoes and stockings, and they very often went out in that condition into the open air; this often brought on a rheumatic complaint of the foot of a very obstinate character, and it appeared to me that some of them were lamed for life in consequence of that. Then, as to the long hours during which they were engaged, I would say this is not merely an evil in itself, but it rendered the constitution more liable to suffer from the other causes I have assigned.

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3174. Will you tell the Committee what, in your opinion, would be the effect, not upon the actual generation of young women who are working these long hours, but upon the next generation to whom they may give birth?—I should say that these influences would not merely affect themselves injuriously for life, bringing on premature old age, and making them less able for the discharge of their functions as mothers; but that it would have an injurious effect upon their posterity, and that it would ultimately, and does actually, lead to a great increase of the pauperism of the country.

3175. Do you mean by a great increase of the pauperism of the country, that the generation of children now springing up would be unable to obtain their own subsistence from work?—Yes; I should say both themselves and their families would often sink into a condition of pauperism consequent upon the effects I have assigned.

3176. Have you any other observations to make bearing upon this class of questions?—With regard to the time they are employed, they are sometimes employed for a short time, sometimes for full time, that is up to the 12 hours' employment, and sometimes overtime. There is a sort of barracks provided for the female workers, what they are in the habit of calling a woman's house, and I could generally tell from the appearance of the woman's house whether they were working short time, long time, or full time. When they were at work short time, they were generally all at their employment, and the sick list was very light; when they were employed for 12 hours a day, the sick list was heavy, unusually heavy; but when they came to work 16 hours a day, or for 18 hours a day, perhaps for three days in the week, the amount of sickness was positively distressing.

3177. Do you happen to have any figures with you that will show this?—No; the nature of my engagement was such, that I did not require to keep any notes at the time, so that I do not possess any statistics; but that is the impression left upon my mind from an experience of 10 years.

3178. Is the woman's house now in operation?—It is still in operation. I believe the Messrs. Hamilton particularly, from humane considerations, have made very great improvements in the state of the woman's house; they have reduced the number allowed to remain in it; formerly it was in a most crowded, unhealthy condition; and I found when I was obliged to treat cases of disease in the house, which I was frequently obliged to do, that the confined atmosphere had a most injurious effect upon my patients. I found after giving great relief, in a case of acute disease for instance, that from the close and heated atmosphere during the night, by next morning my patient was as ill as ever; and I think that where such houses exist, it will be requisite that they should be put under some public arrangement, in order to protect the females who are residing in them.

3179. What number of females were lodged there?—Here again I am at a loss to supply figures, but I may say at once the number was excessive in proportion to the accommodation.

3180. Was the house attached to the works?—The house was attached to the works. The wards have often been not merely crowded with beds, but there have been as many as three workers in each bed.

3181. You mention that when there were these long hours or overtime, the sick list was very heavy; what was the practice when the sick list was heavy; were the patients removed into other wards, or did the sick and disabled women remain in the same ward as those who were going to their work?—The time

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that I attended the works they were confined in the same apartment with the healthy, but I believe since that they have been more frequently removed to the public infirmary of the town, or to the poor's hospital—the workhouse. I may say here that the agitation that has taken place has been conducted in a friendly spirit, and the masters have shown a willingness to meet the people, and have made many concessions towards them, and the general desire is that all this should be reduced into the shape of a Parliamentary enactment, and that such a thing would be found for the mutual advantage of all parties concerned in the trade.

3182. I suppose we may assume that the origin of this woman's house was a kind intention to protect the women, and to keep them together?—Yes, the intention was good originally, although abuses have crept into the system. I would say that I consider, from my experience in connexion with visiting other factories, that the bleach-works really are more in a situation to require the protection of a 10 hours' Bill than the workers in any other factory whatever.

3183. And you give that opinion to the Committee as the result of your medical experience for many years in the town of Paisley?—Yes.

3184. Mr. Davison.] You say that in your opinion these women's houses should be put under some public arrangement?—Yes.

3185. And a doctor appointed to them, I suppose?—The inspector might have power to say whether he thought they were overcrowded or ventilated.

3186. Would it not be a good plan to appoint a doctor to them?—I think it would.

3187. You have had experience in other factories under the law?—Yes.

3188. Does your experience enable you to state whether you have ever seen any pale girls there?—Yes; that was a very marked circumstance before the operation of the Factories' Acts.

3189. But do you mean to say that you do not know girls coming into the factories under the short-hours system ruddy and fat, and afterwards getting excessively pale and thin?—That does take place, certainly.

3190. But not so great as in the other case?—Not so great.

3191. And you have known girls, I suppose, in the other places subject to dyspepsia?—Yes.

3192. And to indigestion?—Yes.

3193. And the other complaints that you have stated?—Most of them, but not subject to the same transition from heat or cold; and in none of the factories are they exposed to the high temperature, so they are able to bear it better; but, in the stoves of the bleaching-works, they break down sooner than they do in any factory that I have been acquainted with.

3194. Mr. Kirk.] You have stated that the erect position is exceedingly injurious to health; that was your first point, I think?—Yes; I mean not so much injurious to health as acting mechanically; the whole weight of the circulation rests upon the blood vessels in the limbs, producing varicose veins and a tendency to swelling.

3195. And you think that an hour a day would produce the difference between health and sickness under these circumstances?—Not altogether so, but it would certainly make some difference to the advantage of health; even one hour a day would be of some benefit; it would not do away entirely with the evil, but it would enable them to bear it better.

3196. Have you been in any of the stoves connected with bleaching-works lately?—Not very recently.

3197. When were you last there?—Perhaps not for a year or two.

3198. Do you know whether there is a draft or current of fresh air admitted into those stoves?—I do not think that there is any regular provision made for that.

3199. Are you not aware that you could not dry a piece of muslin without an amount of fresh air introduced into the stoves?—Yes; but that is accidentally by the doors and windows being opened.

3200. Is it not the fact that in every stove there must be something of a window where they are drying muslin or cambric and a draft of fresh air, or that otherwise they could not dry; do you know that or not?—I have been in stoves without observing that; my attention has not been called to the stoves so particularly.

3201. Ther

3201. Then you have been giving evidence about a thing about which you do not know?—I know that I have frequently passed through stoves, and have felt the excessive heat. I know that that heat was artificially produced, and I have seen the effects of that heat. With regard to the way in which they are ventilated, I do not speak so positively.

3202. But would not a continuous stream of fresh air very much conduce to the health of the workpeople, where that air is necessarily pure?—Yes, that I concede at once; all you contend for.

3203. I am not contending for anything; I want an answer to my question?—Supposing I concede that, still the deteriorating effects are very great.

3204. Do you know, one way or the other, anything about it?—I am willing to admit that there is a provision for fresh air.

3205. And that that is conducive to health?—And that that, so far, is conducive to health.

3206. Is there any provision of a similar kind in spinning mills?—Yes, in almost all the mills that I have observed.

3207. What provision is that?—They have a window regularly opened.

3208. That is the upper part of the window?—Generally.

3209. As contra-distinguished from the stream of fresh air coming in at the lower part of the stove?—I speak from memory merely.

3210. Do you, as a medical man, mean to tell the Committee that a current of air admitted by the top of the window being opened, where a girl is breathing fumes of oil and particles of cotton and flax, or anything else that may be floating in the atmosphere, is more conducive to health than the admission of fresh air in the way I have described?—I believe that a supply of air from below will be more conducive to health than a supply of air from above.

3211. Yet you have stated most positively that these persons in bleaching-works are less healthy than persons in other occupations?—That arises not so much from the want of ventilation as from the excessive heat that is maintained.

3212. Then your observation applies simply to those who are employed in stoves?—Yes.

3213. Have you any idea how many persons were employed in stoves in this mill that you attended for 10 years?—Very nearly 300.

3214. In the stoves?—In the stoves.

3215. Do you know Robert Stewart, of that mill, either a manager or partner in it?—I do not remember the name.

3216. He gives testimony, and he says that there are 130 females engaged in stretching and dyeing out of the 300; of course the other 170 are in different employment?—They have stoves of different descriptions, some of one kind and some of another, but I understand that all females, with very few exceptions, were employed there. They have a boiling-house, where the preliminary portions of the work are conducted, and they have a few females employed there; they are also employed in conducting the washing operations, and the appearance of those females is generally a great contrast to that of the females employed in the stoves.

3217. Have you any positive idea as to the number of men and boys, and females even, included in the establishment of which you had charge for 10 years?—The females would average about 300, and the men and boys about 30 or 40.

3218. Have you any idea of the ages of those females?—The greatest number of them were from 15 to 25, or 30, and a few of them were older than that.

3219. Then whom did you refer to some time ago when you spoke of young children?—They have a number of married persons about the place, and sometimes the male and female children are employed.

3220. Sometimes?—I may say constantly, where they are made to work; they work under the eye of their parents; but the number of children is small, as compared with young men.

3221. What age do you understand by the word "children"?—Those who are under 12 or 13 years.

3222. How many were of that number at one time employed, of your own knowledge?—Comparatively few, perhaps not above 10.

3223. Eight or 10?—Eight or 10, or 20.

3224. Then of the 300 you speak of, there are only eight or 10 children?—Yes; the number was always small.

3225. What did you mean by the words "forced to work;" who forced the

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people to work?—Their circumstances forced them; obliged them to comply with whatever might be required.

3226. Do you know how they were paid, whether by the piece or by the day?—I think by the day, but I cannot be positive upon that point.

3227. You have been speaking of these women's houses, as you call them; who built or prepared them?—They have been built by the proprietors for the accommodation of their workers.

3228. Do you know what rent they charge?—I am not aware that they charge any rent.

3229. Then they simply built them for the accommodation of their workers?—I believe so.

3230. And do not charge any rent?—I am not aware of it.

3231. Yet although they have done this of their own free will to serve their workpeople, you think they ought to be put under law?—Yes; I think it would be necessary to protect the health of these young persons, and it would be a very simple thing to do it.

3232. Would it not be as simple to let the workpeople go and find lodgings for themselves; would not that be the natural course of affairs?—Sometimes the bleaching-fields are at such a distance from a town, or even from a village, that it is absolutely impossible they can do so; Burnfield and Paisley are four miles apart.

3233. Do not the women who go to these houses desire to go; they are not forced to go there, are they?—No, they are not forced, except by their necessity.

3234. They go there of their own free will?—Of their own free will.

3235. And for which they pay nothing?—I will not say that they pay nothing.

3236. Do you not believe that they pay nothing?—I am not aware of that positively; I cannot speak positively upon the subject.

3237. Mr. Davison.] Was it not an act of humanity on the part of the masters to provide these houses for the women?—Yes, I believe it was.

3238. Is it not notorious; do you not know it; have you any doubt upon the subject?—No, I have no doubt.

3239. Let me clearly understand you; you think that these houses, provided by the humanity of the employers, and for which no rent is charged, ought to be put under public inspection; is that your view?—Yes.

3240. You think they should?—I think they should, to prevent them becoming a nuisance, as I have seen them.

3241. You think these houses are a nuisance, then?—As I have seen them.

3242. Do you mean to convey to this Committee, that these houses so provided by the masters are public nuisances?—I mean to say, without saying how they are provided, that I have seen them overcrowded, that I have seen them productive of injurious consequences, and I have often had to lament, as a medical man attending them, the evil effects resulting from them.

3243. Is it your opinion, as an inhabitant of the town, putting aside your medical knowledge, that these houses are public nuisances?—If they are allowed to be as I have seen them, they are a most unsuitable description of houses for females to be in.

3244. Chairman.] Are you conversant, more or less, with the lodging-houses at Paisley and other large towns?—We have very little in the shape of public lodging-houses; they are almost entirely private.

3245. Are those lodging-houses under any public inspection?—They are subject to the inspection of the police.

3246. Although they are entirely private houses, where nobody is compelled to take the lodgings unless they are so minded?—No, I think not.

3247. These private lodging-houses are still under the inspection of the police, or the public authorities?—Some houses are occasionally favoured by the police, but I think not as a general rule.

3248. Mr. Kirk.] Just in the same manner as the public-houses are, I suppose?—Yes.

3249. Mr. Davison.] Is it your opinion that it would be better for the interests of the workmen employed in these bleaching-works that these asylums should be done away with; is that your view?—No; I would not recommend them to be done away with; I think it would be better if they were continued under proper regulations.

3250. A medical man appointed to inspect them?—I think if a medical man were appointed to visit the factories, under the Bill, that he should have power to point out anything connected with the machinery that he considered injurious to the health of the workers, and if he saw anything in these women's houses inconsistent with the health of the inmates, he should be empowered to recommend a remedy.

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3251. You think that the medical man should not only have charge of the factory, but also of these asylums provided for the workers?—To see that they are in some measure commensurate with the continued health of the workers.

3252. Mr. Kirk.] Do you think it would not be consistent with the health of women, from 18 to 25 years of age, that they should take their own lodgings?—Some of them are so helpless that it would be better for them if they had some one to look after them.

3253. Mr. Turner.] You say first of all that there is a great evil in work-people having to pursue their occupation in an erect position?—Yes.

3254. Can you suggest any plan in which the work at such establishments could be carried on by these workers in any other way than in an erect position?—No; I believe it would be impossible.

3255. Then there is no remedy for that?—No.

3256. Can you tell me how goods of different degrees of fineness could be finished otherwise than by degrees of heat, varying as you say from 90 degrees to 130 degrees; could they be finished in a cooler atmosphere?—No, I believe not.

3257. Then there is no remedy for that evil?—

3258. Can you tell me how many persons could avoid change from one temperature to another when they are working in an atmosphere of this kind; and when they have to come out from it and go into the natural atmosphere to go to their own homes, whether it be in winter or in summer, must they not of necessity encounter such a change?—It is a necessity.

3259. Then that is the third necessity which cannot be remedied?—Yes.

3260. And you say that these workpeople work certain hours, according, I suppose, to the press of business that there was going on at the works?—Yes.

3261. Can you suggest any way in which the masters can avoid executing the work that comes into their hands to be done; must they not vary their hours according to pressing necessities of their business?—There is one practice that I have seen—

3262. Will you answer my question; I do not want an argument; how do you propose to remedy it; give me a direct answer first, and then explain your answer as you think fit?—Then, as I understand it, the question is, how they can avoid the necessity for these extra hours. An order is presented to a bleaching master from a merchant; he says, "I must have a certain quantity of goods finished by a certain time; can you do it?" If the bleaching master is in such a position as some I know, he cannot do it without injuring the works, but he knows of some persons less scrupulous who will do it, if he does not, and he generally adopts it; but I have seen this remedy adopted, to accept the order, and knowing of some factory not so fully employed, they have divided the order, and so both works are kept employed. That is a remedy that might be employed to a very great extent. Then, if the merchant consents, they may allow him a longer time to do it in, and the effect of restricting the hours would be that the supply would be more regular both to the master and the workmen.

3263. In fact, if you were the master of a bleaching-work, you would manage it very much better than the masters who were brought up to the business?—I do not pretend to manage the business at all, but I am endeavouring, in the best way I can, to answer your inquiry as to how this could be avoided; I say that I have seen it avoided by dividing the work, and I believe that the merchants would concede time, and that they would meet the emergency; I believe that the business could be so conducted. I do not consider that the present system is any gratification to the bleaching masters themselves; I believe that both masters and workers would feel equally pleased if they could get rid of this irregular system.

3264. Do you not think it would be agreeable to the merchant to send his goods, if he was able, in the same manner?—I think arbitrary orders would be less given.

3265. Why are arbitrary orders given by merchants?—In consequence of wishing to make a particular shipment; but they would give the order, perhaps, a little sooner.

- Mr. *D. Richmond.* 3266. Before they received it?—I believe they could accommodate themselves to the circumstances.
- 29 June 1857. 3267. Can a merchant command his orders?—He can command the conveyance of his orders.
3268. Can he command a regular supply of orders, by means of which he is able to send cloth to bleachers to be bleached?—When he has an order to give—
3269. Answer my question; can a merchant command his orders?—No; a merchant must receive his order as he gets it, but he may divide the work between one or more bleaching-fields.
3270. If a particular finish is wanted, and he knows that at particular works it can be accomplished, and not at another, will he send one part to be finished in one way, and one part in another?—That I believe is sometimes done; but there are more works of the same kind in the same neighbourhood where they work at the same description of goods, and in that way there is a facility in dividing the order.
3271. You say that numbers of these young women came from the Highlands very plump and healthy, and that they deteriorated very rapidly when they came down to the bleaching-works?—Yes, I have observed that.
3272. Do you think that by any arrangement you could preserve young women in that plump and healthy condition at any kind of close work?—I believe not; but they would not break down so rapidly under a shortened period.
3273. Then there is nothing very peculiar in this occupation; suppose the same girls came into a cotton mill, you would not expect them to look so rosy and healthy?—No; but they would not break down so rapidly.
3274. Why?—Because they are not exposed to the same excessive temperature.
3275. You attribute it all to temperature, then, not to long hours?—I attribute it to the long hours and the temperature together.
3276. You say that there is a very friendly feeling prevailing amongst the workmen and the masters by the reduction of these hours?—Yes, and I am very happy to observe it.
3277. Do you think that that friendly feeling will be promoted by this legislative interference between the men and the masters?—So far as I have been able to observe the feeling of the factory people generally, it has had a very happy effect. I have heard many employers express the gratification they have had in seeing these disputes settled, and seeing their workpeople in a comfortable state, and I believe it has been altogether productive of a kindly feeling between masters and workmen.
3278. But you say that there is already a friendly feeling between the operatives and the master bleachers in your neighbourhood?—Yes, I believe so.
3279. Can you not trust to the continuance of that friendly feeling without compulsory interference?—There is danger of individuals of a less scrupulous character breaking through these arrangements.
3280. And because there are one or two bad subjects, you would compel all the rest that are friendly and kind to regulate their feelings according to legislative interference?—I believe that those individuals who are kindly disposed would rejoice were these arrangements settled by a Parliamentary enactment which would prevent future disputes.
3281. Mr. *Davison.*] Did I understand you to say that you were the medical inspector of factories at Paisley?—For some time I was.
3282. Are you so now?—I am not at present.
3283. Who succeeded you?—A Mr. *Cochrane.*
3284. Did you like the business?—I found it very pleasant.
3285. Was it because it was pleasant that you left?—No, it was more in consequence of some alterations that were made.
3286. Then it was not that because it was pleasant, but from some other reason?—It was from some other reason.
3287. Would you like it again?—I am not particularly desirous of it now, this gentleman is in possession of it; and I am happy to see him enjoying it.
3288. You would not like to resume those duties?—I should be nothing loth; my duties were altogether of a humane kind, and I enjoyed the esteem of the workers and the masters.

3289. Were you not paid for it?—I was paid for it.

3290. How long is it since this gentleman supplanted or succeeded you?—He has been in it for several years now; five or six years I think.

3291. You have no knowledge of the arrangements of the business of a merchant yourself?—No, I have had little to do with mercantile affairs.

3292. And you have very little knowledge of the arrangements of these bleaching works?—Not as to their particular construction.

3293. But even as to the admission of air, you do not seem to know anything about that. You do not seem to have any knowledge of the principles upon which these rooms are ventilated?—It is some years since I attended them.

3294. But you knew nothing about it then, and you know nothing about it now?—No.

3295. And yet you are giving evidence upon it?—So far as I can.

3296. You are giving evidence upon a point which you admit you know nothing of?—Not as to that particular point; but I know much independent of that.

3297. *Chairman.*] You have given your evidence as a medical man?—Yes, more particularly.

3298. As to the effect which you have seen produced upon those under your care?—Yes.

3299. *Mr. Kirk.*] Is it not remarkable that you have not been able to produce any statistics upon the subject. You were ten years the medical attendant of these persons in this particular bleach field, and yet you have no statistics whatever, real or comparative?—It was not necessary; my engagement was just to come and visit the workers, and prescribe for them when they were in sickness; and while I have been in the factories I have observed the particular degree of heat, I have observed the standing position, I have witnessed their hours of work, and I have seen them exposed to the sudden transitions from heat to cold, and from cold to heat, and I have given my opinion upon those points; and I think, so far as it is based upon those points, it is correct.

3300. But what we want here is facts, and you seem to be exceedingly scarce of those. You have not been able to give us a positive statement of facts of the comparative amount of different classes of diseases, or a comparative statement of the amount of the same disease in the factory and in the bleach work?—No; but I have no hesitation in giving an opinion, founded on long observation, that all these complaints preponderate in the bleaching works, particularly those engaged in the stoves, where the protection of law is mostly required.

3301. *Mr. Davison.*] But you have admitted to me already that these complaints are identical, although not to the same extent, in the factories?—Oh, yes; I admit that.

3302. *Chairman.*] But we understand you to say they appear in an aggravated form?—With greater frequency, and perhaps in an aggravated form.

3303. *Mr. Kirk.*] But you have not had that experience since the hours were reduced to 11 hours?—I believe there is an amelioration in all those respects in consequence of that.

3304. Then, in fact, the evidence you are now giving to the Committee is evidence of what occurred five or six years ago?—I have some knowledge of it still, because, although I am not in charge of those particular works, I am still treating patients from those different works, so that I have attention called to those facts still.

3305. In your private practice?—Yes.

3306. What was the reason of your ceasing to attend these bleaching works?—I was obliged either to sacrifice that or my private practice, and I resigned in favour of another gentleman.

3307. *Mr. Davison.*] But you would not have any objection to go back?—I would have no objection, from the character of the employment, to go back; but it might not be convenient.

3308. Suppose I offered it to you to-morrow, would you take it?—Well, I have other duties to perform.

3309. Then you would not take it?—I do not know that I would not take it. I wish to be understood, that so far as the thing in itself is agreeable, I would have no objection upon that score.

3310. *Chairman.*] I understand you, that at the present moment there is a very good feeling existing between the employers and the employed engaged in the bleaching establishments?—Yes, I believe the feeling is very general.

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3311. And I think I understand you also to say, that among the masters there is a general feeling in favour of some legislative interference?—A general feeling in favour of it.

3312. In your opinion, does the good feeling now existing between the different classes, arise in some degree from a knowledge on the part of the working people that they and their employers are agreed upon the necessity of some legislative interference?—Yes, I believe so; I have seen the working classes at Paisley in such an exasperated state, that they have actually attempted to murder their employers. I have seen men flogged in the street of Paisley for attempting to shoot their employers, but I believe no such feeling now exists, and I think that all parties would regard it as a common benefit if a measure to meet their views in some manner were enacted.

3313. Mr. *Dalgleish*.] Have you had a good deal of experience amongst other works at Paisley as well as your own works?—Yes, generally.

3314. I understand you to say, that varicose veins is a common complaint amongst the workers at Paisley?—It is a complaint that is common amongst shopkeepers and workers in factories; it exists in mills also where they are much on their feet.

3315. Are you aware that the people in the spinning mills are upon their feet for a good many hours?—Yes, they are.

3316. Do you find the varicose veins more common amongst the bleachers?—Yes, I do.

3317. And you attribute that to the excessive heat?—To the excessive heat.

The Reverend *John Lockure*, called in; and Examined.

Rev. J. Lockure.

3318. *Chairman*.] WILL you tell the Committee what is your profession, and where you reside?—I am Pastor of a congregational church in Paisley.

3319. How many years have you been so?—Seven.

3320. Does any portion of your congregation consist of persons employed in bleaching works in or about Paisley?—Not now, but about four years ago I had a few.

3321. Can you tell the Committee at all what number?—I had only three or four.

3322. Did you become acquainted with their circumstances or their condition?—I did.

3323. Did anything strike you with respect either to their physical or moral condition?—There was nothing particular about their physical condition, and as to their moral, those of them connected with my church were about upon an average with those from other works.

3324. Was your attention, during that period, directed at all to the condition under which the bleaching works were carried on?—I was called on to take an active part in the movement of 1853.

3325. You say you were called on?—Yes, by the bleachers.

3326. Did that induce you to examine into the condition of persons employed in bleaching works?—It made me make very extensive inquiries into the subject; but of the nature of those inquiries I am not prepared to speak at this time, because I was called away suddenly, to come here on Saturday evening, and being from home at the time, I was unable to lay my hands upon the notes which I made at the time; but the extent of my information may be seen by the report which I happened to be employed by the bleachers to draw up when they presented a petition to their masters.

3327. Do you mean the memorial to the bleaching and scouring masters of the west of Scotland, dated May 1853?—That is it.

3328. I need scarcely ask you whether that states correctly the result of the impressions produced upon your own mind by the inquiries which you had made previously to that period?—I was thoroughly satisfied with regard to everything that appears there at that time.

3329. Had any circumstances occurred to your own knowledge subsequently to 1853 which would induce you to alter any opinion you then gave utterance to?—Subsequently to that a kind of agreement was made between the masters and men, which I thought was final.

3330. Was

3330. Was your impression correct in that respect?—I am led to understand not, from the fact of the present application to Parliament.

Rev. J. Lockure.

3331. What was the nature of the arrangement that you had hoped was final?—Sixty-six hours a week, if my recollection is right.

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Mr. James Leck, called in; and Examined.

3332. *Chairman.*] WHAT is your occupation?—A bleacher and singer in Glasgow. I have a bleaching work about four miles out of Glasgow, on the banks of the Clyde.

Mr. J. Leck.

3333. How many persons do you employ?—They vary from 90 to 110, according as we are busy or slack.

3334. Is that in all your works?—No; that refers to the bleaching field.

3335. Of those how many are women, young persons, and children, the three classes to whom legislation is proposed to be applied?—I think I have 10 or 12 children employed.

3336. How many women?—About 70, I think. We have not many men; out of 110 we have not more than about 15 men.

3337. Will you tell the Committee what is the nature of the work that the 70 women have to perform?—From 30 to 40 are engaged in the stoves. I have two stoves.

3338. Let us take those first then; with respect to the temperature of the stoves, what may that be?—It varies from 90° to 120°, according to the description of goods.

3339. As to the nature of the employment, what is it that these women do in those stoves?—They are employed in putting the cloth on the stenter, running it along stoves 41 yards long, to dry.

3340. Is that an occupation which permits them to sit down and rest much during the time they are employed?—No, very little.

3341. They are chiefly in a standing position then?—Chiefly standing.

3342. For how long a time may the women be engaged in this business?—Our usual hours in summer are from six o'clock in the morning till seven o'clock at night, with three quarters of an hour for breakfast and three quarters of an hour for dinner; and on Saturdays we quit at three o'clock, with half an hour for breakfast only.

3343. Beginning at six o'clock?—Beginning at six.

3344. Are those the hours in summer, or are they through the year?—They apply of course to all through the year; but in winter for three or four months we are very busy, and we have no regular hours; then we work according to the order we get.

3345. If I understand you right, the shortest time you work the stoves is what you name?—Yes, all beyond that is extra work.

3346. Will you tell the Committee what are the irregular hours during these three or four months when you are so busy in winter?—In winter we work generally four nights in a week until 11 o'clock at night.

3347. Beginning at six o'clock?—Beginning at six; sometimes we quit at 10, but generally we work until 11 o'clock.

3348. Are the same persons employed throughout the week?—Yes; we have no relays or extra hands.

3349. Do the persons so engaged complain as to their health being affected by these hours of work?—No; I do not think it.

3350. Have you noticed yourself, in your own experience?—They look fagged during those long hours. I have seen repeated cases of fainting away, which I have never seen during the short hours. I have had two or three cases of fainting when we were working the long hours.

3351. Do persons "knock up," as it is called, in consequence of these long hours?—A good many of them "knock under," or are absent occasionally at these pushes. They do not appear next morning unless we insist on their coming; a few are absent till breakfast time, and then they come in.

3352. Has it ever occurred to you that some arrangement might be made to reduce these long hours?—Yes, the short time movement amongst bleachers and employers, and workers, is, I think, progressing. There is a kind of feeling amongst us to work short hours; I have spoken to some very large employers;

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I told one of them that I had a notice to attend here, and I asked his opinion, and he said, "It is a very good thing, and I wish we had it;" and he is about the largest employer in Scotland. I have spoken to some others, and very few of them I think are opposed to it.

3353. I should like to ask you your own opinion; what is your feeling upon the subject?—I should be quite well pleased if there was a legislative enactment for 10 hours a day, so far as regards myself.

3354. Can you tell us what the system of ventilation is in the stoves to which you have referred?—They are only ventilated at the ends, from the doors at one end, and from the opening windows at the other.

3355. And are those windows high up in the apartment?—No; they open inwards.

3356. Is the ventilation produced by that means sufficient, in your opinion?—It is sufficient, of course; we have two flats, and there is one opening in the first flat to allow the heat to ascend into the second flat; but we have no ventilation except the extreme ends of the stoves.

3357. How does that act upon the centre of the apartment; is the heat greater there than it is at the ends?—I do not think it is; I never observed it; it is greater where the fire is; they are fired from each end, and, of course, the fire is immediately over the extreme ends; but the door balances that at one end, and the opening window at the other.

3358. Is that the system pursued in most of the stoves in your neighbourhood?—I believe so.

3359. Are those women natives of the place, or are they partly from the Highlands and from Ireland?—They are mostly natives of the place; it is a mining district where I am, and I get the daughters of the colliers round the place.

3360. You have told us that so far as you know, the majority of the masters are in favour of legislative interference?—Those that I know and that I have spoken to.

3361. Do you think it would have any prejudicial effect upon the wages of the workpeople?—No, I do not think that.

3362. With respect to your own business, do you see any great difficulty in accommodating your business to it?—No, I see none.

3363. Mr. Massey.] You seem to work regularly four days in the week. During these pushes, as they are called, would it not be possible for you to introduce a number of additional hands?—By extending the works we could do that.

3364. Not without extending your works?—No.

3365. Then it would be utterly impossible for you to meet your orders without working these long hours?—Quite impossible.

3366. Mr. Turner.] I fancy you would scarcely be able to do so much work, would you, which you seem to think would be the proper time, as you do now?—No, but we have idle time occasionally. We are of opinion that the work would come to us more regularly from the manufacturers or the merchants if they had a limited time to finish their goods.

3367. I understand you to say that you always had from six o'clock in the morning till seven o'clock in the evening, with an interval of an hour and a half per day for meals?—Yes.

3368. So that would be 13 working hours, less one hour and a half,—11½ working hours?—Yes.

3369. And at certain seasons in winter, for three or four months, you work very long hours, until eleven o'clock at night?—Yes.

3370. Then, if you had ten hours as the working hours upon the whole year through, would you be able at your works to do the same quantity of work?—No.

3371. Would you pay the same wages to the workpeople for ten hours as you now do for the hours you work?—I think so.

3372. Would you?—Yes, I would.

3373. You would be willing to pay them?—Yes.

3374. Then, of course, as you would be able to pay the workpeople for working 10 hours as you do now for working 11½ hours, you would be able to charge the same price to the persons that supplied you with work?—Very likely we should meditate an advance.

3375. Then that would be the advance of the wages you would pay extra.
You

You would pay the same wages for less work. Of course it would cost you very much more per piece in the item of wages?—Yes, it would cost a little more.

3376. For that particular, then, you would consider yourself entitled to charge an additional sum to the manufacturers who supplied you with work?—If we could get it. We find that we can get an occasional advance now.

3377. The plant of your work, the capital employed in your work, must be very considerable?—Yes, it is considerable.

3378. Will you allow me to ask you whether, suppose you were able at your present hours to do 100,000 pieces of cloth, and under the regulations you would not be able to do more than 80,000 pieces, you would not have to charge upon the 80,000 the whole that you would have charged upon the 100,000?—I think we should require to get an advance.

3379. Then the result of this legislation will be a very considerable advance upon the price to the manufacturers?—Not very much upon the cost of the finish; it would probably be from 5 to 10 per cent. a piece, costing 15 s. or 20 s.

3380. Are you aware whether in any foreign countries there is any such limitation of hours as you propose?—No, I do not think there is any limitation, but I am not particularly aware upon that point.

3381. Are you aware that in some departments of business the British manufacturers have to run a very close competition with continental manufacturers?—I believe it is with weaving, in some particular classes of goods; I finish a great many Swiss goods; there is a very keen competition in weaving, but not in finishing, that I am aware of.

3382. The tendency of this legislation would be to place additional burthens upon the British manufacturers as compared with continental, in the bleaching department?—If there are hours of limitation in one place, and in another place they can work as long as they choose, of course it would be an additional limitation in the one where the enactment applied.

3383. Then it amounts to a tax upon British produce, does it not?—So far as regards that.

3384. Mr. Kirk.] Do you finish anything in the linen way?—No.

3385. Do you finish cambric handkerchiefs?—No.

3386. You do nothing in the linen way?—No.

3387. Then your evidence applies solely to cotton bleaching?—Solely to cotton.

3388. Chairman.] I think you stated that the possible rise in price would be from 5 to 10 per cent.?—Yes, I think it might be that, but we have got that in the last year or two, and no great revolution at all has taken place; we got it easily and without any effort; the bleachers in Glasgow have generally got it until this last year or two upon some descriptions of goods.

3389. Mr. Wise.] If the work were more equally distributed throughout the year, do you think you would in reality bleach and dye less than you do now?—I do not think it; not much at any rate in the summer season.

3390. What are the circumstances that lead to your being more busy at one time than at another?—The orders seem to be going out principally by ships in the winter season; I do not know for what reason particularly, but we generally find that the bleachers have more to do than they can undertake in the winter, and in the summer sometimes they do not know what to do; they do not work then more than eight or nine hours, or probably ten, and we do not push the work, but in the winter time there is frequently a great push.

3391. I think you admit that the amount of bleaching must exceed the amount of orders received?—Yes.

3392. Would it be possible to secure regularity of orders?—I could not say that.

3393. Is there any necessity for these long hours of work in the character of the trade?—No; I do it because others do it, and there is the way we go on. The more respectable of them, I dare say, would agree to a short-time movement; but there is one evil that I would notice; these small bleachers take premises and pay 200 l. or 300 l. a year; they work night and day, and suppose they are cheating the landlord by getting double tides out for one rent.

3394. Looking at the question, first as a manufacturer, and secondly as a citizen, do you think the present system injurious to the health of the persons who are employed in the bleaching-works?—I think it is.

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3395. Do you think that without some sort of legislation the poorer classes of this country are able to protect themselves?—I do not.

3396. *Chairman.*] Can you tell the Committee what the increased cost of bleaching a piece of goods would be, assuming the rise to be 10 per cent.?—A piece of goods that would cost 10 *d.* finishing just now, would probably be 11 *d.*; and if we could not get that, we must get it in some other way.

3397. That would be an extra penny?—Yes; I should be very glad in my own business to have that extra penny; but if they would not give it, I would not throw up the house, but I would certainly tell them that Government had interfered for short hours, and I think you ought to give me the penny.

3398. If it turns out that the rise is only five per cent., the increased cost of bleaching a piece of goods would only be a halfpenny?—Yes, just about a halfpenny.

3399. Mr. *Massey.*] Would you be content to give that halfpenny to the men employed under you to cover the less amount of work that you would be able to furnish?—I intend it for myself.

3400. Then you would not increase the wages of your workpeople?—No, I do not expect that; but we are so much under their control, that they meet occasionally and say we want such and such wages; and if the hands are wanted, we give them an advance without more ado—a shilling or so.

3401. Do not you think it would be fair if you were in the habit of paying your workers a shilling a week extra for a long time, and you had all at once to reduce your work to short time, that you should give them some recompence for it?—No, I do not think that.

3402. I understand you to say that if there was no legislation on the subject, and you reduced the short hours, you would still continue to give those employed under you the same amount of wages that they now get for long hours?—I think so; I never contemplated making any alteration; the difference would only be an hour a day, and for long hours they are paid every minute extra beyond the usual time.

3403. Would you give the men employed under you the same wages for working 10 hours as you have been in the habit of paying for 17 hours?—They do not work 17 hours just now, they work 11½ I think, from six in the morning till seven in the evening; that is the regular day, and they are paid extra for every hour beyond that.

3404. Mr. *Kirk.*] The evidence you gave before was, that it was 66 hours a week?—Yes, I think that is it.

3405. Those are the working hours?—Yes, and all beyond that they are paid extra for.

3406. Then when you spoke of long hours, you meant 66 hours?—No, that is not long hours, those are regular hours; the long hours is when we work till 10 or 11 o'clock, in the winter season.

3407. Sixty-six hours are your ordinary working hours?—Yes.

3408. And when you speak of short hours, you mean 60 hours?—I mean the present contemplated Bill.

3409. Do you mean 60 hours?—Yes.

3410. *Chairman.*] What the Committee are to understand is, that you would make no difference between 66 hours and 60, but all the overtime you pay for?—Yes.

3411. You would cease to pay that, of course?—Yes, if they were not working; this Bill would not allow me to work, and of course it would cease.

3412. But between 60 and 66 hours?—I would make no reduction.

3413. Mr. *Kirk.*] Therefore those who were inclined to work overtime would be unable to do so, and in consequence of this Bill would lose the difference?—Of course; they could not get the work done, and they would lose it.

3414. Mr. *Dalglish.*] How much wages do you pay the women?—The stove girls have eight shillings per week.

3415. For the 13 hours?—Yes.

3416. How much do you pay them an hour overtime?—They are paid just at that rate.

3417. Then it would make a difference of about 18 pence a week the taking away the overtime?—Yes.

3418. So

3418. So that your women who are now earning 9 s. 6 d. per week would be reduced to 8 s. ?—Yes.

3419. You have a certain amount of slackness, I suppose?—Yes, in the summer season.

3420. Have you any notion how much their wages would be reduced by that?—We are very fortunate; we have very little idle time; one week or two we have been rather slack, and rather than lose my workers I have said, "It does not matter whether you work an hour a week or not, your wages shall never be below 5 s."

3421. You give them 5 s. to support themselves, although you did not employ them?—Yes.

3422. How many weeks would it be like that?—I said that about three weeks ago when business looked very bad, but it got better immediately; I do not think it occurred more than twice this year, but rather than lose them I did so, as there were plenty ready to pick them up, and it had the desired effect.

Mr. James Thompson, called in; and Examined.

3423. *Chairman.*] WHAT is your occupation, and where do you reside?—At Burnbank; I am the Manager of bleaching-works there.

3424. Is that near Paisley?—Yes.

3425. How long have you been in that capacity?—I have only been about six months in that capacity, but I was formerly engaged with Messrs. Wm. Wallace & Son, which is mentioned in the Report.

3426. When did you leave Messrs. Wallace's establishment?—On the 9th of April last.

3427. Therefore there has been no break in your experience as a manager of bleaching-works?—I cannot say so much on the business I have entered upon, because it is a very different business; but the one I was formerly engaged upon I can speak to.

3428. What is the nature of your present business?—Bleaching embroidered work.

3429. Is that cotton?—Muslin collars, sleeves, and babies' robes.

3430. But your experience at Burnbank continued up to the 9th of April?—Yes.

3431. How many persons would there be employed at Messrs. Wallace's establishment?—During the summers nearly 100; in the winter it was less.

3432. What class of goods were bleached there?—Mostly woollen goods.

3433. Of those hundred persons how many might be women, and how many children and young persons?—Between 30 and 40 women, and about three or four young persons from 10 to 15 years of age.

3434. Will you tell the Committee what the hours of labour ordinarily were for the women and young persons in that establishment?—The ordinary labour was from six in the morning till seven at night, or 66 hours per week.

3435. Was that ever exceeded in the course of the year?—Yes, during the summer months.

3436. What would be the hours then?—On Monday morning we sometimes rose at one o'clock, and occasionally we worked till 12 on Monday evening; but the general hours of working when we were busy were from six in the morning till 12 at night, for three days at least in the week.

3437. Would those be consecutive or alternate days?—Alternate days, Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays.

3438. How many hours' work per week would that give the women or young persons so employed?—About 90 hours; from 80 to 90 hours per week.

3439. What was the impression produced upon your mind by the appearance of the persons who were working these long hours?—Next morning they appeared very tired and haggard-looking; indeed they were not qualified for their work next day. I found in my experience that we lost during the day from 10 to 30 pieces by their working overtime.

3440. Do you mean that they were not bleached, or bleached so badly?—No, we could not get them put forward; we lost that by working irregular hours; we got our regular amount out, but with long hours we generally lost something by it.

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3441. Has your attention been called to the subject-matter of the investigation of this Committee, and the proposed legislative interference?—Yes.

3442. What is your opinion upon that subject?—My opinion is that our trade could be carried on at 60 hours per week, by the masters extending their premises a little more.

3443. You are yourself I think connected with some employers?—Yes; but we bleach only our own goods.

3444. But speaking in the interests of master bleachers, you do not see any practical difficulty in the way of conducting their business under a system of regulated labour?—No, none.

3445. And the Committee understand you to be in favour of legislative interference to shorten the hours of persons engaged in the bleaching business?—Yes.

3446. Mr. Kirk.] I think you state that your present occupation is that of bleaching collars?—Yes, just now, and sleeves and children's robes.

3447. They are very light things?—Yes; but my former employment was in the woollen line, washing and finishing woollens, and occasionally bleaching plain muslins, before the 9th of April last year.

3448. Were the woollen works subject to the same hours as the cotton?—Yes, because we finished both woollen and cotton at the same time.

3449. Were you liable in the woollen trade to the same pushes that you were in the cotton trade?—Yes.

3450. Did you say you were bleaching woollen?—No; washing and scouring woollens, but bleaching plain muslin.

3451. And you were at that time liable to the same description of pushes, as you term them?—Yes.

3452. Mr. Baxter.] Are the woollen and cotton trade so inseparably connected in the west of Scotland that it would be impossible to legislate for one without the other?—As for the dyeing, I cannot say anything about it; the cotton and woollen would be quite inseparable, because one bleach-field, during the winter, finishes cotton goods, and during the summer finishes woollen goods.

3453. But there are a great many union goods, are there not, a mixture of woollen and cotton?—Yes, those are what I mean; we generally call them woollen goods.

3454. Do you bleach and dye the goods altogether in woollen?—We do not dye; the dyeing is separable generally from the bleaching.

3455. I am speaking of the works in the west of Scotland?—The bleaching and dyeing is generally separate, and not connected with the same masters.

3456. But goods made altogether of wool are both bleached and dyed in the west of Scotland, are they not?—No; not under the same employers.

3457. But they are done there?—They are done in the west of Scotland.

3458. Mr. Davison.] Is it your opinion that those persons who are engaged in the woollen trade should be put under the same restrictions as those engaged in the cotton trade?—Yes.

3459. Mr. Baxter.] You consider it would be impossible to draw a line of distinction between them?—Yes, quite impossible.

3460. Are the masters generally favourable in the west of Scotland, do you think, to this legislative interference?—As far as I heard, they were.

3461. Have they ever sent up a deputation to London against Mr. Tremenhoe's Bills?—I understand they did at one period.

3462. When was that?—In 1843.

3463. But have they done so of late years?—I am not sure about that.

3464. Is it not a fact that you would know from your acquaintance with the movement altogether?—I am acquainted with the movement so far as it is going on; but I have not taken any active part in it, any more than giving my evidence.

3465. Are you acquainted with Dr. Boase?—No.

3466. Are you aware that there the course is very different?—I cannot say that.

3467. Mr. Davison.] When you say you bleach your own goods, do I understand you to say that you purchase them yourself?—We are makers of them; we have only commenced this year to be so.

3468. Then you are not subject to these pushes that we have heard of?—No, not to the same amount; we have had occasion to work a little overtime on account

account of being far away from any town, and being unable to get hands; but we are not subject to the same pushes as other places are. Mr. J. Thompson.

3469. Mr. Kirk.] That is mainly because you are your own employers?—Yes.

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3470. Mr. Cobbett.] In answer to a question put to you, you stated that in 1843 the masters in the west of Scotland did send up a deputation against legislation on this matter?—As far as I recollect.

3471. But at the present time you think that those same masters in the west of Scotland are in favour of legislation?—Yes, in general they are.

3472. Have they not entered into agreements amongst them to limit the hours of labour from time to time?—Yes.

3473. And those agreements have been violated, first by one and then by another, until all have gone back to the old hours; is not that so?—Yes.

3474. Would it not, therefore, appear that there ought to be factory legislation?—Yes.

3475. In fact, I understand you to say that the masters generally of the west of Scotland are in favour of legislation upon this point, and that they do now and then voluntarily enter into agreements among themselves to do that which would be made compulsory upon them?—Yes.

3476. I believe you are the manager of the works of your uncle, are you not?—I was formerly, but I am now engaged with Messrs. S. R. & T. Brown; we now bleach our own goods.

3477. But you know a good deal about it?—Yes.

3478. What neighbourhood are you living in now?—The neighbourhood of Paisley.

3479. Do you know anything of the houses attached to these bleaching works, called the women's houses?—Yes.

3480. Do you know anything of Mr. Hamilton's?—No.

3481. Do you know that Mr. Hamilton has a woman's house?—Yes.

3482. Is there any at Pollockshaws?—I do not think it.

3483. Do you know of any other except the one I speak of at Mr. Hamilton's?—Yes.

3484. Whose is that?—Messrs. Adams & Son, of Millbank, and Messrs. Wallace's.

3485. That is where you were?—Yes.

3486. We will speak of that of Messrs. Wallace first; it is a house attached to the bleaching works, is it not?—Yes, it is inside the works.

3487. How many persons does it contain; how many persons live in it; do you remember?—About 30.

3488. They lived there continuously, did not they?—Yes.

3489. Slept there, and had their meals there?—Yes.

3490. Were they all females?—All females.

3491. Of what ages might they be?—From 15 to 60.

3492. Would there be any younger than 15, do you think?—I cannot say about that; I do not think it, because they generally live with their parents then.

3493. We will speak, then, of those 30 that you say live there; did they all sleep in one room?—In one room.

3494. There were beds fitted up there, then, for 30 of these females in one room?—Yes.

3495. How many slept in a bed, do you know?—Sometimes three, sometimes two.

3496. Then they were roused up in the morning, I suppose, whenever they were wanted?—Yes, that was the object of having woman-houses in connexion with the fields.

3497. Do you know how they passed their time on a Sunday?—Very few of them ever attended church; they generally lay in their bed the most of the day, and in the after part they went and took a walk.

3498. Was that from excessive fatigue, and did they complain in fact of their fatigue? Was it that they were too tired, and was that the reason that they lay in bed the greater part of the Sunday?—I believe that was the cause of it; I know that from my own experience.

3499. Did you ever hear any objections in the neighbourhood about these places, on the ground of their being productive of irregularities and immoralities of any kind?—Very much so.

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3500. Was it ever complained of, that the beds were over crowded, too thickly crammed together, and the chests of drawers, or whatever they kept their clothes in, were over-heated on that account and unhealthy?—Yes, very often that was the case.

3501. Did any of them read, or could they read?—In general, very few.

3502. As to what they did read, did you ever hear whether the publications they got were objectionable publications or not?—I never saw them with any thing but songbooks in their hands.

3503. What was the utmost heat that you remember to have noticed in any one of these stoves that you have spoken of?—I have occasionally seen it 140.

3504. Did you ever hear of it as high as 160?—It might have been that when we opened the doors at six o'clock in the morning; but then we generally opened the windows, and brought it down to 130; but I have seen it 140 when they were working in it.

3505. Do you remember this complaint to have been made at all or spoken of, that the nails in the floors became so heated, as to make it necessary for the women who worked there to wear slippers in order to prevent their feet from being blistered?—Yes, I have seen their feet burnt.

3506. By the heat of the nails?—By the heat of the nails; and I have got my own hands burnt.

3507. By what?—By what they call the bearers of the stenters of the stove.

3508. Is the stenter something you hang the goods upon?—Yes, it is where the goods are dried upon.

3509. I want to understand you, whether or not it was that the nails in the floor got so hot that they burnt the feet of the women when they walked upon it?—Yes.

3510. They are obliged to walk up and down the floors continually all the night?—Yes, and the girls have showed me their legs as red as scarlet from the heat of the flues, when they have had occasion to pass up and down by the stenters.

3511. The flues go along the room, I suppose?—Yes; the stenters are above the flues, and the flues are just below the stenters for the sake of drying the goods.

3512. You know that Mr. Hamilton has a room at his house near Paisley?—Yes.

3513. It is about a mile and a half from Paisley, is it not?—Yes.

3514. Did you ever see it?—I never saw it.

3515. Did you ever see the outside of it?—No.

3516. Were you never by Mr. Hamilton's?—I have walked into Paisley, but I never saw it; I have only been three times in Paisley altogether.

3517. Then in point of fact you cannot give any evidence with regard to Mr. Hamilton's woman's house?—No.

3518. Mr. Davison.] About this woman's house; it is provided by the proprietor of the works, is it not?—Yes.

3519. Is it quite voluntary on the part of the persons to go into them, or is it compulsory?—It is voluntary; but it is voluntary in this way, that they go there to get the place comparatively free; it is compulsory thus far, that they have no other place to go to.

3520. Do they pay rent for it?—Yes; as far as I am aware a number pay for it; I cannot say for every one; they pay 2 d. or 4 d. a fortnight.

3521. That is a voluntary payment?—No, the payment is compulsory.

3522. But it is voluntary their going there?—Yes.

3523. They could go into a lodging if they chose?—Yes.

3524. And these women go there?—Yes.

3525. Mr. Cobbett.] Do you know where these young persons who live in this woman's house come from generally?—As far as I have seen, they come from Ireland and the Highlands.

3526. They are young persons that come, generally speaking, from the Highlands or from Ireland?—Yes.

3527. Did you ever hear of a woman's house near Paisley in which there was a division made, and one part set aside for the Irish, and the other for the Scotch?—Yes.

3528. Where

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3528. Where was that?—At Messrs. Cochrane's.
3529. Is that far from Paisley?—About six miles.
3530. Is it not near Pollockshaws?—At Barr Head.
3531. Do you know how many young persons or women were lodged in that house?—I believe he had between 300 and 400 occasionally.
3532. Did you ever hear of any disturbance between the two different lots, the Irish and the Scotch?—I have occasionally heard of quarrels.
3533. Has it not been the cause of a great deal of complaint?—Yes.
3534. I understand you that these houses are parts of the establishment?—Yes.
3535. They are, in fact, attached to the works?—Yes.
3536. *Chairman*] Are they within the walls of the establishment?—Some establishments are walled in, and they are inside the walls along with our workers' houses, where the place is not walled in; it was just beside the workers' houses, and they are generally accounted as just within the works.
3537. *Mr. Davison*.] When they are within the walls, is there an entrance to them from without?—Yes. In speaking of the bleaching, I should say that the cloth lappers had very irregular hours about two years ago, and they spoke out and got their hours shortened to regular hours; before that there was a great shipment of goods nearly every week; now there are very few short shipments take place with regular hours of working; they used to work all night for two days at a time.
3538. *Chairman*.] You mean that the work in that particular branch has been more equally spread since the hours have been shortened?—Yes.
3539. *Mr. Cobbett*.] Then it has been beneficial, in fact, to those who came to the bleacher, that the hours of labour should be shortened?—Yes.
3540. Has there been any difficulty experienced by the merchant who brings his goods in such cases?—No; because the consequence has been that there has been no short shipments to speak of.
3541. *Chairman*.] I understand you to say that from your experience you thought that the lying in bed on Sunday was necessary for the women who were subject to those long hours?—Yes.
3542. Did you mean by that, that you, as manager, had yourself been so kept up that you were obliged to lie in bed all Sunday?—Yes; at least, part of the day; I could not get to church in the fore part of the day; if I did go I slept.
3543. *Mr. Kirk*.] When you speak of long hours, do you mean 66 hours a week?—No, I mean 80 hours.
3544. Then, when you have been giving this testimony, you have been all along meaning 80 hours a week?—When I was giving the testimony of 80 hours, I gave 80 hours.
3545. When you used the term "long hours," what did you mean by it?—I mean long hours, 80 hours per week; but 66 hours I think too long.
3546. Then what do you mean by the term short hours, as applied to lappers?—They work 65 hours, just now.
3547. Supposing that you worked 66 hours, do you think the persons would require to lie in bed all day on Sunday in order to recover their strength?—No.
3548. Then you think 66 hours would not be so injurious to them if they left off on Saturday at three, as to oblige them to remain in bed on Sunday?—No.
3549. You think if they worked 66 hours a week, and left off at three on Saturday, they would not be injured by it?—Not so much.
3550. But you think they would be injured?—I believe that working these hours is injurious to the health, standing in such a heat as they generally do.
3551. Is there a very great heat in the lapping-rooms?—Not in the lapping-rooms. I merely stated that, in order to show that where work is regular, things can go on better.
3552. What I wanted to know was this, whether it was in consequence of a movement on the part of the workpeople, or in consequence of legislation, that the change took place in the lapping-rooms?—On account of the people themselves.
3553. The people themselves were able to effect a change, then?—Yes.

Mr. J. Thompson. 3554. And they did it without legislation?—Yes.
 3555. But you think the others would not be able to effect it without legislation?—I do not think it, because it has been tried and failed, and the masters see that themselves.

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Mr. Daniel Drimminie, called in; and Examined.

Mr. D. Drimminie. 3556. *Mr. Baxter.*] WHAT trade are you engaged in?—In the Irish bleaching; I am managing partner in the firm of Daniel Drimminie & Co.

3557. Conducting large bleaching works in the neighbourhood of Dundee?—Yes, five miles from Dundee.

3558. It is what is commonly and usually called an out-door bleaching field, I believe?—Yes.

3559. That is, the major part of your work is done in the open air?—Partly out and partly in, the in-door depending on the out-door.

3560. You are aware that there are no such establishments in Lancashire or Cheshire connected with the cotton trade in general?—Not that I am aware of.

3561. There are no works which might be properly called bleaching fields?—Not that I know of.

3562. A good deal of evidence has been given before this Committee to show that the operatives in Lancashire, Cheshire, and the west of Scotland, and other parts of the country, have an unhealthy look in consequence of the long hours, the great overtime, and the excessive heat to which they are subjected; are the operatives whom you and your neighbours employ unhealthy?—Not at all; it is a healthy employment.

3563. Are they about the most healthy class of your population?—I consider they are.

3564. Are they more healthy, and do they live longer than those engaged in agricultural labour?—I should say they are; farm servants are generally short-lived.

3565. Will you state whether it is your opinion that your out-door bleaching is more analogous, and bears more resemblance to agricultural labour than to employment in linen or cotton factories?—Yes, it is more in the open air; the females are more employed in the open air, in laying down the yarns and taking them off the grass.

3566. What is the average of your working hours at present?—At present, 10 hours, and that was made by agreement with the people; some two years ago they came to me, asking the hours to be reduced one hour per day, which I readily agreed to, on condition that the other bleachers in the neighbourhood would agree to it; we worked from six in the morning till six in the evening, allowing three quarters of an hour to breakfast and an hour to dinner for five days in the week, and one Saturday we stopped at five, and the next Saturday at two; and on the Saturday we stopped at two we gave half an hour to breakfast.

3567. What number of persons do you employ?—At present I employ 153 persons altogether.

3567*. Have you any females and boys employed in the stoves?—None.

3568. And do you employ females and boys after six in the evening?—Occasionally we do.

3569. For how long?—Sometimes for an hour or two; perhaps three hours; but very rarely three hours of an evening; we do not employ young boys after six o'clock at night; that is to say, boys under 14.

3570. Have you any statement showing, upon an average for last year, what extra time all the persons in your employment have worked?—I have a statement here, showing the extra time worked by spreaders, who are females of from 16 to 18 or 20 years of age, and by bundle women of the same age, and by boys also.

3571. Will you state to the Committee generally the result of the number of hours for the whole year?—I made this statement at the beginning of last April, on looking over the matter, and I found that from April down to 18th March 1856 and 1857, the spreaders worked 13 hours extra that year.

3572. In the course of the year?—In the course of the whole year the bundling people worked 41 hours and one third, and the boys had no extra time during that year.

3573. Does

3573. Does that statement include all the workers in your establishment?—*Mr. D. Drimminie.*
All the females and boys.

3574. You sometimes worked after six o'clock; was that in consequence of the water being dirtied, caused by the floods in the river?—It occurred in consequence of rain, and having to wash out the goods more than in dry weather.

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3575. Then you are dependent upon the weather?—Yes, we are, upon the drying department.

3576. Are your yarns dried in the open air, or in stoves?—They are dried partly in the open air and partly in stoves; in weather such as this we dry them out altogether; in other weather we hang them outside until they are properly finished, and then dry them off in the stoves.

3577. Does dull weather interfere with you; can you dry as well as by your out-door occupation?—Yes; there is more work then, in consequence of having to wash more, and that interferes with the labour of the bundling women, but from four to five days in the week they dry one-half in the yard, and the bundling women have to dry it up afterwards, so that they are put out during that time.

3578. And they make it up by two or three hours at night?—Yes, occasionally for a night or two, but only when compelled to do so; we do not like to do so.

3579. It has been proposed in some Bills that the hours should be limited from six in the morning till six in the evening; would it be more convenient to you oftentimes to begin at a later hour than six in the morning?—Some persons begin later; we have always began at six.

3580. Are you aware that any of your neighbours engaged in the same employment begin at half-past six?—Yes, and seven.

3581. Any later?—None later, that I know of.

3582. You have heard the report of a commissioner, I suppose, and the evidence upon which it was founded?—Yes.

3583. He proposed that there should be a clause allowing extra time in certain cases; do you think that clause would be of benefit to you?—I do think it is practicable, because I think that my foreman, or manager, and the inspector would not agree upon what was necessary to work extra time for; there would be a squabble between them.

3584. You think it would be cheaper for you to pay the fine than to have an investigation into any case that might be disputed between them?—If I was put under an Act, I should try to keep within the law, if possible.

3585. But suppose the inspector and your manager were to differ with regard to the necessity of two or three hours longer work upon a certain occasion, would it not be cheaper for you to pay the fine than have an investigation, calling your workmen away from their employment to give evidence with regard to a case of that sort?—Yes, in that light I think it would.

3586. Is there any part of your work where you could not conform to the conditions of a Bill with respect to regular meal hours?—There is one part of the work, the first part in bleaching the yarns; we have six boys and two men engaged at it, and they commence their work every two hours out of every hour and 50 minutes, and out of that they get half or three quarters of an hour for rest; the other time they work; that is to say, they get half an hour in the hour, and three quarters of an hour out of the hour and 50 minutes; and the time for changing the yarn upon these rollers we cannot bring into the regular meal hours; but then these persons have double the rest of any of the other workers.

3587. Then I gather from your evidence that there are in point of fact no very long hours in the sense in which those words had been used by other witnesses?—No.

3588. It has been stated by Mr. Turnbull, and I believe by other witnesses, that the workmen in Lancashire in these cotton works are quite unanimous, and wishing there should be a legislative enactment; do you know that in Scotland it is not so at all?—It is not so general, as far as I can understand.

3589. We have had a good deal of evidence as to the severity of the work in the bleaching factories, that the workers are positively not able to stand, and that they have to leave their employment; is there anything of that kind in Scotland?—Nothing connected with yarning and bleaching; a more healthy set of women, or better dressed at Church on a Sunday, is not to be seen than in our parish.

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3590. Do you believe them to be as healthy, as well paid, as well educated, and as correct a class of the community as any others?—Yes, I do.

3591. And there has been no demand for legislative interference originating in them?—Not originating from them.

3592. Can you tell me if the bleaching of linen yarn is carried on in the county of Fife like that in your immediate neighbourhood, to all intents and purposes, being an out-door occupation?—It is.

3593. It is as dependent upon the weather as the taking in of a crop of hay?—Not quite so much as that, perhaps, but still it does depend very much upon the weather.

3594. As far as the drying of yarns is concerned, is it not dependent upon the weather?—Because in cool weather we stove, and the farmer cannot do that.

3595. Are you aware that the females employed in these bleaching works in Fife are notoriously and proverbially the most healthy women in the country?—Yes, they are indeed.

3596. It is a proverb, is it not?—It has been very often remarked by persons there, and I have remarked myself what a fine race of women they were.

3597. Of course you know that in these works it would be almost impossible, in consequence of the dependence on the state of the weather, to regulate the hours by legislative enactment, as you admit is quite within the limits of possibility with regard to a factory, and where the work is carried on within four walls?—If we were limited to certain hours, say 10 hours a day, to stop at six, then perhaps we should be limited to a Bill of nine hours and a half a day, because we could not stop our people in the middle of washing a parcel of yarn, and therefore if we were not allowed to work a little before and a little after the time, we should lose 10, 11, 12, 15, or 20 minutes a day.

3598. Have you any difficulty in procuring hands?—No, no more difficulty than in any other district; there is a shortness of hands generally.

3599. Are you aware that bleaching is the most popular sort of labour?—It is generally managed by one class of persons.

3600. Are they very like the rural population, the cotters?—They are cotters at my place; my people all live within three-quarters of a mile of the place in their own cottages; and girls employed at the work whose parents have not cottages, live with other cottagers as lodgers; I have no women's house.

3601. Then would you fear that the effect of any interference by legislative enactment would be to drive your rural population into the towns?—I have great fear that it would.

3602. If your present class of workers were driven into the towns, you would have to get others from the towns?—Of course.

3603. And this system of living in cottages, and families working from generation to generation in the same work, would in a great measure be interfered with?—I do not exactly see how that should be.

3604. Probably you have not thought about the subject?—I have not thought about the subject very much.

3605. In all these bleaching works there is a great deal of land attached?—Yes, a good deal; there is always a large space of ground for spreading and drying our yarns.

3606. What is the largest place; how many acres?—We have about 17 acres. We employ 40 boys, 43 women, and 70 men.

3607. *Chairman.*] Does the evidence you have given respecting the hours of labour apply to the majority or to all the bleaching works in that part of Scotland in which you are connected, or only to your own?—It refers to the districts of Forfarshire and Aberdeenshire.

3608. *Mr. Baxter.*] Does it refer to Fifeshire also?—Yes.

3609. *Chairman.*] Does it apply to Perthshire?—No. Something more than two years ago there was a movement amongst the workers to have the hours reduced one hour a day. Our man came to me, and said, was I willing to do so; I said I was quite agreeable if all the others were; and it was general without any combination at all amongst the masters, or any arrangement.

3610. So far as you know, that arrangement does not apply to the bleaching works that lie in the county of Perth?—Not, so far as I know.

3611. *Mr. Kirk.*] Pray, how do you arrange in winter; at what hour do you begin to spread yarns in the winter?—We begin at daylight, the girls having been previously employed in-doors.

3612. What

3612. What time do you cease working in the winter?—At six o'clock.

3613. Are you able even in winter to give employment before daylight and after dark?—Yes; we do it in this way: we give them the short yarns to do certain things with, which they can do in the house.

3614. You gave employment to that sort?—Yes, we arranged it.

3615. Then you have not specific settled employment for each person, or for each set of hands?—Yes, we have so far, that the persons who worked in the field come in in the morning in winter, and worked two or three hours in the house, and then do the field work outside; in case of frost, or when extra labour was required, we sent out more hands from the bleaching-house, which of course keeps the bleaching-house back, and that has to be made up by a little extra time.

3616. Then you can turn out certain hands in the middle of the day, and bring those hands back to work at night?—Yes, we are obliged to do so in frost and bad weather.

Mr. D. Drimminie.

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Mr. Henry Samuel Boase, called in; and Examined.

3617. Mr. Baxter.] WHAT is your occupation?—A bleacher.

Mr. H. S. Boase.

3618. In what neighbourhood?—In the neighbourhood of Dundee; three miles from Dundee.

3619. Are you the managing partner of one of the most extensive bleaching fields in Scotland?—I am.

3620. What is the name of that bleaching field?—Claverhouse Bleaching Field.

3621. You have heard the evidence which has been given by Mr. Drimminie; do you generally concur with the statement that he has made?—Yes, generally.

3622. Do you think that the operatives employed in those bleaching fields are an exceedingly healthy class of people?—Yes; I may speak pretty strongly on that subject, being acquainted with the operatives in the west of England, at the north of Scotland, and throughout the kingdom, and I do not know a more healthy or a more quiet or orderly population in the country.

3623. Do you yourself personally take a great interest in the labouring classes?—A great interest.

3624. In their social state?—I have laid out a considerable sum to make them comfortable.

3625. Are you aware that there is any discontent among the operatives employed in those fields, or any desire for legislation?—Perhaps I must make a little explanation there; I cannot say exactly that I have not heard any; but the last time I was up here, when the Bill was through the House, on my return I found, to my surprise, that there had been some of our people—I was not aware of the fact before—signed a petition to Parliament.

3626. You misunderstand me; I wish you to tell me whether or not there was any dissatisfaction with the hours, with the labour, until influences were brought to bear among your workpeople from England?—Certainly not; I never heard a complaint; indeed, to the contrary, those that have been in communication with this country have said that we have met all their applications, and have studied all their wishes.

3627. You believe that there is no class of workmen in this kingdom who were less hard worked, and who were more healthy and better paid in proportion to their services than those very people?—Certainly.

3628. Have you read the report of the Commissioner as far as refers to these linen and bleaching fields?—I have.

3629. Do you accept that report, with the evidence upon which it is founded, as complete and satisfactory?—I do not.

3630. Why?—It is not enough, it gives a general idea, but in order to be satisfactory, it ought to have gone more minutely into the investigation; the people of the different works were not examined; their case was not made out.

3631. Do you consider that it was possible for the Commissioner, in the very short time he spent in the neighbourhood, to have made himself master of the subject?—No more than getting a general knowledge, which at the time I understood was all that was necessary.

3632. You know, I suppose, that there are some statements in this report which are not strictly correct; Mr. Tremeneere, at page 33 of this report, says,

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“ Deviations

Mr. H. S. Boase.

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“Deviations from the arrangements would thus be prevented, which when resorted to, place those employers who adhere to the general understanding under considerable disadvantage;” as far as you are aware, there have been no such deviations?—I believe not.

3633. Your masters and men understand that there is to be no excessive over-time?—We understand such to be the nature of the work; we have calculated the hours between the workers and the masters, and we have strictly adhered to that, that is to say, for the ordinary day.

3634. But you have occasionally over-time?—We have.

3635. What does that arise from?—In a great measure from the state of the weather, or indirectly from the state of the river; first of all, we have a surplus of water from the fields which makes stoppages; at other times the water is very dirty, and we cannot work and wash our goods; at other times the water is so small that it is not sufficient to turn the machinery.

3636. So in point of fact it comes to this, from some causes you work an hour or two short time, and other days longer?—Whenever these stoppages take place, they generally take place for several hours, whereas the work generally runs one or two hours a day.

3637. Do you think that the effect of legislative enactment with this matter would be to drive the cottier population of your bleaching fields into large towns more?—It would have this effect, that the children grown up and growing up of the cottage population, not finding occupation, in consequence of frequent hindrances of this sort, unless we can occasionally work over-time, we cannot compensate for the loss of time which the weather occasions, the consequence would be that they would remove to other places where they would be fully occupied.

3638. Has that been the case before?—Yes.

3639. Has your population fluctuated as it is?—No.

3640. Is it a fact that many of your people have been in your employment from 10 even to 30 years?—We have 47 cottagers, and out of those 47, a great number have been from 20 to 30, and even 38 years, and from 10 to 20 the greater part of them, and of course a few under 10 years, replacing those that have died off; but I have been connected with it some 30 years, and out of that number I should think there were at least a dozen or 15 that have been there before I became connected with the works.

3641. Do you know anything in your own works, or in those of your neighbours, that is injurious in the slightest degree to the health of women and children?—It is a very healthy occupation; they are well and happy.

3642. Is it not the same in all?—Yes.

3643. Is it one of the most healthy occupations in which a worker can be engaged?—Yes; and it would be accounted for in this way, that our work is not continuous; it is not oppressive, even with extra hours. Our work is quiet; they are able to talk to each other and walk about from place to place; there is no driving; there is no following machinery constantly; it is just hand-work; they get rest.

3644. Are your operatives a healthy and long-lived race of men?—Yes, they have pensioners 80 and 85 years of age.

3645. Are the women and children healthy also?—Yes.

3646. Is it not the very last occupation, in your opinion, with which the Legislature would be justified in interfering upon the score of over-time or ill health?—I think it is.

3647. A great many years ago, I understand, there was a great deal of over-time; has there been a great improvement within the last 20 years?—A considerable improvement; when I first knew Scotland they worked almost invariably to eight or nine o'clock, and now it is a rare exception, with the exception, allow me to say, of one class of people called beetlers in the linens.

3648. This improvement has been brought about, I suppose I am right in saying, by a gradual feeling on the part of masters and operatives that over-time was prejudicial?—Yes, and I may say that the masters were not in the habit of anticipating above a certain amount of labour; but now the persons themselves are making the pressure, they are opposed to after-time as much as possible, except in cases where it is necessary, knowing that it is brought about from the state

state

state of the weather; but if it is to meet an order for over-work not being interrupted by the weather, those persons would interfere at once, and be restive.

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3649. In fact, they are more in a position to dictate to you than you are to them?—I believe in less than five years we should be even in a more favourable state, the workpeople would be, than the Act contemplates.

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3650. Do you employ any very young children?—We seldom employ them under 13; we have seven under 15 now.

3651. Is it a rare thing and a very exceptional case, done from some charitable motive, if a master admits a child from 10 to 13?—From 12 to 13; occasionally we have one to oblige a workman; the labour they do is scarcely any work at all, moving sluices to let water run into pipes, and when it is filled, letting them run into another.

3652. Are the children generally well educated for their rank in life?—Yes; their parents send them all to the parish school till they are 12 years of age; all the children on our works can read and write.

3653. Do you believe that this evidence of yours applies to all the linen works on the west coast of Scotland?—I believe it does.

3654. Has your attention been directed to that very remarkable exception quoted by Mr. Tremenheere in his report—namely, the evidence of Mr. Daniel Forbes, of Cairnfield, near Perth, who makes some very startling statements with regard to the hours at which the operatives are employed, in which they are generally so tired as to fall down and go to sleep in a moment; have you read his evidence and the report founded upon it?—I have read it; as employing bleachers I cannot conceive that such a statement about falling asleep from overwork can have any truth at all in it.

3655. Any man sometimes in a monotonous employment or work may fall asleep?—Just the same as sailors when off duty will lie down and go to sleep immediately; but now less than formerly, because you will find the women reading; they spend part of their time in reading; they have generally got about two or two and a quarter hours before the shift; they can do nothing but sit about, and if they have nothing to engage their attention, the monotonous state throws them asleep.

3656. Is it not very singular that this evidence of Mr. Forbes is not substantiated by others?—It is so, and I was rather surprised at seeing that evidence, and I made inquiries on the subject.

3657. I understand you to say that your operatives have been many years with you?—Many years, particularly these beetlers.

3658. And is it generally the case with regard to these linen works?—I believe so.

3659. And particularly so with regard to foremen, those in charge?—They are generally men that have been on the place a long time; one of ours has been there 20 years, and the other 26 or 27.

3660. Are you aware that Mr. Daniel Forbes has lost three situations in a very short time?—I have been so informed on good authority.

3661. From all you have been informed and told he is not a reliable authority?—His character did not seem to be very correct; but whether or not, I should have thought that such an important point as that ought to have additional evidence from the work-persons on the spot, and also from other fields.

3662. Have you not met masters connected with Perth and the neighbourhood, who have smiled incredulously whenever you have mentioned the name of this man?—Certainly.

3663. Do you know what he is doing now?—I believe he is no longer employed by bleaching fields.

3664. Do you know why he was dismissed from any of his situations?—Three years before this inquiry I was informed that he was dismissed from L——— bleaching field.

3665. Do you know the reason why he was dismissed?—I am only speaking from hearsay.

3666. Do you not know that Mr. Tremenheere made an inquiry with regard to the truthfulness and character of the parties from whom he took evidence?—That I cannot tell; indeed I knew nothing about this party until I inquired into it.

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3667. But is it not notorious among all those who have been interested in this question upon the east coast of Scotland, that this Mr. Daniel Forbes' evidence conflicted with that of all the others?—I have read the Blue Book, and I find it is not borne out by the Blue Book.

3668. Are you in the same trade; were you not perfectly astonished at the statement which he makes?—Not at the long hours for the beetlers, they are employed for a considerable length of time; but at the effect, saying that excessive work made them so drowsy and monotonous, that would imply that they were in a bad state of health or debilitated.

3669. In all these consequences that you inferred to follow from it, you differ with him as to that?—Certainly. There is one other circumstance which Forbes mentioned that I cannot speak to, that is, the employment at two o'clock in the morning; that is not followed in our part of the country.

3670. *Chairman.*] I think you have told us that you have read the whole of the evidence in the Blue Book?—In connection with the east of Scotland.

3671. Have you referred to the questions which were put to Mr. Turnbull immediately after the examination of Mr. Forbes?—Yes.

3672. Do you think that Mr. Turnbull's evidence is open to the same remark?—I think his evidence is correct. I think he does not mention the effect it had upon the persons being so exhausted and drowsy.

3673. What I want to know is, whether you agree in the fact as to the hours which are stated, first of all by Mr. Daniel Forbes, and secondly by Mr. Turnbull?—As regards the excessive hours, decidedly.

3674. And all you quarrel with is as to the effects?—As to the conclusions drawn from them.

3675. *Mr. Baxter.*] You do not know of your own personal knowledge that these hours are so long?—I can say this; when we had work, which we have not for the last five years, we have been employed fully as long as there stated for the beetling of cloth; that is, as I stated, an exception—we employ three women.

3676. *Mr. Davison.*] Are your works driven by water or steam?—We have four water-wheels and four steam-engines, and when the water fails we put on the steam.

3677. *Chairman.*] Have you stoves?—Yes, we have some of the old stoves still in operation, but very slightly; they are only worked by men; but I have had now completed, at the beginning of the year, a patent stove, in which the persons put in the yarn and take it out in rooms as airy and cool, and even more so than this apartment; they never feel any heat whatever; in order to avoid it altogether they go through a long tunnel; the yarn and the linens only are exposed to the heat, and not the person; they come out cooled to the temperature of the external atmosphere.

3678. Are these stoves being adopted by others?—I have only had it six months in operation; but it works perfectly satisfactory; it is a great improvement for the power-loom work, but exceedingly expensive to put up; it took me 12 months to erect them, at a very considerable cost.

3679. What would be the heat in the old stove?—Varying from 120 to 130 degrees.

3680. Are women engaged?—There is never a woman employed, only the men; they merely take in the yarn and bring it out again; they are in for a few minutes only at a time.

3681. Are you a medical gentleman?—I graduated in the year 1821.

3682. Therefore, you wish the Committee to take your evidence as to the effect of the hours and the other details of the business in which you are concerned as coming with the authority of a medical gentleman?—I can speak with that authority, as well as with a general knowledge; I think the Commissioner's Report will bear me out, that the people are very healthy; I directed his attention to it when he was in Scotland, walking through the works, that they are all a very healthy, cheerful, happy, contented people.

3683. You have given some answers with respect to the works in the county of Perth; are you yourself personally acquainted with the nature of the business carried on in these establishments in Perthshire?—I believe it is very similar to our own; the beetling is the one that employs the people very long hours; at times,
indeed,

indeed, we have at our own works, some five years ago, worked six months together, day and night.

3684. And now you have reduced it by an agreement with your workmen?—Yes; over-time being superseded by certain work.

3685. Are you aware that similar effects have been produced by similar causes in other establishments about Perth; whether they have come to a similar arrangement?—My arrangement is want of work, that trade being superseded by the cotton trade.

3686. Can you speak from your own knowledge as to the state of things in Perthshire at this moment?—I believe they work those long hours still; and we occasionally work all night now.

3687. Mr. Baxter.] Are you not aware that in the neighbourhood of Perth there has been an alteration in the hours?—I am not aware of any change since the report; but during this night work it is not so very excessive as would generally appear, because they have always from two or three hours' rest between a shift, and during the night; by the manner in which they manage it, and one of the men watching the machinery, they have double that, so that they get four or five hours' sleep during the night.

3688. Chairman.] Have those women, who remain in the works all night, any facilities or opportunities of resting in a decent sort of way; do you provide them with any bed or sleeping accommodation?—They are upon benches, with a kind of straw bed laid down upon them, which they recline upon, and also a house adjoining, in which there is a fire continually in the winter time.

3689. Are the sexes divided?—No.

3690. Do you think that is a correct system?—Mr. Turnbull mentions that he thinks there is some immorality in it; but I was not aware of it in our case. I only know one instance of any ill effects of it, and I think that will go to show that it cannot arise from the position in the house; and that young woman was working in the same room with her father and her uncle, and I do not suppose that anything improper could have taken place in that apartment.

3691. Mr. Cobbett.] In all your experience, did you never hear of but that one case that you have spoken of?—Yes; but not one in our own place.

3692. You have probably heard it very much spoken of?—I have not been mixing much with my brother bleachers to get that sort of information.

3693. I understand you to say, that at beetling the men and women do not work together all through the night?—They are in the same room, just the same as they would be in this apartment, and there may be one bench here and another at the other end of the room.

3694. The women and men, therefore, would work throughout the night in this same room?—Yes, the women and men, but with one watcher to watch the machinery; and the women would be at one end, lying on a kind of sofa, until they were called to shift the beams.

3695. How often do the beams require shifting?—Every four hours; and it occupies about three-quarters out of every four hours.

3696. And that is done every four hours?—Yes, throughout the night. Then they can take two half-hours following, and fill up the additional quantity immediately, and then rest until both are worked off.

3697. Then, when they have shifted, they lie down upon these benches?—Yes, or on the benches in the room adjoining, where there is a fire in the winter.

3698. Chairman.] Then the arrangement you have spoken of, not to work extra, does not apply to the beetling process?—No.

3699. Is there any other process to which the arrangement does not apply?—Generally you may say it does not apply; that is, we are always working either under or over time. It is, upon an average, taking the year round, about 60 hours a week work.

3700. Will you tell me how you arrive at that average?—Sometimes we stop for two or three days together in consequence of the weather, and without the means of making up that time the people would not get their wages; our work would fall behind. We are so often hindered by the weather by high winds and rain, frost and snow, and deficiency of water.

3701. Mr. Baxter.] Do you know how many females are employed in this beetling operation in all the works together?—I should think about 70 or 80.

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3702. In the whole part of the country?—About that.

3703. Mr. Cobbett.] In the whole of Scotland?—I should think about that; we have three, and frequently only one of them is employed; the others are men, and they are principally employed in stitching.

3704. Chairman.] What I am anxious to know is, how under the present arrangement there is any security against these long hours being worked for a considerable period of time together?—The great security is that persons are not willing to work, and we are not disposed to employ our men except to make up a case of necessity arising from out-door work.

3705. Is it likely the over-hours would go on for three weeks or a month together?—Sometimes longer, and perhaps altogether they only make up what they have lost during two or three or four weeks previously; I have known them for many weeks together to leave off work at dinner time.

3706. As a medical gentleman, do you think these hours conducive to the health of the women and young persons engaged?—I think that they have no ill effects upon them because the work is not excessive; the work is so easy, and they have so many rests, that it does not oppress them, and it only arises out of a great deal of short work, during which time they often wait and get relief. go home and do their own needlework, or go to school, or if they are fathers of families they attend to their cottages and their little gardens, and therefore there is change of occupation and relief. I think that is more conducive to their health than continuous ten hours' labour in a factory following machinery, which must be excessively exhausting.

3707. You do not employ women in the stoves?—Only men; and now I have a patent by which the men are not exposed to so high a temperature.

3708. Supposing the women were employed in these stoves at these long hours, and for a month or two at a time, do you think that there would be any ill effects from it?—I think the ill effects would not be to the extent upon the ten hours; but the question would be with me, whether it should be tolerated at all, or whether it should be abolished; for if a person is accustomed to work ten hours a day, we are such creatures of habit that the system must get accustomed to it, and a person under such circumstances would not feel an extra few hours like another person who has not been accustomed to that work at all. What I mean to say is, that the system adapts itself to this work. I do not think there is that oppression that *primâ facie* you would suppose there would be from visiting such a place. You would find it intolerable, insupportable; but if you remained there a week or a month, at 10 hours a day, you would get so accustomed to it that you would not feel it so oppressive.

3709. I am asking about a system which I understand greatly exceeds 10 hours a day?—Of course if 10 hours is an evil in itself, any additional time must make that greater; there is no question about that; but the question is, whether the evil itself can be avoided. I believe and hope it will very shortly.

3710. Mr. Davison.] Your process of bleaching, I understand you, is very much dependent upon the elements?—Very much indeed.

3711. Heavy rains, for instance, interfere with the ordinary process, from the effects it produces on the river?—Yes, making the water dirty.

3712. And this business is carried on in the fields for a certain time?—Yes.

3713. Then the persons employed in that go into another department and work?—Yes.

3714. The beetling then, I understand you, is carried on within doors?—Yes, and with the same persons.

3715. Then those persons cannot expedite the process of beetling, but they are dependent upon mechanical operations, that is, the beetling process goes on upon the linen, and must go on for a certain number of hours?—Certainly.

3716. And during those hours the persons in attendance upon the beetling engines do no work?—No, except shifting.

3717. They do no work until the shifting comes?—Certainly.

3718. This shift, as I understand it, consists in taking off the linen, which is rolled upon these beams, and either fresh linen is put on, or the linen turned?—

Yes;

Yes; and which work is very light; it is just the lifting it off with the finger, and when it goes on smoothing it with the hands. Mr. H. S. Boase,

3719. The fingers are sufficient?—Yes; and it is turned by a handle, and so gets relapped upon the beams. It is turned under again, and they smooth it as it goes on. 29 June 1857.

3720. The process of labour, then, either in taking off or putting on the linen upon the beams is extremely light?—It is extremely light; a very small child might do it.

3721. Then when the linen is again put on, the water is let on the wheel, and the beetles are put to work to beetle the linen; is not that the process?—Yes; there is always a double set.

3722. Until four hours elapse, then, there is no work for the people to do?—No.

3723. In the whole of this work which you have described, the work in the fields, and the work within doors, you say it has no injurious effect upon the workpeople; on the contrary, that they are extremely healthful?—The beetling work has always been one that has been looked for and coveted, because it is so light, and if they are ever turned out from the work and put into another department, they are quite incapable of going to it, just as a sailor would be if you put him to farm work.

3724. Mr. Baxter.] Is it a favourite employment, then, amongst the workpeople?—Very much so.

3725. And not more unhealthy than any other?—No; some beetlers are the oldest people in the works. I recollect seeing a man near Edinburgh, who had been beetler for nearly 60 years.

3726. Mr. Cobbett.] You stated that the work was rarely continued so long now as it used to be?—Yes.

3727. When was it first shortened at all, do you remember?—It was shortened about 10 years ago.

3728. That would be in 1847?—About that time.

3729. Were you in business at that time?—I have been in Scotland 19 years.

3730. Then, in 1847, were the hours of work shortened upon agreement between the masters and workmen?—No; the extra time was cut off, not by mutual agreement; the agreement was about two and a half or three years ago.

3731. What you told us about the shortening of time, then, about 10 years ago, was it upon an application of the workpeople to have their time shortened?—No; it was the conviction of the masters that these excessive hours were not necessary, and were to their disadvantage.

3732. That was about the time that the Ten Hours Act for the factories was passed?—Yes, about that time.

3733. Then the people did not object to the shortening of the hours, did they?—No, and for this reason: it took place at the same time with another movement in the country; wages became very much advanced in consequence of railways and other works throughout the country; wages were increased some 40 or 50 per cent., and in consequence of that they stood in less need of these long hours, and this operating, together with the inclination of the masters, and the individuals being better provided for, produced it.

3734. Do you not mean that the wages having advanced 50 per cent. they were rather better off and became rather more independent?—Yes.

3735. And they said, "If you do not shorten the hours, we will go to the railroads"?—No; I do not think it operated in that way.

3736. You say that the men became more independent of their masters in consequence of the rise?—Yes.

3737. How did that operate upon the people in your bleaching establishment?—It made them less disposed to work the long hours.

3738. Then I suppose they wished the long hours to be abolished, did they not?—Provided they had the means.

3739. Did it not almost amount to a threat, that if you did not shorten the hours of work they would go to the railways?—I do not think it went that length.

3740. Was it not something of this kind; Did not the masters feel that now their workpeople had become so independent of them that they must either abolish

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the long hours of work, or that they would lose their work; was not that the feeling?—I cannot recollect any such feeling as that.

3741. I have put it to you in two or three different ways, as to how the rise of wages operated upon the master and the men?—I am speaking more of my own experience than any other; and my feeling immediately I got to Scotland was, that I would endeavour to shorten the hours.

3742. What, 19 years ago?—It is about 10 years ago that I took the management of the works, and during the first nine years I was there I was constantly urging the shortening of the hours, because that I felt they were oppressively long, and the cause of great loss of money. The persons were only undergoing the time; they were doing their work properly during the day, in order to get it back; but the difficulty with my partners was this, "They cannot get their wages."

3743. You say the hours were oppressively long; how do you mean?—They generally work till nine at night.

3744. From what time in the morning?—From six in the morning.

3745. You described just now to the Honourable Member who examined you, that the persons in these establishments were the most cheerful, healthy, robust, and satisfied of any persons in the world?—I believe they are so, more particularly at present.

3746. What I want to know is, why you should have thought it so oppressive, as for you to be nine years endeavouring to get your partners to assist you in shortening the hours, when these persons were so proverbially satisfied and joyous as scarcely to seem to require such a thing?—I think my remarks to the Honourable Member were with reference to the present time; I was not going back to bygone times.

3747. From what part of England did you come?—From Cornwall.

3748. When you first went to Scotland and entered into this business, it struck you that the hours of work were oppressively long?—Too long, and I always urged a reduction.

3749. And you set to work, and for nine years busied yourself from time to time endeavouring to persuade your partners, and gentlemen connected with the same trade, to reduce the hours?—Yes.

3750. And it was from having observed the working of the then system that you thought it was requisite to make a change in the hours?—Yes; which I was able to carry out as soon as the people got better wages.

3751. The change took place about 1847?—I am speaking about that time.

3752. You said something to this effect, that in less than five years we should be in a better state even than the Bill contemplates?—Yes; I meant to say that there is a progress going on between the workmen and the masters; there is a better understanding between them, and they are working more friendly together; in fact, it is a duolism; a master and man cannot be separated; the interest of the one is clearly the interest of the other.

3753. And you think that the understanding is so good, and is making such progress, that in a very short time whatever is reasonable will be adopted?—I believe we have all that is reasonable at present.

3754. Then you do not think any further improvement will take place?—There is a general good feeling among the parties.

3755. What are the wages; how are they paid?—There are two modes in which we pay, by the piece and by the day; the piece workers can earn, the men from 3 s. to about 3 s. 6 d. per day, and the women from 1 s. to 1 s. 6 d., according to the kind of work they are at; 2 s. 6 d. a day is the men's wages, ordinarily speaking, taking one with another, and the women's 1 s.

Mr. James Robertson, called in; and Examined.

Mr. J. Robertson.

3756. Mr. Baxter.] YOU are a Linen Yarn Bleacher, I believe?—Yes.

3757. At Rothe's works, in the county of Fife?—Yes.

3758. Have you been all your life in that trade?—Since I was able to work.

3759. For more than 30 years?—Upwards of 30 years.

3760. Have you worked in various departments?—Yes; for the first 10 years I was a general worker; but I have been mostly in the drying department for the last 20 years.

3761. Do

3761. Do you think it a healthy employment?—Yes; I have had my health pretty good all the time. Mr. J. Robertson.

3762. You are not speaking for yourself, but for others; do you think it a healthy employment in general?—Yes; it is mostly outdoor labour. 29 June 1857.

3763. Are you a more healthy class of persons than others?—I don't say we are healthier than others, but I think we are quite as healthy.

3764. The work in these bleaching-fields is very much dependent on the weather, is it not?—Yes.

3765. Just as farming is dependent on the weather?—Yes, drying in particular.

3766. Are the goods dried in the open air?—In the open air, when they will do so.

3767. You mean when it is good weather?—Yes.

3768. And if it is bad weather, you dry in the house?—Yes.

3769. All the work you do in the open air, of course is dependent on the weather?—Yes.

3770. How do you do in wet weather?—We put it on the beams in the house.

3771. You have a good deal of difficulty in the winter and in rainy months, have you not?—Yes, there is more labour; at some time there is a sudden emergency or a sudden draught is required, and all the hands are employed at a certain house.

3772. Upon those occasions, did all the hands require to remain until the yarn is put in a certain condition?—Yes.

3773. What kind of yarn do manufacturers like best, the yarn that is dried in the open air, or that which is dried in the house?—That which is dried in the open air.

3774. When the weather is unsettled, of course there was great delay caused, was there not?—Yes.

3775. Did the people ever work in the evening beyond the stated hours?—Very seldom.

3776. But occasionally they did?—Occasionally, but it was very rare.

3777. They came to shake the yarn?—That was in the winter season.

3778. If the yarn were not shaken then, what would happen to it?—It would not be a good finish.

3779. It would render the yarn very difficult to work?—Very difficult to wind.

3780. Have you much broken time throughout the year?—Yes, more than we could wish.

3781. What does that arise from?—From the weather and dull trade.

3782. Does it ever arise from a hard frost?—Yes.

3783. When you have a very hard frost, you have comparatively little to do?—Yes.

3784. And then you have very short time?—Yes.

3785. Do the women and boys complain strongly of the hard work that they have, or rather the few holidays?—No, I have heard no complaint.

3786. Do they complain sometimes that they do not know what to do with themselves; that they have more holidays than they want?—Yes, I have heard the complaint.

3787. On the whole, are they perfectly well satisfied with their condition?—Yes, I think so.

3788. Only sometimes they work a little longer than six and sometimes not so long; the time varies very much, does it not?—Yes.

3789. Is it very much the same thing in all that class of works?—In the majority of all the fields that I know there are the same rules.

3790. In these fields you have, on an average, about 60 hours a week?—Sixty hours a week.

3791. Sometimes more and sometimes less?—Yes.

3792. But you have no complaints?—No.

3793. Have there been any attempts to present a petition to Parliament?—I have heard of none.

3794. Have you ever been asked to sign a petition?—No.

3795. Are there many women and boys employed at these works?—Twenty-eight full women, and girls; 40 females in all.

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3796. How many boys?—Two.
3797. Are there many boys employed in Fife generally in these works?—I do not know any other fields that keep boys; there are only two boys for turning over the yard on the grass.
3798. Can the persons in works generally read and write?—Yes.
3799. Do they ever go away from their work in consequence of it being too hard for them?—No.
3800. You never heard of such a thing?—No.
3801. In your life?—No.
3802. You do not believe that there is such a thing in that part of the country?—Never, where I am.
3803. Mr. Cobbett.] How many hours in the day do you think it is proper for women and young children to work?—I am well satisfied with 10 hours.

Mr. James Thompson, called in; and further Examined.

- Mr. J. Thompson.
3804. Mr. Cobbett.] WE have heard statements made, that in the stoves where the women work they frequently faint away; have you any knowledge of that yourself?—Yes.
3805. What do you say to it?—It is on account of the excessive heat.
3806. Did you ever know it to take place?—Yes; I have seen it very often.
3807. And what is done with them when they faint away?—They are just carried out and taken into the women's house, if there is a woman's house there; and if not, into the nearest dwelling-house that can be got.
3808. Do they come back again to their work?—Sometimes, and sometimes not.
3809. Does this frequently take place?—Yes.
3810. Have you known it to happen two or three times in a day?—I have known it to happen once in a day continuously for two or three days. I beg to state, that after working till past 12 o'clock at night, a girl sometimes has to walk three or four miles home, and to be at her work next morning at six o'clock.
3811. That is where they do not live in the woman's house?—Yes; except they like to take a hard bed and lie till six in the morning.
3812. Mr. Kirk.] At what hour does this fainting generally take place?—In the morning.
3813. Have you ever heard any cause stated for its taking place particularly in the morning?—On account of the fatigue they have suffered the evening before; they are sick, and not able to stand.
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Martis, 30^o die Junii, 1857.

MEMBERS PRESENT.

Mr. Baxter.
Mr. Clark.
Mr. Cobbett.
Mr. Dalglish.
Mr. Davison.

Mr. Kirk.
Lord John Manners.
Lord Naas.
Mr. Wise.

LORD JOHN MANNERS IN THE CHAIR.

Jonathan Richardson, Esq., a Member of The House; Examined.

3814. Mr. *Kirk*.] ARE you Member for the Borough of Lisburn?—Yes.
3815. What is your firm and your place of residence?—Richardson & Company, Lambeg Bleach Works, Lisburn, Ireland.
3816. How long have you been engaged in bleaching?—More than 35 years.
3817. How many workpeople do you employ?—From 300 to 400, according to the season of the year, and the plentifulness of work.
3818. Do you bleach linen or cotton?—We bleach very few cottons; almost exclusively linen.

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3819. Do you consider the occupation healthful?—I consider it very much so, for the greens are almost all situated in the country, and there is so much open-air work connected with our business. The boys who are brought into our works generally begin on light out-door work, and that has an effect in strengthening the constitution by the time they are brought into the house works; and I have known instances of very great longevity among our people who had been all their lifetime connected with bleach works in the different departments of the bleaching. And I can give a further instance of the salubrity of the bleach works from the fact that when the cholera visited Ireland, we had very few instances of cases connected with our works, and all those that were attacked recovered; while in the neighbouring spinning mill, situated in the country and under the Factory Act, they had a number of cases of cholera and a considerable proportion of deaths.

3820. Are all your workers sometimes employed in and sometimes out of doors?—We have different sets of bleachers; those who work outside are always kept outside, unless there is some change, and they have to work inside; and those who work inside many of them are not fit to work outside; their manner of working is not such that they can be put from one class of work to another advantageously to themselves or to us.

3821. What are your general hours of labour?—Our bell rings at half-past five o'clock in the morning to commence work, and at six o'clock in the evening; and for the men and general workers there is an hour and three-quarters allowed for breakfast and for dinner; and for the women who work in the stoves two and a half hours, because they get some extra minutes to go out and cool themselves. Those are the general hours, and we keep as close to them as we can.

3822. Can you keep strictly to those hours?—We cannot always begin exactly at the time that our bell rings, for some of the portions of cloth which are in the boiling process, or have been during the night, or in the dipping process, have to be drawn out by the men, preparatory to their being washed. A part of the men commence work at once, but then some of them do not commence for some time afterwards. And then at the quitting hours some of our men may be employed when the bell rings, in filling some of the boilers, or some of the vessels where the dips and sorus are, and of course they cannot quit immediately on the bell ringing, otherwise the property would run the risk of being damaged before they came back from meals, and therefore they are allowed extra time afterwards.

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3823. Is the work of the linen bleachers subject to interruptions?—It is frequently subject to interruptions, particularly in winter, from the rain and storm and frost and snow, and then in the summer from droughts, so that on the average nearly a half more work can be done in summer than in winter. Besides, the processes for producing the same effect upon the linen are double what they are in summer, and there being less of the bleaching process effects the finishing by the beetles, and also the finishing by the stoves and the lapping rooms, and it prevents the whole business from going on systematically and regularly from the want of a supply of bleached goods, owing to these causes. And it is a great loss to the employer as well as to the workers; because, under those circumstances, particularly in the winter, the workers generally have to get loans from their employers to keep them from want, and those loans have to be repaid in the summer when we can give them extra work. Then, in addition to the interruptions from the weather, the bleaching is very much a season trade. We generally get the largest quantity of goods sent to our greens to bleach from January to May, when the season at that period of the year is least favourable to bleaching, and in the autumn the supply of cloth is generally one-third smaller than in the spring, although autumn is the season most suitable for bleaching, and thus at the end of the year and the beginning of the year the employers and the workers have to suffer loss from want of regular steady employment.

3824. Do you think it possible so to arrange the business of the linen bleach fields that the work might be done advantageously within limited hours, as in the spinning factories?—For many years I have been trying in vain to bring about such a change like that in our spinning mill.

3825. Have you a spinning mill?—Yes. In our spinning mill arrangements can be made in all seasons to begin work at a stated hour, and also to leave off work, without injury either to the workers or to the flax that is spinning. No one can tell in a bleach green the evening before, what time the work will commence in the morning. The frost or snow may prevent the field work from commencing until eight, nine, ten, or 12 o'clock in the day. It sometimes happens that they are stopped for days and weeks together, so that linen is often detained at the bleachers 14 and 16 weeks in the winter which in summer could be delivered in half the time.

3826. Is the employment in the linen bleach works continuous when not interrupted by weather or by the customers not supplying you with a sufficient quantity of cloth to keep on in full work?—When the process is going on the workers have frequently to wait till the cloth is ready for them in the way that I mentioned with respect to their not beginning to work at the regular hours, and of course that is a loss to them, as they are paid by the piece.

3827. Do you employ boys or women at your beetling engines?—We do not employ any women on our beetling engines, and we employ very few boys, and we make it a rule not to allow a boy to work any over-hours.

3828. Might not legislation be introduced advantageously for in-door work in the linen bleach fields?—I think not; for without the previous out-door work the in-door work cannot proceed, and although the in-door work is seldom stopped altogether by the weather, it is very much delayed in the winter.

3829. Are you of opinion that a limitation of the hours in linen bleach works would be advantageous to the workpeople?—I think not; it would only make linen bleaching a still more dangerous, tedious and uncertain process than it is at present, and that must tend to lessen the trade and restrict the demand for labour. Since the agitation that has arisen about short hours, we do not employ half the number of women we formerly did in our stoves, and they are now very seldom working overtime at all; and by limiting the quantity of cambric handkerchiefs that we bleach, and introducing machinery, we can do without a great many women, which must, of course, be a great loss to them. Since our stoves, some years ago, were first opened, it has caused an advance of the women's wages in that neighbourhood of upwards of 50 per cent.; and I think, in the course of a few years, we can do away altogether with employing women in our stoves, which would of course free our concern from the necessity of legislation, if any such necessity exists.

3830. Are you opposed to inspection and limitation of hours in your linen bleach works?—Of course I am opposed to it, because it would make a tedious, hazardous

hazardous and expensive process still more so, and must therefore be a loss to the employed as well as the employers, by causing more loss of time; and also by opening the way still further for foreign competition. I think it would be quite as reasonable to limit the hours of the farmers, and say that they must not plough and sow when the weather permits, and that they must not make hay while the sun shines, as to limit the hours in linen bleach works, which are more dependent upon the weather than the farmer is, since in the frost and snow the farmer can cart out the manure, and he can do various things advantageously about his farm, while the bleachers have to wait, with patience, until a thaw comes: and upon the average the bleacher is every month off his employment from seven to nine days, and some of them ten, including Sundays and holidays; that is, upon the whole year, one-third of the whole time.

3831. Have you any instances of that?—Yes.

3832. Will you give the Committee that information?—I have taken here the month of March 1856; at that time I expected to have been in some way connected with the opposition to this Bleach Bill, and of course that was one reason I made a memorandum at that time; I have made none very lately. In March 1856 there were 31 days; there were five Sundays in it; there was Good Friday, Easter Monday; there were five Saturdays, which take off a day and a half, making altogether eight and a half days of actual deductions. In addition to that, I do not know whether other workers are like ours, but they like to take a little play to themselves, I will not say how they employ it, whether advantageously or not, but they will make up two days more in that way, which leaves 20½ days of actual work. I find, that if you take the average of the time which the people are kept in work during the whole year, upon the average of six or seven years, I am quite sure that what I say is within the mark; that they do not work within one-third of the whole time each month.

3833. You mentioned that you have a number of women in the stove-rooms, do you consider ventilation necessary to the proper drying and finishing of linens, and if you do will you describe to the Committee how that ventilation is produced in your works?—With respect to ventilation, when we have to dry by steam we find it absolutely necessary. The best kind of drying is the open air, and when we have to employ steam the nearer we approach to the open air the better; therefore when we are drying our cambric handkerchiefs in the stoves at an average heat of 90 degrees, we have pure air coming in at the sides just above the piece, and being let off in the ceiling, which has the effect, as the women are walking along and pulling the pieces about, of crystalizing the starch and giving it a bright shining appearance; and in fact the action of the air on the drying of linen is of so much importance that it is just like a friction passing over the threads and giving a certain lustre to it; that cannot be done without pure fresh air. Then with respect to our other kind of drying where we do not employ women, but where we find that air is necessary, we employ very powerful fans to effect the same object.

3834. Is it not a well-known fact that you could not give the lustrous appearance to cambric handkerchiefs which you have to give to them without a current of pure air?—We could not.

3835. Does the pure air pass from the outside to the workpeople before it comes to the cloth?—Yes; the women have the first breath of it.

3836. Have you ever tried to arrange the works at the bleach fields so as regularly to stop at a fixed hour every day?—Yes; I have frequently tried it, but not with success, for frost and snow, or something connected with the weather, might interrupt the processes, so that the effect which we want is not produced on the linen. Then at the time appointed for stopping sometimes some of the men and part of the works have to be kept going until the linen is placed in a safe state till the next morning comes.

3837. What do you mean by a safe state?—I mean free from the risk of damage. The linen bleaching process is so long and so uncertain, and so many chemical agents are to be used in doing it, and possibly hundreds and thousands of pounds worth of linen have been damaged since I have been acquainted with the trade, and some of them altogether destroyed, for unless the chemical processes are attended to at the exact time, the risk becomes so great that you are almost sure to destroy the property.

3838. Have you read over Mr. Tremenheere's report?—Yes, I have read it over.

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3839. Have you read over those observations that he applies to your evidence in his report?—Yes, I have.

3840. Do you conceive that the observations which he makes are borne out by the testimony which you gave him?—I think Mr. Tremenheere gave a very fair report of the conversation he and I had together.

3841. Then it was a conversation you had?—We had a conversation first.

3842. Had he a set of questions to propose to you?—I do not know whether he had a written set of questions to propose to me, but he asked me a set of questions, and after having gone over our works and having every facility of seeing them, and communicating with the workers as far as he wished, he then went into my drawing-room and read me over the notes that he had taken, and asked me whether I considered they were correct, and I told him, as far as I could judge, they were correct, but that when he had written them out if there was any question that he wished to ask me, I should be very glad before he sent his report to print, to give him every explanation. However, Mr. Tremenheere did not communicate with me afterwards, and I heard nothing further of him until I got his report. Now, in reading this report, I see there is one statement here which I am sure Mr. Tremenheere has unintentionally made, because I recollect myself; in the after part of his report, he says, at page 31, “In the case of Mr. Richardson’s works, however, it will be seen by that gentleman’s statement to me (paragraph 911), that he had already made arrangements by which he would not henceforward have any occasion to employ any of his people over-hours, and would consequently not be affected by any Act that may be passed upon this subject.” Now that is a statement that I did not make to him. In making the statement I did to him, I merely referred to the women employed in the stoves, and I said that we had seldom, if ever, occasion to employ them over-hours, and by referring to page 74, it will be seen that I am borne out in what I have said, and that Mr. Tremenheere has unintentionally made a statement for me that I did not make. There he says, “this depends upon the length and severity of the previous winter, but although the last winter was both long and severe, we have made such arrangements as will prevent the necessity of our working the females over-hours in future.” Now that is, I think, the only incorrectness, as far as I can judge. In my observation I only allude to female labour.

3843. And he applied it to the whole of the workmen?—Yes, which of course I never could have said, or intended to say. The work of course must go on until the cloth is placed in a safe state.

3844. Can you state to the Committee what is the actual time in the week during which the females and boys in your establishment are employed?—The boys who are on the field may be employed during a great part of the winter season from daylight to daylight, or they may not be employed half their time. It altogether depends upon the state of the ground and of the cloth. And then with respect to the in-doors work, when our bell rings at half-past five o’clock in the morning and again at six o’clock at night, the boys of course work within those limits, and go away when they are over, and the women also, it is very seldom that they work longer than that.

3845. And on Saturday?—On Saturday all the women and all the boys get away at two o’clock. If they are kept there it is for the winding up of the work, which is absolutely necessary to keep the cloth in a safe state until Monday morning.

3846. Just turn to the answer at page 74 given to question 912?—I have it.

3847. Does that apply to females only?—Yes, that applies to females only.

3848. How many hours are they working?—They only work ten hours a day.

3849. And that for how many days a week?—For five days a week, and only until two on Saturday. The paragraph which you refer to is as follows:—“As we allow our women in the stoves two hours and a half for meals and rest, their net hours of work are only ten.” That is my answer.

3850. Could you give the Committee something like an approximation as to the actual number of hours worked per week by the females in your employ?—I have not made that correctly up, because if you take the average of ten hours a day for five days, that would be 50 hours, and then seven hours for the Saturday would make 57 hours. But then that is taking into account that our stoves are working the whole year round. Now, when the bleach green is stopped we cannot bleach, and the stoves are thrown out of work, because we have no cloth

cloth to keep them going with, and of course that would reduce the average of 57 hours.

3851. When they are at work is the average under 60 hours?—Yes; it is 57.

3852. Are you able to state to the Committee whether the women or boys work more than 60 hours a week now?—No; I am sure they do not.

3853. *Chairman.*] I think you stated that in the example you gave us in March, the cause why so many days were struck off was owing to Sundays and holidays?—Yes.

3854. Have not all the manufacturing and other establishments had the same deductions during that month?—They did not arise particularly from the bleaching.

3855. Can you give the Committee any statement to show the number of days in the course of a month, or in the course of a year, which would be taken away from your working, in consequence of any causes extending to the bleaching business alone?—Upon the average of years, as I mentioned before, it is about a month. That is a low average. We have been stopped six weeks; but a month on the average, I think, is a low average.

3856. Does that include the Sundays and holidays?—No; the month I allude to is a month of working days, including six days in the week.

3857. When you say that the women have two and a half hours from the stoves for meals and resting, are we to understand that they leave the stoves, or do they remain in them?—They go out of the stoves and occupy their time generally on the green grass, or else beside the water, if it is very hot weather. They are every one turned out to wash their hands and comb their hair; it is a kind of recreation to them.

3858. Did I rightly understand you to say that the number of women engaged in the stoves is decreasing?—Very much; and I can give the Committee a statement of it. In July 1854, we employed at our works, for the same amount of business as we are doing at present, 177 women. We made some changes before May 1855, and at that time we only had 118 women. We have made still further changes since, and now we only employ 68 women. So that, in reality, we have parted with 109 women since June 1854; that is a very large proportion; and we are now doing as much work at the present time by machinery, and with much less over-work than we did at that time, because, previous to that, we had the women there all night sometimes; but now, without the over-work, we do the same quantity of business with 68 or 70 women as we did with 177 in 1854.

3859. Is the Committee to understand that the women in the stoves do not work over-time at all?—Very seldom; there may be such a case, but it is quite the exception. I think that has only been the case this year, about four times since January.

3860. Can you tell the Committee for what time that over-work would be continued?—It might be till eight or nine o'clock in the evening. The stove women are all working by the piece as well as the men, and if they happen not to be supplied with cloth, and they had not been regular, we gave them the opportunity of working some over-hours to make up their wages, at the end of the fortnight; that was they way it occurred.

3861. When they do work over-time have they any extra hours for resting or meals?—Of course, because they quit as if they were going to quit altogether at the regular time, and then all that work extra hours begin again in perhaps from 30 or 40 minutes; we are not very particular about their beginning very exactly, as would be the case if they were day labourers, of course we should be more particular as to the work; we leave it to their own consideration, and many of the women in the morning do not come till breakfast, but then of course if they are idle it is their own loss.

3862. Did I rightly understand you to say that when you first employed women it raised the wages of women in the neighbourhood 50 per cent.?—Since we employed the women their wages have advanced.

3863. Now that you have decreased your number very considerably, has that decrease in the number of women employed reduced the wages of those women which you still employ?—No, the women that we employ are paid by the piece. We do not intend to reduce their wages. But in the neighbourhood it will have the effect of making a greater supply of women for the mills and other occupations, and of course the women will not get as good wages as they did before.

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3864. Do you state that as a fact?—I know it is the fact, I can get women more easily than I could, and some of the women lately wanted us to advance their wages, and we told them that rather than advance their wages we would let them leave us, because there is no occasion for it. That is a sure sign that the tendency of wages is to be reduced owing to those circumstances.

3865. *Mr. Clark.*] What is the extreme heat of your stoves?—The extreme heat of the stoves is 100 degrees; I believe they are very seldom above 90; we wish to keep them at 90, but we are not always able to attain that.

3866. When you are obliged to work the extra time do you do so for a number of consecutive days, or is it merely a day now and then?—It is a day now and then; in fact we have to do it so seldom and rarely that it is only a chance day. We do not wish to do it, and unless we are at times obliged, we do not do it all, and it has only happened in a few instances the whole of this year.

3867. Have you noticed that working in the stoves is prejudicial to the health of the women who are obliged to attend them?—No, I have not; and I have made particular inquiry from gentlemen who have had the stoves and have had longer experience with stoves than I have, and from the similar testimony of the women in the stoves, I conclude the women are not liable to colds.

3868. *Mr. Dalgleish.*] Which do you consider the more healthy employment, the working on a bleach green, or working in a factory with the limited hours?—I would only ask any gentleman to stand at the door of our mill, and to see our workers walking out, the wretched haggard-looking creatures, and many of them with their poor lungs full of flax; and then go and stand at our stoves, or at the gate of our bleach works, and he would see the girls coming out with their hair as nicely curled and in as nice order, and their skins as clean and nice, looking as well as the ladies that one would see in our own circle. They are as different as can be. I certainly have looked very closely to their health, and, I believe, to their education also.

3869. Do you consider that the occupation in a bleach green is much more healthful than that in the factories?—There is no comparison whatever.

3870. *Mr. Kirk.*] At what age do you employ the boys and young persons in your establishment?—About 14. We would rather not have them under 14, and we require them to go to school and produce their testimonials from the masters that they can read and write; in fact they have to show up once a month to me their proficiency before they are admitted to the works. Of course there may be some exceptions. Sometimes a parent is very anxious to get his son in, and one or two may be smuggled in without my knowledge; and whenever I caught them, in that case they would be sent back to school. There is one disadvantage, however, that has occurred, and that is one on the part of our own people, which at first I did not contemplate, that persons whom we had refused employment to in our bleach works have gone to a neighbouring spinning mill and got employed there; and of course our object for the benefit of the people was done away with by their being admitted into the spinning mill.

3871. Therefore do you only employ those who can read and write?—With few exceptions, I only employ those who can read and write, and are above the age of 14.

3872. *Chairman.*] When a child is taken into a spinning mill, does not he come under the operation of the education clauses of the Factory Act?—They do not look to education in the mills at all.

3873. Is not there a public officer under the Education Act, whose duty it is to see that those clauses are enforced?—I hear nothing about the education, at all, of the children in the spinning mill, and therefore, in fact, I do not interfere with it, because it is under Government superintendence; but I look myself particularly to the bleach works, and there I do interfere.

3874. Are you aware that under the Act of Parliament a boy going into a spinning mill would be subjected by law to a certain education?—Yes; but Acts of Parliament are not so good as a person's inclination to make the workers happy and to do what is right.

3875. *Lord Naas.*] Do boys ever come to you from the spinning mills?—They have done so sometimes; they remain some time at the spinning mill, till they get large enough, as they suppose, to be admitted into our works, and then they come to our works.

3876. What is the state of education that you generally find them in?—That is a point upon which, except as regards our own people, I am not competent to speak. It is a thing I am not acquainted with.

3877. *Chairman.*]

3877. *Chairman.*] Do you require a certificate from those who have been with other people?—We merely get a discharge from their previous employer, saying that they have worked at the mill and are free of his employment.

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3878. Did I rightly understand you to say that before you admitted any of the children of your own people into your works, you required a certificate that they can write and read?—Once a month the master of the school produces to me the writing and the cyphering of each boy that can read and write in the school, and they get to be first employed. They have to write a piece for me, therefore that comes under my own superintendence. I see the master of the scholars every month, and he has to give a report to me once a month. I get this copy written by the boys, and by the girls also, so that I know the state they are in; and I also know their ages; because at the bottom of every copy the date when the child was born is written.

3879. Have you made this proficiency in reading and writing a test of admission?—That is a good guide.

3880. When a child comes out of a spinning mill and applies to you for work, do you make a similar inquiry?—If he is the child of one of our own people, we immediately make that inquiry about him; if he is a stranger we take no notice; we have no power over him; our own people live in our own houses generally, and of course we have some control over them; and in all cases they will take advice. But we do not exercise any undue influence over them. Generally speaking the parents are desirous to have their children educated, if we talk to them and show them the advantage of it; and the very fact of my having a copy written by each of their sons once a month would be more likely to keep the boy at school six months than if I threatened the parent that I would turn him and all his family off, and it is by far the easiest way to do it, and the most satisfactory to me; and so it is done.

3881. *Mr. Crook.*] How many women do you employ at present?—From 68 to 70.

3882. How many boys?—I do not know the exact number, but I should say we have not a dozen; that would be the outside.

3883. How many of the women are employed in the stoves?—The greater part of the women are employed in the stoves.

3884. May I say that 60 are employed in the stoves?—You may say from 68 to 70 are employed in the stoves; and that there are five women in other parts of the works, say 75 altogether. My observations were entirely with reference to the women working in the stoves.

3885. How many of the boys are employed in the stoves?—Not any of them.

3886. How many of them are employed inside?—About three are employed inside.

3887. Did not you say that, as a rule, you do not allow the women to work more than ten hours a day?—No, we do not.

3888. You have had a general wish for many years to make that the limit of their employment, and it is the limit as a general rule?—As a rule, it is the limit.

3889. But occasionally, if in the beginning of a fortnight they do not work ten hours conveniently, you allow them to make longer hours at the end of the fortnight?—It does happen, perhaps once a month; it has only happened, I think, about four times this year, that I know of.

3890. They do not work very late at night on those occasions?—They do not.

3891. There is no working all night now for the women and children?—That is a thing we seldom or ever do; we never have a child at night, at all. Women occasionally work after hours; but we never have boys working at night.

3892. How many hours have you endeavoured to establish, as a regular course?—Every few years, when we had made such improvements that we thought we could give up the over-work; but we have found it a harder matter than we had thought.

3893. Have not you been a bleacher for 35 years?—Yes.

3894. You attempted to establish 10 hours at that work, I suppose?—I never succeeded in doing it.

3895. My inquiry is entirely confined to women and children; do you mean

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to say that women and children are never employed more than 10 hours a day, except on the occasions which you have mentioned, which have very rarely occurred?—Yes, that is the fact.

3896. And your impression has been, several times during the last few years, that it was quite possible to work 10 hours a day without difficulty?—My observation did not apply to the stoves at all. When I made that observation it altogether applied to the practical part of bleaching and carrying out the chemical processes, and not to the stoves.

3897. It did not apply to the work which the women and children are employed in?—No; they do not do that work at all. I have nothing to say to the chemical part of the work.

3898. Do the women and the young boys perform those operations?—No, not at all.

3899. They are performed by persons who are not within the object of this inquiry?—Just so.

3900. Have you never had an impression that it was possible to employ them regular hours?—I have had that impression as far as the women and children are concerned; so far as that is concerned, the women and children could be turned out at any hour.

3901. You say that you did contemplate making the hours uniform for those women and children on several occasions?—Yes.

3902. Therefore I believe several times you came to the conclusion that there was no practical difficulty there?—There is no practical difficulty with respect to the women and children.

3903. Now and then when that exception does occur it was done more for their own convenience and to make up their wages, than for yours?—Yes.

3904. Was there any commercial reason for that over-work?—There might be a commercial reason also, because if a load of goods were wanted to be shipped the next day, and those women in the stove were wanted to finish the work, that would be a commercial reason decidedly.

3905. What sort of apparatus do you heat those stoves with?—It is done with steam pipes.

3906. Are the steam pipes underneath?—The steam pipes are exposed along the floor.

3907. Does not the diminution in the number of women employed in your bleach works arise from the employment of machinery?—Yes.

3908. What sort of reports do you get every week from the schoolmaster with regard to the children in the mills?—I said nothing with respect to the mills at all, it is merely connected with the bleach works. I have no report from the spinning mill.

3909. Does the inspector ever visit the mill?—Decidedly.

3910. How many times a year?—He comes five or six times. I have not charge of the spinning mill. We have a manager who looks to that altogether. I take no charge whatever of the spinning mill, or of what the workpeople do there, therefore I cannot speak as to these minute facts.

3911. When you spoke before of the temperature of 90 to 100 degrees, is the Committee to understand that you do not conceive that it would be at all proper for those people to work outside as well as inside?—Yes, the stove women go regularly out. When there is hay making and when there is turnip hoeing many of them leave us and engage themselves in the country for two or three weeks at a time.

3912. Is that when you are slack of work?—Sometimes they go out when we would rather keep them.

3913. Do you conceive this temperature quite as wholesome as the external and ordinary atmosphere?—I think that where the constitution becomes accustomed to it, it does not produce any bad effect.

3914. Do you think that your wife and children could easily be accustomed to a temperature of 90 degrees?—There was a new stove established in Belfast some time ago near the house of a gentleman who came from a foreign climate; and the gentleman to whom they belonged said that he spent a great part of the day in it. I think that the constitution of women and the constitution of men are much alike. I think women would stand heat as well as men.

George M'Comb, called in; and Examined.

3915. *Chairman.*] WHOSE employment are you in?—That of Jonathan Richardson and Company.

3916. That is the firm of which the last witness is the head?—Yes.

3917. What is your occupation?—A practical bleacher.

3918. What are the hours of labour in your establishment?—The bell rings at half-past five in the morning, and at six in the evening.

3919. Is there any variation as to those hours, and the quantity of the work done in the winter or at other seasons of the year?—Yes, there is.

3920. Is not the larger proportion of the work in the bleach fields out-of-door work?—Yes; there is a large proportion of it out of doors; we have the cloth to expose outside to the weather.

3921. Can you state to the Committee about what number of men are working outside?—We have more or less; we are not limited to one particular number; sometimes we have more and sometimes less.

3922. About what is the amount?—We have on the average about 22 or 23, or thereabouts.

3923. Can those men and boys do any work in the winter time out of doors before daylight?—No, they cannot work before daylight in the winter time.

3924. What can they do out of doors during frost and snow?—They cannot work at the cloth outside at all; a very little frost stops the work.

3925. Are not there instances where a wet night that is succeeded by a slight frost in the morning, that has prevented you from going on?—Yes, in the spring.

3926. Is that a usual occurrence in the spring?—Sometimes it is; it has happened often in the spring.

3927. You saw the Bill that was brought into the House of Commons last year?—Yes.

3928. Did you sign a petition for it or against it?—Against it.

3929. How long have you been a practical bleacher?—I have been connected with the same establishment for the last 27 years.

3930. In your experience in the various situations that you have filled during those 27 years, is it your opinion that legislation is necessary or unnecessary?—I think it is unnecessary, to the best of my judgment.

3931. What are your principal objections to the Bill?—I think it would lessen the labouring man's pay in the first place.

3932. Are not your workpeople all paid by the piece?—They are, nearly all through the establishment; I may say all through.

3933. Do you think that if they had fewer hours' labour, they would get less wages?—Yes, they would.

3934. Is there any other injury that the passing of a Bill limiting the hours of meal times would inflict upon you?—Yes; it would interfere greatly with the carrying out of the business.

3935. Can you give the Committee a practical exemplification of how it would act?—Supposing the bell rang at half-past eight o'clock for us to quit for breakfast (that is the hour, or as near as possible to the hour we do quit), a parcel of cloths may be put into the boiling process; if we had to stop at that time, and that were to remain so till we came back from breakfast, it would have a great tendency to injure the goods; we should either overdo one part, or underdo the other; both could not be right.

3936. Half the cloth would get the whole of the alkali, and that which would not injure the whole would injure the half?—It might; we arrange our stuff for the whole as near as we can.

3937. Does it not follow that it is desirable that the cloth should be bleached as fast as possible?—Yes, and if we do remain, as we do often, when the bell rings, eight or ten minutes or sometimes a quarter of an hour before we get our job completed, we take that much longer after the bell rings again.

3938. Do the men get a few minutes longer at the other end of the time?—Yes.

3939. What effect would the stoppage that you have described have upon the men's labours of the day?—In the way that linen bleaching is carried on, the one depends upon the other; perhaps there is a quantity of machinery waiting these goods, and if we left them there, an amount of machinery would stand idle.

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idle until they came forward. We have things arranged in such a way that the one just depends upon the other; I am speaking of out-door work. The inside is dependent upon the outside; one process follows the other in rotation, and we must get on in the regular way, and it stops that process if we cannot get on in that way.

3940. Are we to understand that if this boiler was delayed being filled for the breakfast hour, it would not only run the risk of damaging the cloth, or that portion of the cloth left in the reive, but it would also prevent the boiling being finished at the regular hour, in order to suit the other processes of labour?—Yes; that is what I meant to say.

3941. Would not that retard the process?—Yes, it would; but it would not stop there; perhaps a parcel of goods has to go into another process, and you would keep the people waiting in another part after you. The linen bleaching is the same as many other things; sometimes they are working and sometimes they are not. There is many a time when for 10, 15, or 20 minutes they will be doing nothing.

3942. In fact they are waiting until the previous processes are ready for them?—Yes, exactly.

3943. Are you aware of any cause of complaint under the present system of working linen bleach fields, or whether the people are content?—I think they are very well contented; I do not hear any grumbling with our people; in anything that I am connected with I have not heard any complaint.

3944. Do the workmen remain in your bleachfields for a length of time?—Yes; we have had men working in the establishment that I am in for 18 and 19 years, and above that. Some hands have been there 24 or 25 years.

3945. Are they perfectly healthy?—Very much so.

3946. Are they as healthy as the persons employed in farm labour around them?—I think they are fully as much so.

3947. Is it within your knowledge that there was a very old man at those works lately when the third generation was in the employment?—Yes; he is in the same employment as I am.

3948. He had been in the employment of Mr. Richardson or his predecessors for three generations?—Yes.

3949. Is it your opinion, from your practical acquaintance with these facts, that the proposed limitation of hours will be in any way beneficial or useful, to the workpeople themselves?—No. I candidly think that it would be injurious to the workpeople; I think it would much lessen their wages.

3950. Do you think that the proposed limitation of hours would have the effect of diminishing the wages?—I do.

3951. Are you aware that there are a number of workmen and boys employed in stoves?—Yes. There is a stove pretty convenient to me; I am not much in it, but of course I bleach the goods that go in there; and if I am passing by I am backwards and forwards in it every now and then.

3952. As a practical bleacher, do not you know that a supply of pure air is requisite in order to produce the required effect upon cambric handkerchiefs?—Yes; and when they have not pure air in bleaching cambric handkerchiefs for the London merchant it injures the colour, or at least it does not give them that lustre that they want without the pure air.

3953. Is it not the fact that pure air is necessary in order to crystalise the starch, and produce the desired effect?—Yes, it is.

3954. Have you any practical statement upon that subject that you can give the Committee?—Yes, I have. Any practical man as well as I, can say that he has known goods returned to him which had been dried with steam when there was not air to apply at the same time to cool them along with the steam. It has been said that they are not white enough in the colour of the starch, and they have turned yellow. I have had them returned to me, but I never have done anything with the exception of drying them over again. I get them dried in the air, and they have gone home all right many a time.

3955. Have you heard the evidence given by Mr. Richardson?—I have.

3956. Are you disposed to agree with it, or to disagree with any part of it?—To the best of my knowledge, there was not a word that is said that, so far as my knowledge goes, was not correct. I have been round there. The establishment was very small, and it has got to be a large one now; and I have seen the way in which the concern has been managed as well as my employer himself.

3957. *Chairman.*]

3957. *Chairman.*] In what capacity are you employed now?—As a bleacher.

3958. Are you employed as an overlooker or manager?—I bleach the goods.

3959. Have you people under you?—Yes.

3960. How many?—I have not taken the number exactly, but I could come pretty near it. There are from 70 to 80, or thereabouts.

3961. Are there many women and boys in that 70 or 80?—There are no women connected with my department. There are two or three boys.

3962. Did the answer that you gave about the rate of wages being diminished by legislative interference, apply to the people with whom you have most to do?—Yes, that is just what I speak of; they are paid by the piece, and I would just show the Committee how it is. In the morning the goods are in the boiling pots, they are in liquids, and if there were not men there before they start the concern it would be nearly time for the bell to ring before you got the concern started; we have to get the goods made ready and to start the machinery; we cannot go in and start; it is just the same in many other things; they have to get ready the goods and to prepare them for the machinery.

3963. Are the females employed in Messrs. Richardson & Co.'s establishment paid by the piece?—They are.

3964. Is not there a spinning manufactory belonging to the same firm?—It is not near me; it is not within my reach at all; it is in the county of Donegal.

3965. Are you at all conversant with the rate of wages in any spinning mills in your neighbourhood?—Yes, I am; Mr. Barber has a spinning mill, a very large one, near us; and there is another a little below us again.

3966. Do you know if the rate of wages in those mills has been reduced since the passing of the Ten Hours Act?—I am not much acquainted with the factories, but I believe the wages are regulated by piecework, so far as it goes.

3967. The wages being regulated by piecework, do you know whether, as a matter of fact, they have been reduced since the Factory Act came into operation?—I think that it has diminished them.

3968. Can you tell the Committee at all in what proportion they have been reduced?—I will not take upon me to speak upon that subject, for it is only from hearsay that I can speak; it is not from experience.

3969. *Mr. Dalgleish.*] Did not you say that you signed a petition against the Bill of last year?—Yes.

3970. Was it numerously signed by the workers in the establishment that you are connected with?—Yes, I think most of them signed it; all the people round my departments did so; and that is as far as I can speak to it.

3971. Was there any petition in favour of the Bill from the same work?—No, not that I am aware of.

3972. *Chairman.*] Did the women sign that petition?—I do not know; I am not connected with the women's department, except from just going in to look at the goods that I have bleached when I passed by; I have nothing to do with them; there is a man appointed for that.

3973. *Mr. Dalgleish.*] Would an interference with the employment of the women tend to lessen the wages of people connected with the bleaching establishment?—I do not know about that; I cannot say that at all.

3974. Supposing that the women are only permitted to work 10 hours a day, between six o'clock in the morning and six o'clock at night, would that have any effect in lessening the wages of the men employed in your establishment?—No; it does not concern them.

3975. *Chairman.*] When you signed that petition were you under the impression that the Bill was to regulate the hours of labour of the men in all your departments?—I was.

3976. Do you suppose that that was the general impression of those who signed the petition?—I do.

3977. If you had known at that time that the Bill only proposed to regulate the hours of labour of women and young children, should you then have signed the petition against the Bill?—Not so far as that was concerned; I would not have interfered with that; I could not take in hand to arrange the bleaching departments where I am employed, and to do it safely, if I were limited to hours; and if I were obliged to be limited to hours I would much rather resign my situation and try something else; I should not wish to remain in any man's employment to whom I might do damage to a great extent in that way; I would rather try some other way of

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living; it is very easy to damage from 1,000 *l.* to 10,000 *l.* worth of goods in the bleaching; they are a long time in the process.

3978. *Mr. Crook.*] Are you employed at the Lambeg bleach-works, or at the Glenmore bleach-works?—At the Lambeg bleach-works.

3979. Are there any women employed out of doors in the fields?—Not connected with the bleaching.

3980. Are there any children?—There are boys.

3981. How many boys are employed under you?—There are seven, and their principal business is just for lifting the pins out of the grass that the men put into the cloth; that is what they are employed at; they have a little bag for them, and they lift the pins out of the grass, and they lay them down for the men to use in the pinning of the cloth.

3982. Are you aware during what hours the women are employed in the stoves at those works at Lambeg?—Yes, I am in the habit of seeing them because I am close to the works, and I see them going out and coming in as regularly as I see the other people employed about the works; although I am many times by, I do not go inside often.

3983. Are you aware that the women work later than six o'clock at night as a rule?—They do not.

3984. Have you any woman or child in your family employed in the works?—I have not at the stoves.

3985. Have you any wife or daughter working in these works?—No, I have neither wife nor daughter in the employment at all.

3986. Nor boys?—I have no boys working in the stoves; I have boys working indoors with myself.

3987. How many boys have you working there?—Two.

3988. Are they employed inside?—Yes, they are employed inside.

3989. What time do they give over at night?—They give over working in the green just at whatever time we shut up the works and give over.

3990. What sort of employment do they work at?—This one boy works at the cloth in the same way as I used to work.

3991. Does he work on the bleaching process?—Yes, he does.

3992. Has he anything to do with the boilers?—No, he has not.

3993. Are there any women that have to do with the boilers?—No.

3994. Have you anybody that the Ten Hours' Bill would affect employed about the boilers?—There are men to attend to the boilers.

3995. Did you think that this Bill limited the employment of men?—Yes, I did.

3996. Do you understand now that this Bill only affects women and children for the length of the day, and does not interfere with your hours?—Yes, I do.

3997. Do you think that the women are employed more than 10 hours a day in your establishment?—No, not on the average.

3998. Are they occasionally?—Yes; I have known it happen just a few times.

3999. Would not the Bill interfere with the business only to the extent of stopping the women and children from working late those few times during the last year?—I will not undertake to say anything about the stoves; I know nothing about anything connected with the stoves any further than I have stated.

4000. When you spoke of this Bill reducing wages, you did not mean that it would reduce women's wages?—I have nothing to do with the women.

4001. *Mr. Kirk.*] You stated that sometimes the women work after six o'clock; is it not also within your knowledge casually that they sometimes stop before six o'clock?—Yes, many a time.

4002. Do they stop as often before six as after?—Within this last 12 months a good deal oftener; I am well aware of that.

Mr. Thomas O'Brien, called in; and Examined.

Mr. T. O'Brien.

4003. *Mr. Kirk.*] WILL you state your occupation, and by whom you are employed?—I am a practical bleacher and manager of the Glenmore bleach works, in the employ of Messrs. Richardson, Sons & Co.

4004. What number of persons are employed there under your direction; if you can, state the number of men, boys, and females?—There are 244 men, 34 boys, and 140 females, making 418 altogether.

4005. How

4005. How many of those work out of doors?—Of the men and boys there are 36 men and 10 boys who work out of doors, and 158 men and 24 boys who work in-doors; the rest are employed as mechanics and labourers.

4006. What is the nature of the work they are employed at?—Out of doors they are employed at spreading and lifting the cloth, and carting it to the houses; and in doors they are employed in filling the boilers that the cloth is boiled in, and attending to the boilers and filling the reives that the cloth goes through in the other processes.

4007. What extent of ground do you occupy with the spreading of linens at Glenmore?—We have about 140 acres of ground, of which 120 acres are almost constantly covered with cloth.

4008. Is not that dependent upon the weather?—It depends a good deal upon the weather.

4009. What extent of ground do you cover with linens daily?—The whole extent of that is covered and uncovered twice a week; that is to say, we uncover 40 acres every day, and cover it again with other cloth.

4010. Can you state in what way frost affects your operations?—When frost occurs, even for a day, it prevents our getting those 40 acres of cloth lifted, and it prevents us from spreading the cloth over also.

4011. Does that affect the work of those employed in the houses, or only those employed in the fields?—It affects those in the houses quite as much as those in the fields, because it renders them short of work.

4012. Is it not the fact that in the event of your being unable to spread any cloth on a particular day, you must either stop for a day altogether, or spread as much cloth as would cover 80 acres in the following day?—We do not stop for a day altogether unless there is a continued frost; we should work on reducing our work in the houses from day to day for a week, and then we should be obliged to stop, and if the frost and snow continue for two or three weeks we are stopped the whole time, except three or four days.

4013. Have you read the Bill proposed to the House last year?—I have not seen a copy of the Bill of last year, but I have read the previous Bill, and I understand that there is very little difference between the two.

4014. You are aware that section 21 provides for over-work out of doors, in cases of emergency, would that meet your objection?—No, it only provides for over-work out of doors “when rendered necessary for the preservation of the goods by reason of any unexpected change in the weather,” whereas a change in the weather causes more additional in-door work than out-door work.

4015. Is there any other way in which the weather affects the carrying out of the bleaching operations?—Yes, a much more important interruption is caused by the weather when the spring-bleached cloth overtakes the winter-bleached cloth. Goods that we have commenced to bleach in November, December, January, and February require four or five weeks longer than those commenced in March and April (in fact the whole of the rest of the year), causing nearly a double quantity of goods to come forward for finishing in the months of April, May, and June.

4016. Can you tell us the quantity of goods that you had on hand part bleached on the 1st of November and the 30th of April last?—The quantity we had on hand part bleached on the 1st of November last, was 20,651 pieces, and on the 30th of April, 32,104 pieces; they had accumulated in consequence of the backwardness of the weather for bleaching.

4017. Did not that arise from the spring bleaching overtaking the winter bleaching?—Yes.

4018. Can you give the Committee any opinion as to how the Bill would affect the workers, considering the constant changes you mentioned in the quantity of goods on hand?—We should have to discharge a number of hands when work decreased, and take on others when it increased, our present system being, as far as possible, to keep sufficient hands for average work. The masters would employ fewer young persons and females, causing them to go elsewhere to seek other employment.

4019. Would the effect be to decrease the quantity of work?—Yes.

4020. Are you aware whether the workers are satisfied with their present system?—The workers, so far as I know, are perfectly satisfied; I believe they are a most contented class of workers in that part of the country.

4021. Do they desire this Bill?—Not that I know of.

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4022. Was there any agitation got up among them upon the subject?—No; I did not hear of any among our workers.

4023. Were you examined by Mr. Tremeneere?—No; I was not.

4024. Have you read his report?—I have read a good deal of it; I have read the part connected with bleaching linens in Ireland.

4025. Do you coincide with the suggestions which he makes upon the evidence, which he received in the Irish bleach works?—No, because he says that most of the bleachers seem to think that they can work under the Ten Hours Bill, and they have no objection to it. If they did not at the time state to him that they objected to it, their unanimous opposition to the Bill now, shows that they are all opposed to it. I do not know any instance of an employer wishing the Bill to be passed.

4026. As far as you know anything of the opinion of the bleachers, are they not mostly opposed to legislative interference?—Yes; they are decidedly so.

4027. I suppose they are not particularly fond of having inspectors coming in to look over their processes?—No; I think we could not carry out the provisions of the Bill satisfactorily if that were to be done. There is one clause as I understand, in the Bill, which provides that an account is to be kept in every case in which over-time is worked, and the reason of it; and that they should be able to prove that it was necessary that the over-time should be worked to save the goods. It would cause a great deal of additional trouble and expense in a large establishment like our's.

4028. In fact, it is your opinion that it would scarcely be practicable to carry it out?—I think not.

4029. Do you think that the Bill would not be workable?—I think that it could not be carried out; they could not work under inspection, so far as I know of the business.

4030. Do you know anything of the spinning mills?—No; I cannot say that I do. I have been through some, but all that I know of them is from hearsay.

4031. Are not you aware that in those mills which are subject to inspection, all the workpeople turn out together, whether they are adults or young people?—Yes.

4032. Will you give the Committee your opinion of the general health of the operative bleachers?—The health of the operative bleachers is better than that of any class that I am acquainted with; they are the healthiest and stoutest-looking men to be met with, although without the special care of an Act of Parliament in their youth; and you find the females and young persons are much healthier looking, and from the nature of their employment much cleaner and neater in their appearance than any other workers of a similar class.

4033. Do you apply that remark not only to those who work in the open air, but to those employed in the stoves?—I apply it also to those employed in the stoves.

4034. Taking the whole of the bleachers, those who work in the stoves, and those who work in doors and those who work out of doors, are they, as a class, more or less liable to be affected by epidemic diseases than other workers?—They are less liable to be affected; for upon two several occasions since I was first employed at Glenmore, the cholera was prevalent in the neighbourhood, and during both of those visitations of the cholera, we had not any who were connected with the bleach green or finishing affected by it. Two people died in our employment, but they were old men not connected with the bleaching; they were labourers.

4035. Are the girls employed in the stoves more liable than others under ordinary circumstances to pulmonary diseases and diseases of the chest?—I do not think they are; we have seldom any of them absent from ill-health.

4036. Are you much in the stoves, or about them yourself?—I am frequently in and out; there is a manager of the stoves who works under me.

4037. At about what temperature is the stove kept?—We keep it at 90 as near as possible, that is the greatest amount of temperature that I know of, and it is only on the lowest story that that is the case; on the second story the temperature is lower, and on the third story lower still, the average of the house would not be 85; we only keep a thermometer in the lowest story to regulate the temperature, and we let the others be as they will.

4038. Do you recollect any cases in which the workers in the stoves have fainted from excessive heat or fatigue?—Never.

4039. Could

4039. Could such a thing have happened without your knowing it?—No, it could not.

4040. Is there a stream of pure air admitted into the stoves in order to carry on your drying process?—Yes; under each of the windows there is a ventilator, and it is largely ventilated in the ceiling.

4041. Is not it the fact that you could not carry on the process of drying properly if there were not such a stream of pure air?—We could not produce the finish on the cloth that we require, nor the colour that we require.

4042. You would neither have the colour nor the appearance of finish, owing to the minute crystalization of the starch that you desired to have?—We should not.

4043. Is there anything else which you desire to state to the Committee?—I think that the work of the girls in the stoves is more dependent on the weather than the last witness stated, because when we are stopped for two or three weeks, that retards the finishing of the handkerchiefs, upon which they are exclusively engaged, and of course there is an accumulation of cloth to be finished. When the frost continues for two or three weeks, they are thrown off along with the rest of the workers, and when the work can be continued again they have to work occasionally extra hours to make up for the lost time. It is quite as much for their advantage as for ours that they should do so.

4044. When they have been stopped for two or three weeks, either from frost or snow, or from any other causes dependent upon weather, and over which you have no control, do they work extra time to bring it up?—They do.

4045. Do they work extra time upon any other occasion?—Very seldom.

4046. How often in the year?—I do not think it would amount to half a day in the week; and when we do work them overtime it is only for two additional hours, or two and a half hours (a quarter of a day), and they are paid for that overwork.

4047. Mr. Davison.] Do I understand you correctly to say that an interruption in any one department of the bleaching process interferes with the general business of the whole?—It does always.

4048. So that the effect it produces is alike in the bleach green as in the stoves?—Yes.

4049. If an interruption takes place in the stoves, does not it affect the ordinary process of bleaching in the fields?—No; I do not mean to say that the men who work in the earlier stages are interrupted; it interrupts the finishing process.

4050. Is the stove the last process?—Yes.

4051. Is the beetling any portion of the process?—Yes; the beetling is the last process applied to linen goods; the stoves are confined to the finishing of cambric handkerchiefs.

4052. The linens do not go to the stoves at all?—No; it is the cambric handkerchiefs only.

4053. Is beetling a severe process for the labourer?—It is severe work, with frequent intervals. They have severe work for half an hour, and then they have two or three hours of interval, in which they have only to watch the process going on.

4054. In what does that severity of work consist?—The operation of putting the linen on the beams and turning the beams is severe.

4055. How long will they be idle after the process is gone through till the time necessary for another shift?—The average is two hours, or two hours and a half.

4056. Then they are idle for two hours, until the next change takes place?—Yes.

4057. Chairman.] How long have you been in your present employment?—I have been six years at bleaching, and I have been about three and a half years in the actual management of the concern.

4058. Were you there when Mr. Tremeneere came to visit the work?—I was there when Mr. Tremeneere was, but he did not examine me.

4059. Can you tell us whether the figures he gives as to the number of people employed in the works at the time, are correct; he states that there were 165 males and 300 females employed at those works at that time?—It is nearly correct; we had 320 women at that time.

4060. At the present moment, I understand you to say, that there are only 140 women?—We have since that reduced the number to 140.

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4061. Can you tell the Committee what has caused that great change?— I should say that one cause was what Mr. Richardson stated ; we have introduced machinery in finishing, which has reduced the number of workers, and we have made a reduction in the quantity of cambrics that we bleach also.

4062. Is that process likely to go on further?—The process of introducing machinery is likely to go on further.

4063. And is it likely to be brought up to the result that you will not employ any women?—Yes, I think the tendency will be to employ fewer women.

4064. Mr. Davison.] I asked you whether the interference of any one department of work does not necessarily interfere with all, and you said "Yes"?— It does necessarily interfere with all.

4065. Supposing that an interruption took place in the bleach field, must not that necessarily interfere with the work in the finishing department, if it is continued for some time?—Yes, it does.

4066. So that if a continuous frost took place for some time together it would necessarily interfere with the finishing, which is only done by women?—Yes, it would ; I stated that in answer to the question.

4067. Then, of course, if it were reduced universally to 10 hours, or 10½ hours, you could not get the work done by these women, which would be necessary, in consequence of the frost or of the weather?—Yes, they could not work during that time.

4068. The process of bleaching could not be carried on in regular order?— No, it could not.

4069. Chairman.] Did I rightly understand you to say, in answer to a previous question, that an interference with the labour of the people employed in the stoves would not necessarily interfere with the labour of the people employed in the bleach grounds?—It might keep back work, but I do not say that it interferes with the bleaching, as it is a succeeding process, a finishing process.

4070. Are the women engaged in the bleach green or in the stoves?—Almost altogether in the stoves ; the number I stated are all occupied in the stoves, except ten.

4071. Mr. Crook.] Are they very busy just now, or not very busy?—It is the usual average at this time of year.

4072. What are your hours for work?—Our hours of work are from six to half-past six, and to three o'clock on Saturday.

4073. Did you work any woman or child after half-past six last week?—Yes, we did. I think probably two evenings last week.

4074. Are you sure of that?—I am sure they worked one evening.

4075. What night was that?—I do not remember.

4076. Do you think they worked overtime the week before?—We have for the last few weeks worked overtime for two evenings in the week.

4077. Is that generally the practice about the spring, or have you been busy this year?—We have done our usual amount of business.

4078. Mr. Richardson stated in his evidence before Mr. Tremenheere, "The regular hours of work are from six to half-past six P.M., two hours off for meals, and we stop on Saturdays at three o'clock. These are the hours for the whole establishment." Do you think that is a fair statement?—Yes ; those are our regular hours for the whole establishment.

4079. Did not you say that you go into the stoves occasionally?—Yes.

4080. The thermometer is on the bottom story?—We regulate the heat on the bottom story.

4081. What difference is there between the bottom story and the other ones?— I have hardly examined it ; it is only about 10 degrees.

4082. You say that you keep it at 90 in the bottom rooms?—Yes.

4083. What temperature would the top room be when the bottom room was 90?—It would be 80, because the room is heated below with steam-pipes on the floor.

4084. Have you ever tried the heat of the top rooms when it was 90 below?— I cannot say accurately.

4085. What sort of floors are there in those stoves?—They are all wooden floors, and there are open spaces about 18 inches wide under each frame, and there is a close floor where the girls walk.

4086. Are those holes square?—They are 18 inches wide the whole length of the house.

4087. Are

4087. Are they under each frame?—They are under each frame.
4088. Are these frames made like tables?—They are not tables; the pieces are supported at each end only.
4089. Are they stretched from end to end?—Yes.
4090. Are the women employed in every story?—Yes.
4091. What sort of clothing do the women wear in those stoves?—They wear the usual amount of clothing.
4092. Do you think that they have as much clothing in this temperature as they have out of doors?—They have shawls and handkerchiefs, which they take off when they come to their work; they wear the usual amount that I have observed in their class.
4093. Do they wear shoes and stockings?—No.
4094. Do they wear flannel petticoats?—They may; I do not know that they do. I do not know what their under-clothing is.
4095. Are you satisfied that they wear under-clothing?—They do.
4096. Do they wear a dress or something over their shoulders?—Yes, they do invariably in the stoves in Ireland.
4097. You say, that if we passed a Bill to limit the hours of labour of women and children to 10½ hours a day, it would decrease the amount of work you do; as your workpeople work only 10 hours a day, will you inform the Committee how allowing them to work 10½ hours would reduce the amount of work you do?—When we are stopped in winter time, as we frequently are, they are out of employment, and we then let them work overtime to allow them to fetch up their time.
4098. How often do they work overtime?—Occasionally; not often.
4099. You occasionally work to half-past eight?—Yes.
4100. Would not the Bill only reduce your hours on those days?—It would cause us, when we were busy, to employ more hands.
4101. Would you reduce the wages?—We should have to discharge them again, when the pressure was over.
4102. You say that you formerly had 320 women, and now you have only 140; do you think that that reduction has had any effect in reducing their wages?—We have not reduced the wages in our works, but it has made their labour more plentiful.
4103. You say you cannot work under inspection; what is the difficulty, in your mind, about working under inspection?—It would be impossible to keep an account every evening, or every meal-time when we had to work 10 or 15 minutes over, and to prove that it was necessary for keeping the cloth safe.
4104. In what processes do you generally require them to work at meal-times?—I understand that the work would have to be stopped during the meal hours.
4105. How do you understand that?—From the Bill.
4106. *Chairman.*] Have you a copy of the Bill before you?—Yes.
4107. Can you refer to the clause of the Bill which contains that provision?—Clause 5 I understand to refer to that. In any spinning mills that I am acquainted with, the work is all stopped, the machinery all stops, and, as I understand, they would stop the bleach greens also.
4108. *Mr. Crook.*] Do you now understand that this Bill will not interfere with the meal hours or the time that the male adults work?—We have a number of young persons working along with the adults, and if they are obliged to stop their work, it will interfere with the general process of working.
4109. Have you more than a few instances of that kind?—It would occur frequently.
4110. What number out of the 140 women employed would it interfere with?—There are none of the women employed in those works at all; it is the young persons I refer to.
4111. You have 34 of them; how many of those are employed in the bleaching department?—We have 17 employed there, and 10 work in the fields.
4112. How many would be interfered with if this Bill passed?—It would interfere with the working of those 17.
4113. And how many of the women would it interfere with?—It would interfere with their work only at such times as we had been stopped and had an accumulation of work.
4114. *Mr. Kirk.*] Are those females and young persons that are employed relatives of the other persons employed?—They are generally.

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4115. If, therefore, they cease to be employed, or their time was lessened so as to lessen their earnings, would not that be an injury to them and their families?—It would; it would tend to break up and disperse the families; they would have to look for work in other employments, whereas there is abundance of work for them all together.

4116. Do you keep a mean average amount of workers without desiring to work them overtime unless compelled to do so by the change of the weather?—Yes; we keep an average amount of workers, and only work them overtime in cases of emergency.

4117. Is there another effect which would be likely to arise, that if the Government inspection was put upon the bleach works, there would be a tendency on the part of the employers of labour to cease to employ women and young persons altogether?—Certainly it would; the first thing we should do would be in some of the departments to avoid employing young persons altogether, and reduce them as much as possible in the others.

4118. Is not your belief that if such a Bill as is proposed pass, that would be nearly the ordinary rule in the Irish bleach greens?—I think it would.

4119. In fact it would lessen the employment?—Yes.

4120. In fact the employment would be confined to adults only?—As far as possible.

4121. Would not that be mainly because parties do not like to have their premises subject to Government inspection?—Yes.

4122. Mr. Cobbett.] You say that the system of inspection would tend to make them employ adults only?—Yes; I think that would be the tendency.

4123. Do not you think that it is well that adult men should perform the work?—No; there is a great deal of the work which may be performed by young persons.

4124. Do not you think that it is preferable that men should do it?—There must be young persons employed to give them a knowledge of the business.

4125. Then must you not employ young persons whether this Bill passes or no?—To a certain extent we must employ young persons for that purpose.

4126. As a general rule is not it better that adult persons should perform the work than young persons?—I think not.

4127. Would you think it better that adult persons should not do the work, and that young persons should do it?—It is my view that young persons can do the work.

4128. You say that the tendency of inspection will be to make you throw young persons out of work, and take adults?—I think it will be.

4129. What is the reason that you do not do that now?—Because we have light work at which young persons can work.

4130. If the Bill passed would you prefer taking the adult persons to do the light work that young persons now do?—We would prefer that to being under inspection.

4131. In point of fact would not you be obliged to give higher wages?—No.

4132. Would you get the adult persons to do the work that young persons do now without any difficulty?—I think we could get adult persons to do the work.

4133. Why do not you do it?—We take young persons because we have light work that they can do, and it is less expensive.

4134. Would not you have to give more for that work?—It would not increase the wages of adult persons.

4135. Why is it then more expensive?—Because the wages of young persons are less than of adult persons.

4136. Would not the wages of adult persons be more?—It would not increase wages; adult persons would be employed.

4137. Do you say that inspection would make you suddenly take adult persons in place of the young persons you employ?—We could not do it suddenly, we must do it gradually.

4138. Do you mean you would begin to take first one or two in, and then a month or two afterwards another or two adult person to displace young persons?—It is probable that would be the process, but I cannot tell.

4139. What is the objection to such a thing?—Most of the young persons that we have employed are the sons of men working in the place; they wish their sons employed, and it is an advantage to them to have their earnings; that is one reason

reason why we frequently employ young persons when we would not do so otherwise, because their parents wish to have them. Mr. T. O'Brien.

4140. You must have other persons standing by that are not employed, and that are ready to be employed, in the way of adults to replace those young persons; have you those persons waiting by?—We have not persons waiting by. 30 June 1857.

4141. Even supposing the inspectors were to be appointed, would not you have some difficulty in replacing the young persons that you would discharge, and finding adult persons ready to your hand?—We should have difficulty in it.

4142. Would it not, in point of fact, be more expensive to you; would not you have to pay adult persons more wages?—It would be more expensive to us.

4143. Do you know in all the factory districts where the Ten Hours Bill has been in operation, the effect has been to cause the very young persons in the greater number of instances to be displaced by older hands?—I am not aware of it.

4144. Have you ever read the Factory Inspectors' reports where they show the benefits of that change?—I have not read them.

4145. Mr. Kirk.] Would you have any difficulty in doing away with the attendance of boys altogether in bleach fields by the application of belts and other machinery?—There would be less difficulty in that than in any other branch of the employment.

4146. Would there be anything but a temporary difficulty in taking adult labourers; could not you get plenty from the neighbouring farms?—There would be only a temporary difficulty, as the labourers can be taught in a short time.

4147. In two or three months?—Yes.

4148. Are you aware at the present time of any body of persons standing by, waiting for employment and watching others at work?—I am not aware of any.

4149. Mr. Wise.] Have you any girls in your establishment, and at what age are they first employed?—We do not take them under 12 years of age as a general rule.

4150. Do you think there might be any limit as to the age of employment?—I do not think it is desirable to employ young persons under 12 years of age.

4151. Do you think it injures their health to employ them under 12 years of age?—No, I do not.

4152. What is the character of the hand work of which we have spoken?—It is handling cloth in the different processes; pieces are hanked up into hanks.

4153. Do they lift heavy weights?—There are not heavy weights to lift.

4154. Does the character of the work which you give them tend to educate them as it were for their future employment?—It does.

4155. Does it render them better workmen for another department?—Yes.

4156. Are the boys generally healthy?—Yes, they are all healthy.

4157. Are they employed in any of the hot rooms?—They are not employed in the hot places.

4158. Mr. Cobbett.] You said that you could find agricultural labourers, and teach them the business in two months?—Yes, I did.

4159. Would not that tend to raise the wages of the agricultural labourers that you left behind?—I suppose that would be the tendency.

4160. Mr. Clark.] Have you known any instances where children have been compelled to work those long hours against the wish of their parents?—No, I have not.

4161. When they work long hours, is it for their own accommodation?—Yes, altogether; and it is a rule with us not to ask any female to work over-hours unless she wishes to do so. At the regular quitting time at half-past six, we permit all who wish to go home to do so.

4162. As far as you have had an opportunity of judging, do you consider that the health of the boys is in the least injured by those long hours?—Not in the least; they seldom work long hours.

4163. Mr. Dalgleish.] Supposing that you employed adult labour only in your bleach works, and that the children were entirely displaced, would there be a good many of the labourers' children not employed in your establishment?—Yes, a good many of them.

4164. Supposing the children were no longer employed in your establishment, is not it certain that the parents would leave to go to the district where their

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children would be employed?—I do not think they would; I think the tendency would be for the children to seek employment in the spinning mills.

4165. Would not it be their interest to go to another district?—The boys would go; the parents would not leave us to go there.

4166. Supposing adult females were not employed, would not they go to seek employment elsewhere?—I do not think adult male labour could be substituted at present for the labour of females.

4167. Did not you say that in the event of the Bill passing, you would be inclined to employ adult labourers in the place of the labour of females?—We should be inclined to employ adult labour instead of the labour of young persons.

4168. The employment of female labour being under the operation of this Bill, would not you employ male labour instead?—What I stated was, that it was my opinion that there would be a tendency, if the Bill passes, to dispense with the labour of young persons.

4169. Mr. Kirk.] Supposing that machinery were introduced so as to do away with female labour altogether in the stoves, would there be any want of female labour in the employment of sewed muslins in the cottages of people round?—No; there is an abundance of labour.

4170. There is abundance of labour on sewed muslins at present?—Yes.

4171. Are they kept supplied with materials?—Yes, as far as I know.

John Johnson Kelso, Esq., M.D., called in; and Examined.

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M. D.

4172. Mr. Kirk.] WHERE do you reside?—At Lisburn.

4173. You are connected with the dispensary there, are you not?—Yes, I am.

4174. Have you had ample opportunities of knowing the state of the work-people employed in the neighbourhood of Lisburn in the bleach works, about which evidence has been given before the Committee?—Yes, I have.

4175. In reference to health; what is the effect on young persons from 18 years of age and under, and upon females who work in the stoves with a temperature varying from 90 to 100 degrees?—I should say not prejudicial under certain conditions.

4176. Will you state what those conditions are?—The first condition in my mind is one that is of general application; it is that a person on entering upon the employment should be in a proper state of health. I suppose it is unnecessary to state what I understand by a proper state of health. If a person eats well and sleeps well, is not unduly susceptible of fatigue, that is a condition that is personal to the party who is employed; the other condition has reference to the temperature of the stoves, and also the state of ventilation of the stoves. I think that the parties who are engaged should have liberty occasionally to cool themselves, and to get a little drink of water to recruit themselves.

4177. Under such circumstances would 60 hours of work a week in a temperature of that kind affect the health?—I should think decidedly not.

4178. Under similar circumstances might an extra two or three hours a day or a week, occasionally, or for days together, prove injurious?—I should think not, provided the party were properly nourished, and received proper sustenance. I should think half an hour a day would make no material difference.

4179. Are there any diseases or affections that particularly attach to stove occupations, either in young females, or in females more advanced in life?—I am not aware of any particular diseases of that sort.

4180. Do you think that their being in an erect position is more prejudicial to health than if they were stooping?—I should think not. I should think rather the reverse.

4181. Is it within your knowledge that the persons employed at those stoves are more or less liable than persons differently employed, to bronchitis or other inflammatory affections of the chest?—I should think on the whole perhaps that they are not so liable to that as other operative classes are.

4182. Comparing them with workers in factories, or workers out of doors, or even domestic females at home, which is the more healthy?—I should think they would not be so liable to these diseases as either of those classes. Either of those classes are more liable to them than the stove workers.

4183. I presume you would understand that they wear additional clothing when they leave the room where they have been working?—Yes; and that they take proper

proper care of themselves when they go out; that is a matter of course. And when I make my comparison I would limit my observations to the parties who work. For instance, there are a considerable number of females who stay at home weaving and other things. Now, compared with them, I should think the stove operations are not so prejudicial to health, nor are the persons employed in them so unhealthy or so susceptible to diseases as those females.

4184. Are there any local diseases or affections to which such employment gives especial prominence?—I am not aware of any particular ones.

4185. Are the people working at them subject to swelling of the feet or ankles more particularly than others?—I should think they are not so subject to that as persons who weave in their own houses are. The females, who weave in their own houses, are more susceptible to swelled ankles and ulceration of the legs, as far as my observation goes, than stove workers are.

4186. Comparing the general appearance of the females who work in the stoves, are they more or less healthy, in fact, than the people employed in spinning and other factories?—I should say most decidedly that they are of a more healthy appearance, judging from their complexions, and altogether that they are much more healthy, especially than those who work in spinning factories.

4187. Or than the cotton or woollen weavers, of whom there is a large number?—Yes; a good number employed round Lisburn.

4188. Is there any difference as to their liability to fever or other diseases?—I should think upon the whole that they are scarcely so liable as either of those classes to which you have referred. I speak generally; they are scarcely so susceptible as the other classes are.

4189. I think you are the medical attendant of the Lambeg Bleach Fields?—Yes, I am.

4190. Is there any specific disease to which the workers either in the bleaching department or the stoves are particularly liable?—None whatever, that I am aware of; none that I can point to.

4191. In fact, are they not rather more free from attacks of fever than other workpeople?—I think they are rather better off, and more especially than those female workers in their own houses.

4192. How can you account for such comparative immunity from diseases?—I should think that, upon the whole, stove labour is a healthy labour, and the proof of it is in the result. The atmosphere that they breathe in those stoves is perfectly pure, and the atmosphere that the persons working in their own houses breathe is not pure, because the ventilation is not so good; the cabins they live in are not good; the floor is generally open, and altogether the atmosphere there becomes so much more deleterious to health than the stove atmosphere would be.

4193. Then the general purport of your evidence is, that you are disposed to contend that the climate in the stoves is decidedly healthy?—I should say so, decidedly.

4194. Are you aware whether many accidents have occurred in connexion with the employment?—There are some few; but very few; and those are not of a serious nature.

4195. Have you remarked whether young persons, either male or female, under 11, are ever employed about Lisburn in the stoves and other labour?—I have not observed; they are generally from 12 and 13 upwards.

4196. Have you any idea of the state of education of the boys and girls when they are first taken into employment?—With regard to the persons who are taken into the employment of Mr. Richardson, they are generally tolerably well educated. The reason is this, that Mr. Richardson has very properly and very creditably to himself established a school, and he takes great care that the children at his works shall be properly educated; that is not the case, however, in Lisburn itself; there, I have no doubt, the different clergymen of the town are very anxious that the young persons should be educated, and we have one or two national schools in Lisburn. But, notwithstanding all their desire to get the children to come out, there is an indifference on the part of the parent; they would rather keep them at home, for the purpose of turning their labour to some account, in sewing and embroidering muslin; they wish to turn them to account, even when they are five or six years old, and they will not allow them to go to school, although the cost of schooling is quite nominal.

4197. Are you the surgeon of the Lisburn Dispensary?—I am surgeon of the Knocknadow Dispensary.

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4198. Can you form any opinion as to the number of persons in connexion with the bleach works about Lisburn to whom you have afforded relief within the last two years?—I have no doubt but that the medical attendant of the dispensary may, as he held the post during the last two years. In 1854, the number of stove workers who got relief under the dispensary system was 24, and of mill workers 104.

4199. Are not there more people employed in the stoves than in the mills about Lisburn?—No, I think not.

4200. Have you any idea of the comparative numbers?—I could not precisely say; I say about one, perhaps, to three; the stove workers being about one, and the mill workers about three.

4201. What is the proportion of medical relief afforded to each?—The total number who got relief was 1,240; but of course it is to be observed that the dispensary district takes in the agricultural country; there were 24 stove workers and 104 mill workers, persons employed about the bleach works, and 1,200 persons who got relief round the dispensary district. In 1855 there were 23 stove workers, 102 mill workers, and 1,102 persons who got relief all over the dispensary district. In 1856 there were 22 stove workers, 102 mill workers, and 1,344 persons who got relief all over the district.

4202. From the dispensary book of that district are you satisfied that stove working is more healthy than mill working?—No doubt of it.

4203. *Chairman.*] In those figures have you taken into consideration the proportion of people employed in the different trades?—They could not be prepared accurately, because, under the present system, it would be impossible, but the number of persons who apply for relief immediately round where the dispensary is situated is considerably larger. The population is large, and not only that, but, on account of the facility of application, there are more persons working in the locality of the dispensary than those in the districts more remote.

4204. Could you give the Committee any information as to the number of people employed in the mills and those employed in stoves?—There are about one to three; one stove worker to three persons who are employed at what I call mill work, including bleach works, spinning mills, and finishing works also. It is merely an approximate answer; I could not say positively.

4205. *Mr. Crook.*] Do you think these extremes of labour, to the extent of 10 hours a day, are not detrimental to a healthy person?—I should say not.

4206. Would you consider that the mass of those women and young persons that seek employment are almost invariably healthy?—Of course, one could not say invariably. Health is a relative term; some would be more healthy, and others less so.

4207. Are you aware that the bulk of the women and children have to seek employment in the district out of their own houses?—Yes.

4208. What proportion of the bulk of the women and children would you say are in good health?—That would depend altogether upon what you assign as good health. The answer to that question might strike different medical men differently; but what I would define to be a person in good health would be a person who could eat well and sleep well, and who was considered capable of doing a certain amount of work without being unduly fatigued in consequence.

4209. Could you give an estimate whether one-half or one-third of these classes could be said to eat and drink well?—There are certainly some delicate persons who seek employment, but in that case they give way soon.

4210. Is not there among this class of workpeople a great proportion that are delicate?—Looking at the result, they must be, at least as far as my observation goes, comparatively few; because the number of applications for medical relief in connexion with persons who are employed in the stove labour is comparatively much less, I should decidedly say than those with reference to any other similar employment attended with physical labour in the community.

4211. Have you ever been in one of those stoves more than once?—Yes, I have.

4212. Have you ever been in the top rooms of the stove?—I have been in all the compartments of the stove.

4213. Have you seen a considerable number of women working there?—I have.

4214. Do you think they can be at work over those apertures when the heat comes up without detriment to their health?—I do.

4215. Did

4215. Did you observe what amount of clothing they wore?—I certainly have lately. They have some covering that they put on when they come out. They do not immediately sit over the apertures; the aperture is under the place where the cloth is stretched, and the persons walk through the intervening space on the floors, so that they are not in the draft; but they are so placed that the ventilation tells favourably rather than the reverse upon them.

4216. Are you aware what the temperature usually is in the rooms?—The usual temperature, as far as I can ascertain, is from 90 to 100 degrees; it rarely comes up to a 100.

4217. Have you been in the mills in your neighbourhood?—Yes.

4218. Are they flax mills?—Yes.

4219. Are you aware what temperature they have in the mills?—I am not sure; I never looked at the thermometer; but it is not so high at the mills as at the stove; it is not so necessary, I should say.

4220. Did you observe whether there was any provision for ventilation in the mills?—Yes; unless there were ventilation, their health would be doubly deteriorated; but I should say that the ventilation in the spinning mills is not so effectual as in the stoves; the means adopted for ventilation are not on so good a principle as in the stoves.

4221. What is the difference?—The ventilation in connexion with the stove is that the ventilation is beneath the window, and the current of air gets entrance at the floor, or almost at the floor, and it gets up. Whereas in the spinning mills the ventilation is at the top of the window, and for that reason the good effects of the ventilation are not so decided.

4222. Are you aware that a vast amount of money has been spent on the House of Commons in ventilating it?—Yes, I have understood so.

4223. Have you heard as to what direction the changes in that ventilation have taken lately?—Lately I have understood that they have succeeded, but I thought the system at first was not effectual.

4224. Do you know what that system was?—I cannot say. I think the air was admitted at the bottom. But it struck me that the principle was faulty.

4225. Are you aware how it used to be ventilated, whether the air was admitted at the roof or at the ground?—I cannot recollect.

4226. Have you any idea how the ventilation is now conducted?—I think there were some alterations made at first; the system was not satisfactory, but I think latterly there has been a change.

4227. Will you have the kindness to tell me whether you are aware what the nature of that change is?—I am not.

4228. Have you been in any foreign mill lately?—No, I have not.

4229. Have you been in a linen or cotton mill this year?—Not this year.

4230. Can you say you were in a mill last year?—I was.

4231. Whose mill was that?—It was Mr. Richardson's.

4232. Is that a flax mill?—Yes.

4233. Has he any means of ventilating the mill?—Yes, he has; but it is upon the principle to which I object, for the ventilator is at the top of the mill, and not at the bottom.

4234. Do you mean to say that the window opens at the top?—Yes. There are also ventilators in some of the panes of glass.

4235. Is there perforated glass?—Yes.

4236. What sized openings are the windows in the flax mill?—The windows are made to slide down—that is one of the means; then there are ventilators besides at the top of the windows.

4237. Then the windows will slide down, so as to open half the window?—Yes.

4238. Is not that an effectual means of ventilating, if you are able to use it?—Precisely so.

4239. Have you been in a mill in which you found the windows closed?—I do not recollect; I cannot answer that question precisely; but if the windows are closed, they have a ventilator to act as a sort of substitute.

4240. May I understand, that it is an hypothesis of yours that the ventilation in the mills is not so complete as in these stoves?—It is not in my view of what ventilation should be.

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4241. Will you give your reasons for that opinion?—In so far as the stove is concerned, I should say practically the result is in favour of the plan that is adopted.

4242. Have you been in the neighbourhood of Belfast lately?—I have not been to visit any of the mills.

4243. Did not I understand you to speak cautiously as to the time that you think the work of the women might be prolonged exceeding ten hours a-day; you say they might work half-an-hour or an hour?—I should say perhaps an hour.

4244. You have not a very strong feeling?—Of course health is a relative term, and what I might consider to be delicate, another medical man might not consider so.

4245. You were asked if persons might not work without detriment to health for 12 or 14 hours a-day several days in succession?—That is an unusual time at present.

4246. Have you any daughters?—None.

4247. Have you any wife?—I have.

4248. Would you like your wife to work 14 hours a day?—That question would scarcely apply, because a female should grow up to it, if she is to be employed in physical labour, and be gradually trained to it; but if you put a delicate female, who has not been so trained to the labour, the probability is that the thing would end injuriously; but generally the class of persons who do work in mills are put to work at a younger time of life, and they are habituated to it, and therefore it does not tell so injuriously upon them.

4249. You are aware that there are a considerable number of delicate girls and boys who have to do all this kind of labour; do not you think that if they work 12, 13, or 14 hours a day, it will tell upon their health?—If a person is delicate, of course it would; but if the person has tolerably average health, it would not decidedly.

4250. *Mr. Kirk.*] Are you not aware that the ordinary ventilation of the flax-spinning mills is by means of a pane in the centre of the window, which works on a swivel, and that nine-tenths of all the window frames are of iron, and stationary?—Yes. I have endeavoured to explain it; either a ventilator is put in, or else perhaps a pane is taken out.

4251. And are not the window sashes of iron, and stationary?—Yes.

4252. *Mr. Crook.*] Did not you say just now that the windows slide down?—In some mills they do, and in others they do not.

4253. Do you remember any mills where they slide down?—I think it is the case at *Mr. Robert Stewart's* mill; it strikes me so, but I will not say positively that it is so.

4254. Do you remember whether *Mr. Richardson's* mills are so ventilated?—I think the ventilation there is fixed; it is by apertures and ventilators.

4255. Do you remember how his windows are constructed?—I think they are made of iron, and stationary; but I cannot speak positively about it.

4256. Supposing those windows are stationary, and the construction of the windows was altered so as to admit any amount of ventilation, do not you think that would improve the ventilation of the room?—It would improve the ventilation, but it would never make the ventilation so good as the admission of air at the bottom of a window; because as the air gets heated it tends to rise, and it carries with it, of course, the impurities that are connected with it.

4257. As far as you can judge, would it be difficult to correct the ventilation of the mills?—I should think not.

John Leeper, Esq., M.D., called in; and Examined.

J. Leeper, Esq.
M. D.

4258. *Chairman.*] WHERE do you reside?—At Keady, in the county of Armagh.

4259. How long have you been in general medical practice?—Twenty-five years.

4260. Do you hold any public appointments, and how long have you held them?—I am medical officer of the Keady Dispensary, and certifying surgeon to the Darkley and New Holland Spinning Factories, and I have been medical attendant to the constabulary for 12 years and upwards.

4261. In reference to the health of the operatives, what is your opinion from those official situations which you hold of the effect of the employment in bleach works on young persons?—I think the employment is very healthful.

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4262. As compared with factory labour, which do you think is the more healthful?—I think the work in bleach works is much more healthful than the factory work.

4263. Could you make any comparison?—I think that six hours a day in a factory is more severe than 10 hours in bleach works.

4264. Would you give the Committee your reasons for that opinion?—In bleach works a great deal of the work is in the open air, and what is executed in the house is in very airy, well-ventilated apartments. On the contrary, in the spinning factories in my district, the atmosphere is not so pure; it is loaded with moisture and loaded with dust.

4265. As compared with agricultural labour of the persons employed in agriculture, and those employed in bleach works, which are the more healthful?—If they are employed in bleach works in the open air, they are quite as healthy as those employed in open air agricultural labour.

4266. Why is that?—They are both much of the same character, and their labour is less severe; they both work in the open air. But the bleachers who work in the house are even more healthful than those who are employed in agricultural labour.

4267. Are they more liable to pulmonary disease than those employed in fields?—I think quite the reverse. The labourers in the fields are more exposed to the vicissitudes of weather, and they often have not the opportunity of changing their clothes, and they are more subject I believe to rheumatic and pulmonary diseases than the other.

4268. Are you aware that it is the practice in the neighbourhood of Keady, all down the river, to employ boys between 14 and 18 years of age to attend the beetling engines at night?—I am.

4269. What is your opinion, as a medical man, of the effect upon the health of the boys of being employed all night upon the beetling engines?—I think it is not in the slightest degree injurious to them.

4270. Do not they sleep all day and work all night?—Yes.

4271. And you say so after an experience of 12 or 13 years?—I do.

4272. Are you aware at all of the nature of the employment of attending beetling engines?—I am quite well aware of it.

4273. Can you give the Committee any account of it?—The boys are not employed more than half their time. The work is very light and easy. During the intervals of changing the beams, or changing the cloth upon the beams, they have the opportunity of resting, and often lay down upon the bench, or retire to a little house outside the mill; the work is very light, and the labour is easy.

4274. Have you ever had any conversation with them as to whether they were satisfied and anxious to get that class of labour?—Very often.

4275. What was the result of that conversation?—I have known persons advanced in life who have been employed in that capacity as boys, and they have spoken of that work as light, cheerful, and easy work.

4276. Are you aware of any diseases to which persons employed in bleach works are especially liable?—I am not.

4277. Is the duration of life shortened in those districts by such employment?—Certainly not.

4278. Are accidents frequent in bleach works in consequence of unfenced machinery?—No; they are very infrequent, and any accidents I have witnessed have been entirely owing to the gross negligence of the parties themselves. I have known three or four.

4279. You are certifying surgeon of the spinning factories?—Yes.

4280. At what age are young persons taken into work at those factories?—They are not taken in under 13.

4281. Are you aware at what age they are taken in, in the bleach works, in that neighbourhood?—Not under 14; I believe that is the youngest period at which they take them in.

4282. What is the state of education among the children that are employed in bleach works?—I think the education is very much improved among them since the introduction of the national system of education; they are almost all educated to a certain point.

4283. Has there been any injurious results arising from the introduction of sewed muslins as regards the education of the female population?—I think there has. I have made it a point, when persons have been pressing for work in the

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factories, before giving a certificate to inquire whether they can read and write ; I have done this for years, more from curiosity than anything else ; and I have found that a great number of the female children lately have not been educated ; their mothers have employed them from six years old to 16 at sewed muslin work, which prevented them from going to school, and sometimes they tried to give them an hour's instruction at night ; but although the district is well supplied with schools, the girls are not instructed.

4284. Is there any other observation that you wish to make to the Committee ?—I am not aware of any.

4285. *Chairman.*] I think I understood you to say that the boys who work at the beetling engines at night do not work in the day ?—They do not work during the day ; they are in bed all day.

4286. Supposing from any necessity they worked all day and half the night ; should you say that their hours of labour were excessive ?—I should ; and I should think it would be injurious to their health.

4287. *Mr. Crook.*] You say that you are certifying surgeon of this neighbourhood. Is the mill of Mr. Richardson in your district ?—No ; I live at Keady, in the county of Armagh.

4288. In your district you say there are no children employed under 13 years of age ?—No.

4289. Then of course there are none required to go to school, under the Factory Act ?—No ; they are not required to be sent to school by the owners of the factories.

4290. Will you tell the Committee your impression of the requirements of the Factory Act as to children being educated ?—I understand the Act to be this, that if they are employed in factories before they reach 13, from 10 to 13 the owners of the factory are obliged to give them a certain number of hours, to allow them to be educated in the day.

4291. Are you conversant with the requirements of the Factory Act ?—No ; I cannot say I am, except so far as my own department goes.

4292. How many mills have you under your inspection ?—I have two.

4293. How frequently do you visit them ?—I am required to visit them once a fortnight.

4294. Do you know the amount of ventilation in them ?—Yes.

4295. Can you describe to the Committee the construction of the windows, and the means of ventilation at those mills ?—They are different ; one has been lately built. It is a large mill, and I think the ventilation has been attended to in it as well as it can be.

4296. Do you think that the preparation for ventilation is spacious ?—Yes ; the windows are very large, and they open the windows all round on purpose to allow the heated air to go out.

4297. Have you seen the House of Commons ?—I have seen the House of Commons, but I am not at all conversant with the mode of ventilation of the House of Commons.

4298. Is the provision for ventilation which you have described only applied to one mill ?—Yes ; in the other mill it is not so perfect.

4299. Are you aware whether there is any artificial heat used in mills in weather like this ?—Yes, there is in the spinning factories.

4300. Are you sure that they have steam on a day like this ?—Yes, when they spin with warm water ; when the thread goes through the water.

4301. Is the quantity of water used so great as to affect the temperature of the rooms much ?—Yes ; I have been in the rooms even in summer, and I find that they are very warm.

4302. Has it come under your observation that the temperature of the mills is precisely the same as the atmosphere ?—No.

4303. Are you aware that the heat in mills is principally introduced for the purpose of drying out the moisture ?—I do not at all think that that was so in spinning factories. I thought it was almost entirely for heating the water through which the yarn passed ; I am speaking of flax spinning.

4304. Have you not seen any stoves employed for the purpose of heating the rooms that the men and boys have been at work in ?—That is not so in my district ; those mills are so different. In those mills, as far as my observation goes, it is not so.

4305. Have

4305. Have you been in any of those stoves?—No; they are not used in my district.

4306. You do not know whether there is any moisture in those stoves or not?—I do not.

4307. As you have not been in these stoves, and do not know anything about them, what is the ground upon which you say that six hours in a factory is worse than 10 in a bleach mill?—In saying that, I was comparing the work of a flax spinning factory with the work in the bleach works; I had no reference to stoves when I made that statement.

4308. Are we to understand that when you said that six hours in a spinning factory is worse than 10 hours in bleach works, you did not know anything about the work done in stoves?—I do not.

4309. *Chairman.*] Your observation applies to bleach works where there are no stoves?—Yes.

4310. *Mr. Crook.*] Did you refer to the out-door work?—To the out-door work, and the work in the lapping rooms, and that in the beetling engines.

4311. Are those places in which no women or children are employed?—There are boys, but no women or children employed, using the term “children” for those under 14 years of age; I mean by children, those that are under 14; but if they are above 14, I look upon them as boys.

4312. Are not you aware that the Ten Hours Factory Bill affects women and boys up to the age of 18?—I am not aware of it; I know that persons are employed in the spinning factory, and they do not require a certificate from me if they are over 16 years of age.

4313. Are you not conversant with the clause in the Factory Act which limits the labour of young men and women to 10 hours a day?—I am acquainted with the operation of the Factory Act with reference simply to the spinning factories over which I am set.

4314. Do you know the clause that limits the hours of labour in factories?—I cannot say; all I know is this, that any person over 16 years of age does not require a certificate of his age.

4315. Are you then conversant with the nature of the limitation clause of the Factory Act as regards women and children?—No.

4316. *Mr. Kirk.*] Speaking of the moisture in the flax-spinning rooms, is it not true that all the thread must pass through boiling water?—There are some places where they spin the yarn without passing through boiling water; that is what is called dry spinning.

4317. Does not that apply to tow spinning?—Perhaps so.

4318. Does not all the flax that is spun near Keady pass through boiling water?—It does.

4319. Is there not placed at the top of each spinning frame a long trough, 18 or 20 feet long, filled with hot water?—Yes.

4320. The bobbin stands upright, and the thread passes down through the water before it is spun?—Yes.

4321. Has not the keeping this constantly boiling by steam pipes the effect of producing a very moist atmosphere in the spinning room?—It has.

4322. And this you consider injurious to health, to a certain extent?—I do; not solely in consequence of the moisture, but because the atmosphere is loaded much with the dust of the spinning factory; I have had ten cases applying to the dispensary for relief from the spinning factory for one that I have had from the bleach works.

4323. *Mr. Crook.*] What are the dimensions of those hot-water troughs which you have just described?—I think the spinning frames in the spinning factories of my district are mostly double; and at each side of the frame there is this trough that I referred to; it is about nine inches deep; there is about nine inches of water in it; and it extends the whole length of the frame.

4324. What is the breadth of it?—It is narrow at the bottom, and broad at the top; it seems to me to be about nine inches broad at the top.

4325. Are you aware of the number of processes in the spinning factory in which water is used?—No.

4326. Are you aware that it is used in any process except the last?—I think not; not till it comes to the last.

4327. Do you consider that the moist thread will give off dust?—No.

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4328. Where does the dust arise from in those rooms?—It arises from the cans, out of the threads passing into the spinning frames.

4329. How fast does it produce dust; can you see it move as it goes out of the can?—Yes, I can see it move.

4330. Do you think it comes with such a velocity as to cause dust?—I do; I see that the room has dust in it.

John Bell, Esq., Jun., called in; and Examined.

J. Bell, Esq., Jun.

4331. *Mr. Kirk.]* WHAT is your residence?—Belfast.

4332. Are you acquainted with flax-spinning?—I am tolerably well acquainted with it.

4333. What is your trade?—It is rather difficult to describe my occupation; I am connected with the linen trade.

4334. Are not you connected with the trade of bleaching, and getting linens bleached, and disposing of them in this and other markets?—We are, generally.

4335. Are you and your partners largely concerned in the linen and diaper trade?—We are; and we are flax spinners as well.

4336. Can you give the Committee any idea of the manner in which flax is generally spun into yarn in the north of Ireland by your firm, and how the rooms in which it is spun are ventilated?—With regard to the mechanical operation of spinning flax, I am not very competent to speak, because it is some years since I was engaged in that particular branch of our business. But in reference to ventilation, I think my attention was called to the remark of Dr. Kelso, with reference to letting down the windows. Now I suppose that there are not three concerns in the whole of Ireland, and very few in England and Scotland that I do not know, and I must say that I never saw a window yet let down. In a flax mill the ventilation is upon the same principle as in this room, by a pane generally in the centre of the window, which turns on a swivel. But in all the new mills, in nine cases out of ten, the windows are all stationary; I have seen them with a narrow moveable pane at the top of the windows, but I do not think it is any improvement upon the pane in the centre.

4337. Can there be any reason for this peculiar mode of ventilation?—I am not aware of any, except that it facilitates the opening and shutting, and letting down and putting up the windows.

4338. Are you aware that there is hot water used in order to spin flax into yarn?—When it is wet flax spinning, that must be so of course.

4339. Is not that the great bulk of the spinning?—In Ireland I do not think there are more than 2,000 dry spindles altogether.

4340. The great bulk of it is wet spinning?—Yes, in Ireland.

4341. If the air were admitted below, would not it have a tendency to cool the water in the troughs where you introduce the steam to heat?—It would, no doubt.

4342. Is not that the reason why the ventilation is above?—Any damp atmosphere when heated will naturally ascend; consequently that will take it off better than if the ventilation were below.

4343. Do not you lap a considerable quantity of cloth which you get finished?—We do.

4344. Are you not a practical bleacher yourself?—No.

4345. You employ others to bleach the cloths for you?—Yes.

4346. What do you think would be the practical effect of limiting the hours in the lapping rooms?—As far as I can judge of the trade, I do not see how you could limit the hours in the lapping rooms, or make a law that you could not work in the lapping rooms except at certain hours, for this reason, the trade depends so much upon the demand in both the home and the foreign trade at certain times of the year, that it is absolutely necessary, in order to execute the orders at a certain time, that we should work to get the goods off in the time they are required.

4347. Then are the Committee to understand that the lapping room is a warehouse?—It is, no doubt.

4348. Is not the ordinary process in Irish lapping rooms for the proprietor to have the stock finished, and not made up?—Yes, that is the ordinary practice. So far as I am personally concerned (our principal business is in the damask trade), we keep

keep continuously making up as the goods come in from the green ; but a considerable portion of our stock is kept unlapped, and I know that people who are not so much in that trade as we are, keep all their goods unlapped.

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4349. Then the effect of that would be that if they are without orders, they would be without work?—No doubt it would.

4350. Are you obliged to wait in the lapping-rooms somewhat in the same manner as a shopkeeper waits for his customers?—Just so, because the buyers from the different markets will have the goods made up in different ways.

4351. Do you have the goods for one market made up in one way, and for another market in another way?—Yes, that is the case.

4352. Should you think it very hard that the lapping-rooms should come under a restrictive law, and the warehouses be left without a restrictive law?—I do not see any cause for legislation with regard to the lapping-rooms at all, because I think there is no grievance to be redressed ; there is no over-work except there may be very extraordinary occasions.

4353. Is not the tendency in the north of Ireland to shorten the hours of labour both in the employed and the employers?—It is in our own warehouse ; we only open at nine o'clock in the morning, and shut at five in the evening the whole year round ; but it is the case there, as with everything else, that when we have a press of orders we are obliged to work after-hours.

4354. What time do you work to when you come to after-hours?—We never have worked after half-past nine.

4355. But you occasionally work as late as nine or half-past?—Not, perhaps, more than twice a year.

4356. You do it occasionally?—We do it occasionally.

4357. Would it be one of your objections to legislation that these lapping-rooms would become subject to inspection?—I should not like to have a stranger coming into the lapping-room, although he might be a Government officer, who could have no object in taking information from us ; I should not like to have our work open to the inspector at all times whenever he thought proper.

4358. *Chairman.*] You were asked if you could limit the hours in your lapping-rooms, and you replied, that you thought it would be impossible. Supposing you were asked whether you could limit the hours that the women and children are engaged in those lapping-rooms, what would be your answer to that question?—I think I should answer that in the lapping-rooms a great portion of the people employed are women and children ; I do not speak so much about the women, but there are young men that work for particular purposes in the lapping-rooms.

4359. Can you tell us what in your own establishments is the proportion of women and young persons to male adults?—They are half and half.

4360. What other processes do you carry on besides lapping?—Nothing whatever, except the mere operation of lapping and ornamenting goods. It is the lightest work that any person can possibly be engaged in, and it is the mere manipulation of the linen.

4361. You have sometimes worked on to nine or half-past nine at night ; in those cases do you begin at the time you have mentioned, namely, nine in the morning?—We begin at nine in the morning ; they work till five without leaving off, and then they have an hour and a half, and then they work from half-past six till half-past nine if we have extra work.

4362. Have you ever begun before that time?—Never.

4363. Have you ever heard complaints among the women and children engaged in your establishment?—No, I have not, because the occupation is such a healthy one ; it is a mere matter of folding over the cloth, which involves no bodily labour whatever.

4364. *Mr. Crook.*] How many women and children do you employ in lapping?—We have five at work altogether.

4365. And you only work from 9 o'clock to 5?—Yes.

4366. Do you know the limitation of the hours of labour under the Factory Act?—Yes.

4367. Could you describe it to the Committee?—The Factory Act limits the hours of labour to 60 hours a week.

4368. Does it limit the hours of labour in the day?—It is 10 and a half hours a day.

4369. To what class does that apply?—It applies to all women and young people under 18.

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4370. Would a Bill of that kind affect the lapping business of your concern on the days when you work under pressure?—I say that there are occasions when you are obliged to work, but I think they occur about twice in the year; they are the seasons when the trade commences to be brisk.

4371. How long do those seasons last?—It depends altogether on the number of orders we have.

4372. Do they last a week or a month?—A month would probably be the very outside of it.

4373. Do you begin at 9 o'clock in the morning?—Yes.

4374. Under those circumstances you work these women and children to nine at night, allowing them how much for meals?—They go away for an hour and a half.

4375. If this Bill passed, what would be the effect upon those women and children?—As far as we are concerned, if the Bill passed, we should commence work at whatever time the Bill allowed us to do, and work them until we were obliged to quit in the evening; we could get far more work according to this 60 hours' Bill than we now work, and, at the same time, I do not think there is any feeling of any necessity of legislation.

4376. How many women and children do you employ as flax-spinners?—I cannot tell you that.

4377. Have you some women in those works?—A great many; I suppose from 150 to 200.

4378. Are you conversant with the process of spinning?—Tolerably so.

4379. Can you tell the Committee how many of the processes require the thread to pass through hot water?—One, simply, I think.

4380. Do you have the preparation in one room and the spinning in another, or are they mixed together?—The preparation is separate from the spinning.

4381. In that room you do not use hot water?—No.

4382. Are there not more rooms in which there is not hot water than there are in which there is hot water?—No, it is the reverse; because we have only one preparation-room and two spinning-rooms.

4383. Have you been to see any new mills that have windows in which there are divisions?—I said I had seen some of them where there was a small pane at the top which swung; but I never saw any where half of the window was let down, as described by Dr. Kelso.

4384. Have you ever seen any new mills in which one-fourth of the window was suspended in the centre, and remained on a swivel?—I could not say positively; I am prepared to assert that in nine-tenths of the new mills I have seen in the neighbourhood of Belfast within the last two years the centre window has been ventilated by a pane in the centre, as I have described.

William Mackinley, called in; and Examined.

W. Mackinley.

4385. Mr. Kirk.] WHAT is your place of residence?—Lambeg.

4386. What is the name of your occupation?—I am a working bleacher.

4387. What is the nature of your occupation?—To attend to the bleaching.

4388. Do you spread the cloth in the fields?—No; I chiefly attend to the house.

4389. Is your work inside the house?—Yes.

4390. Is your labour continuous on all the occasions when the bleach-works are employed?—I am generally employed for a time so far as my work is concerned.

4391. How many hours do you work?—My time is not limited; I work piecework.

4392. When do you begin to work?—At six o'clock in the morning.

4393. At what time do you generally leave off?—Whenever my work is finished.

4394. Would that be some time in the afternoon, sometimes at six o'clock, and sometimes later?—Exactly so; and if it is before dinner I am at liberty.

4395. Can you go away at three o'clock, or at six o'clock, or at any other time you please?—Yes, without any one asking me any questions.

4396. What time do you take for meals?—An hour for breakfast and an hour for dinner.

4397. Have

4397. Have you signed a petition either for or against the Bill restricting the hours of labour in bleach works?—I signed a petition against the Bill.

4398. Did you read the principal clauses of it?—When it was first stated, as it was in the newspapers, I thought that it would be dangerous to the working classes. I took it into consideration at the time, and I thought that it would be a great injury to the workers.

4399. Do you still think so?—I do.

4400. Can you state your reason for thinking so?—It is a simple reason; it is as much as to say that if I do a little labour I am to receive a little wages.

4401. Is there any complaint against the present system of working in the bleach works?—Not that I know of.

4402. Do you think, that, as you are paid by the piece, the limitation of the hours of labour would be beneficial to you or to your fellow-workers?—I think it would be very injurious to me and to my fellow-workers.

4403. Do you think that your occupation is a healthy one?—I think it is very healthy.

4404. How long have you been employed in this work?—I joined the establishment as a bleacher in 1811.

4405. Have you good health yourself?—I never was ill in my life with the exception of one disease I had.

4406. From your knowledge of bleaching, do you think that the limitation of the hours could be carried out without seriously impeding the several operations through which linens have to go?—I think it could not.

4407. *Chairman.*] Will you tell the Committee what you thought the Bill would do for you and your fellow-workmen?—So far as we are concerned the bleaching system goes on rather by piecework. From the time it is put on till it is bleached, it goes on upon the same system. It goes from the bleaching to the washing mills and kives, and so on upon the same system; it is all piecework. Every squad does their portion of work, and our master or any other master pays them. Therefore, I think that limiting the hours of employment would not allow that liberty if we worked ten hours a day. Daily wages are very low in Ireland; they are only 14*d.* a day. Now, during those ten hours I should like to earn twice 14*d.*, and my master would pay it me with great satisfaction.

4408. Were you under the impression that you would be prevented by the Bill from working more than 10 hours a day?—My impression is, that if I only received 14*d.* for ten hours' work, I should be much diminished in my pay.

4409. Do you tell the Committee that you petitioned against the Bill, because you thought that it would interfere with your hours of labour?—Yes, I do.

4410. Did you think that the Bill was intended to prevent your working more than 10 hours a day?—I do not know how I could answer that question; a very few hours would satisfy me if I thought my master would pay me for them.

4411. You tell us that you petitioned against the Bill, because you thought that it would do you some harm?—Yes.

4412. And that that harm was preventing you from working more than 10 hours a day?—Yes, if it was necessary to work more.

4413. Did you think that the Bill would not allow you to work more than 10 hours a day?—I did.

4414. If you were told that the Bill would not prevent you from working more than 10 hours a day, what would you say about it?—My opinion is, that there should be no interference between my master and me, as long as my master allows me to earn as much money as I can in whatever hours suit me.

4415. Is the Committee to understand that as long as the Bill did not interfere between you and your master, you would not care to petition against it?—No, I would not have cared to petition against it in that case.

4416. You spoke of a squad of working people; are there in your squad any women and children?—There are some boys.

4417. Supposing the Bill prevented them from working more than 10 hours a day, would you wish to petition against the Bill upon that ground?—Upon the average of our times of labour we never do work 10 hours a day; if we do we are paid more for our labour; but that is only occasionally.

4418. Supposing the Bill only interfered with the labour of women and children, would you then object to it?—No; as for that I would not take any part in it; I only speak for myself.

4419. You told us that you objected to the Bill because you thought that it

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was intended to prevent your working more than 10 hours a day?—I say that I object to the Bill, because I think it would lessen our pay.

4420. Why do you think that it would lessen your pay?—I have a portion of work to go through; suppose that yesterday I had a small day's work, and I had done by dinner time, then there was a small day's pay; the following day I have a great deal of work to do, and if my pay was small yesterday I should be able to pull up to-day by working a few hours extra.

4421. If the Bill did not interfere with the labour of men, but only interfered with the labour of women and children, would you still think that it would reduce your pay?—I would say, that as we are working piecework, if we were to go out to work by the day we should get less wages.

4422. Would you be apprehensive that if the Bill passed you would no longer be paid by the piece, but that you would be paid by the day?—That is just what I am afraid of; I do not want to be paid by the day; I could not live by it.

4423. If this Bill did not propose to put daywork in the place of piecework, would you object to it?—Yes; I do not want to have any interference at all. I have been a bleacher for a long while, and from my youth upwards the system of bleaching has gone on chiefly by piecework. The manager would say to me, "Go and do so much work, and I will give you so much pay;" I have gone on upon that same principle throughout my whole course of working, and I should not like to serve 10 hours for 14 *d.*

4424. Are the Committee to understand that you do not wish piecework to be replaced by daily work?—I do not; I wish to continue my present way of gaining money.

4425. Mr. Cook.] Whose employment are you in?—In that of Mr. Richardson, of Glenmore.

4426. What part of the work is it that you do?—I work at part of the machinery, called the "rub-boards."

4427. Can you go on with your work without any women or children being engaged at the same time?—I can. Children would be of no use in my department. They are of no use in any part of the bleach works that I know of, except for gathering pins.

4428. Supposing that the Bill did not interfere with you in any way, would you still be inclined to oppose it?—If it would just let me alone I would let it alone.

4429. Do you think that 10 hours is not too long for a delicate woman to work?—I am not acquainted with a woman's abilities.

4430. Is your wife working in the bleach works?—No; I have a better way of providing for her; I work for her myself.

4431. Have you a daughter?—Yes.

4432. Does she work in the bleach works?—I reared all my family in the bleach-works.

4433. Do you consider that it is good for their health?—I have never heard any complaint from any of them.

4434. Did they ever work more than 10 hours a day?—I do not know that they did; whatever way the work went they just went with it. I have some of my sons working with myself, and some not.

4435. You do not know that they have worked longer than 10 hours a day?—They just do the same as myself. As I have mentioned, when the work is done I go away, if it was done in an hour; and I stay till such time as the work may require.

4436. Do you think that the workpeople would work from six till half-past six in your establishment?—Not as a rule; that is probably the time in the Bill, but I want not to be obliged by the Bill.

4437. It is stated in Mr. Tremenhoe's Report, "We rarely work over hours;" is that correct?—I suspect it is right.

4438. Do you know that there are boys working in the field taking up pegs?—Yes; I have no great knowledge of them; I am not concerned with them.

4439. Have you ever seen boys in the fields?—In all portions of the bleach works I have seen boys.

4440. Would this statement of Mr. Richardson's be correct: "Nearly all the boys are employed in taking up the pegs; we rarely work from half-past six in the fields?"—I cannot answer that; I am not acquainted with it.

4441. Do you not know what times they work in the fields?—I do not; but I have a son who works upon the field; he is a grown man; I cannot tell you of course

course how long they work, but they work as long as they can, for the more they do the more they get for it ; I do not ever attend to the hours.

4442. Mr. Kirk.] Do you prefer piecework to day labour?—I do ; I would much rather have piecework ; by that means I am able to give my master work for his money. As long as he pays me extra money I am willing to do extra work.

4443. Supposing from the fluctuating nature of employment in the bleach-works your master was only able to find employment for one half the day to-day, would not you find it a great restriction that whereas he could give you a day and a half's work to-morrow, you should only be allowed to work ten hours for him?—If I could get any other employment he would not long be my master, in that case.

4444. Does not that form a substantial objection to the limitation of the hours of labour?—It would be of serious consequence to the working classes ; it is a very great thing for a poor working man, who has a healthy boy, if he is a faithful man, to get his child in to the work, for it will increase his own wages, by which he supports his family, and he dresses them gaily and feeds them well, and that fits them for their work.

4445. Is it not a thing that often occurs that persons in your position are anxious to get their sons employed when they come up to be 14 or 15 years of age?—It was my case.

4446. Have you sons in the same employment with yourself?—Yes ; I reared all my children in the bleach-works.

4447. At what age did you seek for employment for your boys?—I do not recollect that ; but so far as my idea goes, I say that in the bleach-works they are put to work that they are fit for. If they are fit for light work they go to what they are fit for, and as they get older they must just seek other things ; unless they come up from their youth they are no bleachers. I heard a witness here saying that people might come from the fields and be made bleachers, I deny that ; it is like any other portion of the trade ; they must learn it as a trade, or else they are no bleachers ; otherwise they may learn one portion of it, but they know nothing about it.

4448. You spoke of squads ; do you mean by that a number of workmen who take a particular thing to do?—Yes, they must perform a certain portion of the work.

4449. Does not that squad include boys as well as men?—Yes, it does in some portions of the work ; it is not a general rule.

4450. If there were a limitation of the hours of labour, would not those boys be obliged to leave off the moment the clock struck six?—Yes, they would.

4451. Do you object to the Bill on that ground?—I do ; because the men must be idle when the boys stop.

Mr. John Henchy, called in ; and Examined.

4452. Mr. Kirk.] WHERE is your place of residence?—Seymour Hill.

4453. By whom are you employed?—Messrs. John and William Charley.

4454. Will you state the nature of your occupation?—I am examiner of white and brown linens, and I have worked in nearly every department of the bleach-works and the lapping rooms.

4455. What are your ordinary hours of labour?—From six in the morning, and sometimes half-past six to six in the evening.

4456. What hours do you go to your meals?—At eight o'clock for breakfast ; I come back at nine ; one o'clock for dinner, and come back at two.

4457. That is two hours?—Yes.

4458. Have you signed a petition against the Bleaching Works Bill?—I have.

4459. Of course you have read the principal clauses of it?—Yes.

4460. Are you still of opinion that legislative interference is unnecessary?—I am.

4461. What are your principal objections to the Bill?—My principal objections are these : I believe that if the Bill becomes law, the employers will be compelled to discharge all under the age of ten, and that would cause them to go elsewhere to seek employment ; and I do not know of any other employment in that neighbourhood so remunerative as bleaching, or the other employments about bleach

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works and lapping rooms, &c.; that is one of my reasons. Another is, that fixed hours in the lapping rooms would be very injurious to employers and employed; for instance, if an order came, as I have seen them come on some occasions, for goods to be immediately made up and shipped off by to-morrow or to-day, perhaps a few minutes after the prescribed hours might enable them to make up the goods and send them off; whereas if you had to quit at eight o'clock, as regards the work done by the boys, the men would have to be idle, because they assist the men, and one could not work without the other.

4462. Does not the man hold the pieces of cloth while the boy ties the string?—Yes.

4463. In fact, the men and boys work together?—Yes, almost invariably; you could not work the men without the boys, and I know very well the workpeople themselves are very much against the Bill, knowing, or at least thinking, that it might cause a separation of families, which would be very heartrending.

4464. Are you aware that there is an anxiety on the part of the workpeople themselves, who are employed in the different works, to have their families employed also?—Yes.

4465. Have you ever known or heard of any person being forced by his employer to come in to work?—Never; it is all the other side of the question; they solicit to get them in.

4466. In other departments of the works besides the lapping rooms, what would be the effect of these fixed hours?—I think it would be injurious to the property to a great extent; for instance, if we were drawing goods out of what is called the dip, and we had only a portion of them drawn out at the time appointed for the people to quit, the other portion would have to remain till the next morning; the consequence would be that the goods would be damaged when taken out again, or if they were drawing them out, and had a portion of them out, if the steep was exposed to the air, as it is in many places, and they had to quit at that time, the action of the air would be likely to damage them. I have known that, in some instances, to occur from accident or negligence on the part of the workmen.

4467. Therefore it is an operation that requires to be finished before you quit it?—Yes, or else serious loss would ensue.

4468. At what age are boys usually employed in Messrs. Charley's works?—They are generally taken in at about 13 or 14 years of age.

4469. What is the state of their education?—It is pretty fair; most of them can read and write.

4470. Is the occupation in which most of those boys are employed in the lapping-rooms within doors a healthy one?—It is very healthy; I was in a lapping-room seven years myself, and I enjoyed perfect health, and all the others with me during that time, because we could go in and out whenever we liked; we generally went out if we chose; we were not closely looked after.

4471. Do you know what the young boys in Messrs. Charley's bleach-works are occupied in?—The principal portion of the boys are occupied in what is called fieldwork.

4472. What are they doing in the field?—Lifting and spreading the linens, which is a very healthy occupation, especially at this season of the year.

4473. Could they begin at six o'clock in the winter?—No; they could come at six o'clock in the winter.

4474. Could they work till six o'clock in the winter evenings?—No, they could not.

4475. Would there not be nearly one-fourth of the year when they could not work from six to six?—Yes; they begin then at eight o'clock in the morning, and leave at four.

4476. Are not the boys paid by the piece?—Yes.

4477. And they are of course subject to fluctuations as to the quantity of time they work daily?—Yes, owing to circumstances.

4478. One day they work more, and another less?—Yes.

4479. Do the Messrs. Charley employ any boys at their beetling engines?—I am almost certain that they have only one under 18 years of age.

4480. Do they turn their beetling frame, that is the roller upon which the cloth is fixed, by hand or by machinery?—They turn it by machinery mostly; before the matter came to be talked about it was done by boys; but they got belts put up, which caused them to dispense with the boys.

4481. In

4481. In one instance they have displaced the labour of those boys by machinery?—Yes.

4482. Will they not go on to displace the labour of the boys by machinery?—I believe there would be a tendency to it, for necessity is called the mother of invention, and there would be a necessity for their doing so.

4483. Do you know any cause of complaint under the present system of working the bleach works?—I know of none.

4484. Would a limitation of the hours prove in any way prejudicial or useful to the workers?—I believe it would not.

4485. Do you think that the limited hours proposed would enable the workmen to earn more or less than they now do?—I think they would earn less.

4486. From your knowledge of bleaching, do you think the limited hours could be carried out without seriously impeding the operations?—I believe it could not be carried out without seriously impeding the operations to a very great extent.

4487. I think that your occupation is to look over the brown cloths as they are received from the factors or weavers?—It is.

4488. That is your present occupation?—That is my present occupation; I have followed almost every occupation in the bleach works.

4489. How do you first begin?—I began in the lowest occupation in the bleach works, namely, gathering pins.

4490. Had your father been employed there?—Yes, my father has for 34 years been employed by Messrs. Charley, and is in their employ at the present time.

4491. Is he well?—He is very well, and healthy, and active, and he is about as severe a job as there is in hand.

4492. Are the people generally speaking satisfied with the present state of things?—They are all very well satisfied, that is the general feeling existing among the employed.

4493. Would 10 minutes or half an hour beyond the regular hours be very necessary in the lapping rooms where boys are employed?—It certainly would in many cases be very useful; for instance, in the lapping room, if there is a box of goods that had been ornamented to-day, and were ready for packing, and the men had to start off with it at a certain hour to the boat to be shipped, and if 10 minutes after the hour mentioned in the Bill would complete the job, but it could not be completed without the 10 minutes, that box could not be shipped, and the next day the time of shipment would be passed, which would be a serious annoyance to the parties concerned, to the parties who ordered the goods, and the parties who sent them away; I think it would be the same annoyance as it would be to any other merchant, if he were obliged to shut his door at a certain hour.

4494. Does an Irish lapping room go on a very different process from the warehouse?—I can see no difference.

4495. Have you had any conversation with Messrs. Charley's workmen about the effect of the Bill?—I have.

4496. Did you explain to them how the Act would operate as regards the women and children?—I did.

4497. Did the parents think better of it then?—They thought no better of it; I have explained it, as far as I could, to every individual I came in contact with.

4498. Mr. Crook.] Did you say that you are in the employ of Messrs. Charley?—Yes.

4499. How long have you been in work there?—Eighteen years.

4500. Will this statement in Mr. Tremenheere's report be correct, that they do not employ any women in their works?—There are no women employed in the works, except in what is called the brown rooms, adjoining the lapping department; but I believe that at the time the statement was given it was done by Mr. Edward Charley, and he thought that the Bill merely applied to bleach works; his brother, the principal, was not at home, and I think a mistake must have occurred; we have four women employed in working the brown linens.

4501. Do you think that statement is incorrect?—Yes, I do.

4502. Mr. Charley says that you have only a few boys working at your works, is that correct now?—No.

4703. How many boys are there?—We have about 16 boys, but three above 18, although we call them boys; there are six of them in the lapping rooms, and 10 in the bleach works.

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4504. Is this statement correct: "They have generally done their work by four o'clock"?—This was quite correct.

4505. If this Bill is sanctioned, to what extent will it affect your works?—If we require to work a few minutes after six o'clock, it would be a very serious annoyance to the establishment if it could not be done.

4506. What work would it stop?—It would not stop the people so much as it would injure the interests of the employers; the people are well disposed to serve them by working a few minutes over time, although it does not often occur; and now in the lapping rooms I know that if they work a few minutes after the hour; for instance, if it was one o'clock when they have to quit, and they work to two or half-past two, they get the remainder of the day to amuse themselves; so that they would rather have things in their present state than have any alteration.

4507. You were asked with regard to the custom of the employment of boys in the fields in the winter time; do you suppose that the Bill would compel them to be employed to six o'clock in the winter?—No, I do not suppose it would compel them.

4508. Would it have any effect upon the employment of boys in winter?—I think they would be discharged in order to steer free of the inspection.

4509. You say they cannot work in winter at six o'clock?—Not in the field.

4510. In what way does the Bill affect the boys?—It would not affect them in the winter time, but there are other seasons besides the winter.

4511. Would this Bill make them begin to work at six?—I do not think it could make them begin at six in winter, but it would in the summer time.

4512. As regards the winter, do you admit that this Bill would not affect the working people out of doors at six o'clock in the morning?—Yes, I do.

4513. You said it would affect them in the summer time; in what way would it affect them in the summer time?—They would have to begin at six in the morning in the summer time, and work till six in the evening.

4514. Do you understand the Factory Act as compelling the people to work?—No; but I understand that if it were the law, the employers, in order to keep themselves safe, would compel them to work, if they employed them in their service. If they were restricted they would have to get as much as they could out of the workmen.

4515. Do you mean to give the Committee to understand that the masters would be compelled to find work, whether there was work or not?—No.

4516. How would this Act affect the work in your place in the summer?—As I said already, I believe they would have to commence work at six in the morning, at least the employers would expect them to do so; whereas, at the present time, sometimes they are left to their own free will, almost according to the state of the business; but I take it upon the whole as being more favourable to the employed than the employer; they have more time given to them for amusements, if they work over hours, and they highly appreciate and value it, they wish always to have it.

4517. Do you think the Bill would affect the hours of labour in the summer?—I think it would, because they would have to quit at a certain time for dinner, according to the Act; whereas at the present time they can work if they choose at the dinner hour, and get away to other business they have at home, and that is a thing I know they would not like.

4518. Does it strike you that it would affect them in any other way?—In many other ways.

4519. Are there any women or boys required to draw the goods out of the steep?—There are men required.

4520. But not women or boys?—Occasionally there are boys.

4521. Is this piecework?—Yes.

4522. Do boys do their work by the piece?—Yes.

4523. Of your knowledge, have you known a boy under 18 years of age to undertake this process?—Yes, I have.

4524. Are you aware that among the factories where labour is regulated by law, the wages of the operatives have risen invariably?—I do not know much about spinning factories.

4525. Have you ever been in a factory?—I never was in a factory but once in my life, and I was glad to get out of it.

4526. Mr. Kirk.] Is not there one circumstance connected with the employ-
ment

ment of boys, which should be mentioned; that they desire sometimes to begin early in the morning, and leave early in the afternoon, in order that they may go about some occupation of their own, either business or pleasure?—Yes; that is the case almost daily.

4527. Do not they dislike the restrictions of the factory law, and desire to have freedom?—Yes; they like freedom.

4528. Is not it true that the employed are quite upon a par with the employers in the way of independence?—They are, indeed. The balance is rather in favour of the employed.

4529. Is not the feeling, that the employed are quite as independent as the employers a help to them?—It is; in fact, they dare not tyrannise over them.

4530. Mr. *Crook*.] How would the Factory Act interfere with regard to holidays. Is it your impression that it would prevent their having holidays?—I believe it would prevent them from having half holidays.

4531. How will it?—I believe the Bill orders that they shall begin at six in the morning, and work till six at night; at least, it allows them liberty to do so. According to the present state of things, if boys choose, in the summer season, they can begin before six in the morning, and can work the breakfast hour and the dinner hour, and be done at half-past three o'clock. If the Factory Act was law I believe they could not do that; that is my impression, that they would miss that time which they get; they now get much time to themselves by working overtime.

4532. Mr. *Kirk*.] Do not you know that these young persons do this for a very proper purpose, namely, to work at their gardens, or at their farms, or anything of that kind?—Yes, they do that in some cases.

4533. In the spring season, is not it ordinarily the course for young persons to begin early and work hard to get the day's work over, for the purpose of going home to assist their parents in the garden or the farm?—Yes, I have known that to be the case.

4534. Mr. *Crook*.] Do you think those things so important as to stand in the way of the limitation of the hours in which women may be employed in stoves?—I do not know much about the stoves; I never was in a stove but once. There is not a stove in our establishment.

4535. Have you seen much of the employment of women in bleach works?—Not a great deal; there are no women employed in our bleach works.

4536. Though you have been 18 years in that bleach work, you do not know much about the employment of women?—Not in bleach works; I never was in any establishment but this one.

4537. Mr. *Kirk*.] Would the fact of women being cruelly treated in the cotton bleach works of England, be a reason why the law should extend to linen bleach works?—There is no cruel treatment of women in the linen bleach works.

4538. Do you believe that they are always kindly treated?—I think so.

4539. And that there is no such grasping after wealth in Ireland as there is in this country?—I do not know what there is in this country; I know that there is no grasping after wealth in our country, but as to this country I cannot say; I never was in England before in my life; I think a law may be very applicable in England that is not applicable to us.

4540. Mr. *Crook*.] Do you think it is kind treatment for the women in Ireland, to keep them at a hot stove 14 or 16 hours a day?—I can only say that I know some of the women, and I never heard them complain.

Mr. J. Henchy.

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Veneris, 3^o die Julii, 1857.

MEMBERS PRESENT.

Mr. Baxter.
Mr. Clark.
Mr. Crook.
Mr. Dalgleis.
Mr. Davison.

Mr. Kirk.
Lord John Manners.
Mr. Massey.
Mr. Packe.
Mr. Turner.

LORD JOHN MANNERS, IN THE CHAIR.

William Kirk, Esq., a Member of the House, Examined.

*W. Kirk, Esq.,
M. P.*

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4541. Mr. Davison.] ARE you Member for the Borough of Newry?—I am.

4542. What is your occupation in life?—I am a linen merchant, bleacher, dyer and finisher, the business being now principally carried on by my sons; I am also partner with others of my sons as flax spinners and manufacturers, both by power and hand.

4543. You have, I presume, an intimate acquaintance with the processes of bleaching and beetling?—If I live until the 5th of the present month it will be 50 years since I first went to it; I went on the 5th of July 1807 as an apprentice to my maternal uncles.

4544. Were they also extensive bleachers?—They were.

4545. Will you have the kindness to state the number of men that are employed in your bleaching works?—In the bleaching works, taken, as such, 25 men and five boys.

4546. In your dyeing works?—Sixteen men and seven boys.

4547. Your lapping rooms?—Forty men and 14 boys; in my beetling mills 159 men and 55 boys; this, of course, does not include any but those that are specially engaged; we have a number of mechanics and labourers and other servants about the place.

4548. Making a total of how many men and boys?—Two hundred and forty men and 81 boys positively engaged in those works; I should add here that there are three women, but they are simply engaged in marking ends and stitching; marking with Turkey red cotton the marks on the cloth.

4549. Will you state the general working hours in your establishment, including winter and summer?—The persons employed in our bleaching and dyeing works in the winter season, that is from the middle of October till about the first or second week of February, commence at daylight and stop when the light goes, having one hour for breakfast, and 10 or 15 minutes for eating a piece and having a smoke about two o'clock. There is a lodge or place provided for them, where they go and sit down, where there is a fire, and have a smoke. In the summer we commence at half-past five in the morning, and work steadily till half-past six at night, having an hour for breakfast, and an hour for dinner, and have done that all along; but, on the whole of the labour we do not work 60 hours a week the year round.

4550. This alludes to your regular hours of work?—Yes.

4551. Are you subject to interruptions in this work?—Yes, to great interruptions; because the works I now speak of are dependent, in a great measure, on the weather; I am speaking now of bleaching-works and dyeing-works; then, with regard to the lapping-rooms, we commence there at six, and work from six to six in summer, with an hour for breakfast and an hour for dinner, and in the winter we commence at seven and work till eight, having two and a half hours, stopping at half-past four, and resuming at six. In the lapping-rooms, however, we occasionally, but as seldom as possible, work overtime; if we have an order in the morning, and our people do not begin, as they frequently do not begin until nine o'clock, because we have not employment, we then go on until the order is completed. We are merchants as well as manufacturers and bleachers. The goods are piled up in large presses in the various rooms ready for being made up; the orders

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orders come, we take and make them up to order: it may be that it is an export order, and in that case that must be made up 36 inches to the yard, for a home order it is 37 inches; if going for exportation they must be made up in a particular form, ornamented with a peculiar paper and stamps, with a particular seal; all this must be done, and it must be got ready that night, to be sent forward next morning to catch the steam-boat. Generally speaking, we are obliged to do this; but I should say that in no case, at least for many years, are we longer than seven or half-past seven o'clock, and that not frequently; still we feel it would be a very great mar if we are obliged to quit precisely at six. On Saturdays we generally stop about four, from half-past three to five, as the case may be. Then, with regard to the beetling-mills, we have two sets of men and boys; these men and boys work alternately day and night; that is, they work a month by day and a month at night; the ordinary hours of commencing work in the summer, when the men come at the ordinary time the others do, is about half-past five, or thereabouts; they have nothing to do until seven, because of this beetling-engine, a model of which I have brought, which will illustrate more fully than any description that I can give. This beam is supposed to be in work; it is turned by this machinery.—[A model was produced, to which the Witness referred.]

4552. The beetling process is affected by mechanical arrangements for lifting the beetles off these beams, and then they fall by their own weight?—Yes.

4553. They fall upon the linen which is laid upon these rollers, do they not?—Yes; the roller then, when it is in work, is thrown into a class of machinery called "traverses," which gives them a rotary motion, and a lateral motion, so that the beetle never falls twice upon the same place; according to the nature of the finish we require to give, we give the cloth half an hour, an hour, two hours, or three hours beetling before it is taken off, and the rule and arrangement is, that during the day the shorter quantity of beetling shall be given, and during the night that the longer quantity of beetling shall be given. The labour of the men consists simply in stripping off the cloth; for that purpose the engine is provided with two beams; supposing we want to work it by men the beam is thrown in till the cloth is sufficiently worked; then that beam is thrown out, the other thrown in, and the machinery is turned on and works away; while it is working away, the man strips down the cloth from the beam on to an apron board; he is sitting on a form raised sufficiently high to allow his knees to be under this apron board; it is 22 inches up, sufficient to enable him to sit as easily as I can sit upon a chair; he turns the cloth end for end, and arranges it; if there is no machinery to turn the beam, a boy has to turn it by hand. Some years ago I thought it would be an important improvement, and some saving to me, to put in that simple belt which you see, and I put it in as you see it, and we have a rod that runs across in front of the man, who has no difficulty whatever; he catches this rod, and it throws out a clutch, which is not shown upon this model; he can stop it and work it himself by the aid of machinery without a boy; but I found my workpeople objected to it most seriously. A man would come to me, and say, "My son, Jem or Tom, is 14 years of age, and able to work as well as me; I cannot do without his labour; I have no chance without sending him to the farm, and he would have very small wages there, scarcely as much as would clothe him beyond his food." I found there was very great objection to it; that although I had a large quantity of these beetling engines changed, no less than 48 of them, I stopped in consequence of the dissatisfaction which arose amongst my workmen.

4554. In order to give these people employment?—Yes, and besides that, I find that the lads going in at 14, were quite able to do our work, and became better workmen in consequence of being taught early.

4555. At what age do you take these boys into your establishment?—We never take any boys into our bleaching or dyeing or beetling works under 14, unless we are deceived about the age, and I often judge of that myself.

4556. Are the different processes of manufacture in your and other establishments dependent on previous stages?—Yes.

4557. That is, if the work in the previous stages be not in a forward state, it retards the work in the next stage?—Quite so, and we are retarded occasionally in consequence of being unable to get the process forward, therefore our labour is not so continuous as we would desire to have it.

4558. What effect would it have on the linen trade if you were obliged to stop a given hour, without going on for half an hour or an hour, as the case may be, in

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these different works?—I consider that it would have the effect of retarding every thing very much; suppose, for instance, that a frost took place in the morning or during the night, and we could not lift cloth as is commonly the case, especially in the hilly districts in which I live; and my works are situated 500 feet above the level of the sea, therefore we are more subject to frost than those who live in the neighbourhood of Belfast, which is more level; we cannot lift the cloth in a frost; consequently, for an hour or more, our men are sometimes sitting idle. If we were obliged to stop at a fixed hour, and all our boys were to be turned off, the necessary consequence would be, that the pot would be left unfilled, and there would be danger in the bleaching process, and the operations of the day would be retarded in consequence of that. The same would be the case at the dinner hour, and again if we had a parcel of cloth to wash at night, or to bring out of a kieve at night, and it was not done at the exact moment, we must either lose half or three quarters of an hour, or run the risk of injury or retardment.

4559. Then in those works the labour cannot necessarily be continuous?—It cannot be, because it is dependent upon that circumstance; the labour in the beetling works is of a continuous character.

4560. Can you tell about how many hours of continuous labour there are in these other portions of the work, in the course of the day?—We are by no means satisfied with the state of things at present, and we have wished very much to alter it, both to our own advantage and to that of our workpeople; but the agitation about this Bill has been a very serious cause of injury. We employ by the day, and we were very anxious to have changed that to employment by the piece, as that would give the people better wages, and would enable us to do more work with the same hands; but, finding the agitation going on about this Bill, I thought it was not worth while to change, although I had made arrangements for changing about three years ago. Suppose, for instance, that a man gets a task, and he wants to go and plant some vegetables in his garden, or some potatoes in his field, and he comes and asks for a task, that is, to get a day's work, laid out as a task to him; he finishes the task at about 11 or 12 o'clock, and goes away to do what he wants; and I think he would earn a great deal more wages if his work was done by task.

4561. How many continuous hours of labour are there out of the 12?—Eleven hours, from half-past five till half-past six in the summer season; that is, 13 hours, with two hours off for meals; so that there is 11 hours nominal work in the summer, and on the average about eight in the winter.

4562. And even that is subject to considerable interruption?—Of course it is.

4563. In the beetling department, how many hours of continuous labour will there be during the night or day?—I think the continuous labour during the day, at the beetling engine, never exceeds eight hours, and during the night it never exceeds six, or six-and-a-half at the outside.

4564. And you state that you have separate hands employed during the night?—Yes, we have two sets of men who work alternately every month, or two months, or three months, which ever they please; we leave that to their own regulation.

4565. You have spoken of the agitation about this Bill, do I understand you that that agitation arose on the part of your own workpeople?—No, certainly not; it arose in consequence of John Waring, the man who was examined first here; I do not know whether any person accompanied him or not, but he came over and issued a number of placards, calling upon a number of my people to agitate the question.

4566. Previous to that, you had no complaints?—No, no complaints except that I was complaining that they did not do enough work, and that I wanted to change them to piece-work; there had been no arrangement entered into, it was of my own free will.

4567. During the time that you have carried on business before this agitation to which you have alluded, did you hear of any complaints upon that subject from the workpeople?—Yes; we had a species of turn-out for a day or two in the year, when the currency was changed.

4568. But that was a complaint upon other grounds?—Yes, the people wanted to get British currency instead of Irish, and we gave it to them.

4569. I was asking with respect to complaints about over work, had you any complaints about that?—No; the only time was that when the currency was changed;

changed; they asked to get their wages raised to British currency, and we raised it.

4570. I think you have stated the average number of hours per week?—Yes.

4571. They did not exceed, as I understand you, 60 hours?—I am satisfied they do not work 60 hours a week the year round, even including odd times; we do work over-time, but it is very rare.

4572. Did you cast your eye over previous Bills which were introduced for the regulation of the trade?—Yes, I did.

4573. Will you state your opinion in reference to the application of those Bills to the linen business generally?—I think that the 14th clause of the last Bill is peculiarly offensive, and I think that no Member of the Committee can read that clause without considering it so.

4574. Have you a copy of it?—I have a copy before me.

4575. Will you just refer to that clause?—It is a clause headed "Obstructing Inspectors, an Offence;" and is as follows: "All persons wilfully obstructing the inspectors or sub-inspectors in exercising any of the said powers shall be deemed guilty of an offence against this Act, and shall be subject, in each case, respectively, to the penalties imposed by the said 'Print Works Act (1843)' for like obstructions to the inspectors or sub-inspectors in the execution of the powers given by that Act; and the owner of any bleaching work in which an inspector or sub-inspector shall be obstructed by any attempt to prevent him from making a full and complete examination of all parts of the bleaching works, and of every person employed therein, shall be liable to the penalty provided by the said Act in the case of like obstruction in print-works." Now I conceive that gives the inspector power to walk into any part of my works and to examine even into the departments of the office and look into my private affairs, and I consider it exceedingly objectionable; I dislike inspection altogether, but I consider that the most objectionable clause I ever saw in an Act of Parliament.

4576. You object also, I understand you, to inspection on another ground, by reason of each department of your trade being dependent upon a previous one, and the impossibility of stopping at a particular hour?—It is not impossible to stop, I do not mean to say that, but I say that it would be exceedingly disadvantageous to stop.

4577. You mean it would be injurious to the trade?—Yes, besides I feel that there is no necessity for it, because the tendency with us is to shorten hours. We never have had long hours, properly so called, but the tendency is to short hours; and my feeling is, that so far from the workpeople being at our mercy, we are at theirs; and I believe the next Act of Parliament that will be passed will be for the protection of the masters, because there is no tyranny like the tyranny of the mob, and that is what we are coming to.

4578. Have you any stoves?—I have.

4579. How many?—I have two steam stoves, one hot air stove, and a drying machine heated by steam.

4580. What class of persons work in these stoves?—Adult males.

4581. What is the temperature of your stoves?—The temperature of the steam stoves which are for airing cloth upon is about, 80°; 80° is our average, or 75°, never, I think, exceeding 85°.

4582. Is there any current of fresh air introduced into these stoves?—Yes, we could not dry if there was not; a current of fresh air is introduced below; it passes up through the stove, the floors are open, and it passes up through ventilators to the top, to allow the damp and hot air to pass out.

4583. Are those stoves used in summer and winter?—No, the steam stoves are not used during the summer at all, only for three or four months in the winter season, or during very damp weather.

4584. You would prefer the other process independent of the stoves?—Yes, I use the air to dry always when we can do so; stoves are simply matters of necessity; the hot air stove is used exclusively for drying goods that are dyed.

4585. You have paid particular attention to the health of your people, I believe?—I have.

4586. What is their general appearance, as compared with other persons engaged in different pursuits in the country about you?—I believe there are not

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more healthy persons than those employed by us, and the testimony given by Dr. Leeper I know to be perfectly true.

4587. Pray is any artificial heat introduced into the beetling department?—No. The heat is about 60; there is a large beetling-room, with probably 12, 14 or 16 of these beetling engines, which are going at the rate of 60 drops a minute; the friction raises the temperature to about 60, and that is the same throughout the year. In very warm weather, such as we have had, they open the windows, in order not to allow it to go above that, because if they did, it would dry the ends of the cloth.

4588. Is there any heated air introduced into your lapping-rooms?—No; we have stoves to bring up the temperature to a moderate heat.

4589. What heat?—We keep it at about 55 in the winter, and, of course, subject to the heat of the air in summer, very much against our will, because it injures the cloths to keep them at a high temperature.

4590. Are these boys that are brought to your establishment at school before they come to you?—Yes; we would admit no boys into the lapping-room who are not able to read, write, and cast accounts; they must be able to do that; and the others, generally speaking, are able to read; it is a very rare case that they are not able to read; some read freely, others read imperfectly, but all are able to read more or less; and they do read, because they have books very often, and, in the intervals of labour, I see the boys in the beetling-room with books in their hands.

4591. Is it at the instance of the parents that these boys are admitted?—Yes; we have always numerous applications upon our list; in fact, we are forced to take more boys than we wish; there is a constant pressure upon us by the parents.

4592. Is the remuneration to the hands in your establishment, and in the other establishments that you are acquainted with, better than that of ordinary agricultural labourers?—At the particular seasons of spring and of harvest, the people around give higher wages; but we were always in the habit of giving the highest wages of any of the parties around us, and, as I have already explained, it is not my fault that the wages are not much higher.

4593. Have you any knowledge of the bleaching operations on the continent?—I have a good deal; I have felt it my duty, as I found my sons were growing up around me, and as I could spare time to go to see what was doing in other countries, to go and make inquiries; but what roused me to that, was the fact that I had been doing a considerable linen business in France with one of the first houses there, and I was the person who supplied the statistics, I believe, to the Committee which sat in 1841, prior to the change of tariff with France; I supplied at least a large portion of the statistics of the linen trade at that time through one of the honourable Members of the Committee. This led me to go in 1844 to the first French Exhibition, which was brought about by Louis Philippe, as the Committee are aware.

4594. Did you institute any comparison whilst at the Exhibition relative to the manufacture of linen in France, or upon the continent, and in Ireland?—I did, carefully.

4595. Will you state to the Committee what the result of that comparison in 1844 was?—The result of the comparison at that time was, that they were a vast distance behind us, both in manufacture, bleach-colour and finish.

4596. Did you return again to the French Exhibition in 1855?—I did; but in the meantime I had been making comparisons besides, the circumstances of which I can detail if necessary, and which led me to think that the Prussians were making great progress; I therefore went to the Berlin Exhibition in 1849, having previously been to the Brussels Exhibition, and carefully examined and studied the stages of progress which they were making. Then again I was still more interested in the Great Exhibition of 1851; I was making careful and clear notes of the progress which each of those nations were making; and in 1855 I was at the French Exhibition; I spent many days in the linen department there.

4597. Did you find any difference upon the comparison which you made in 1855 with the comparison which you made in 1844?—I could not have believed it possible that any nation could make such progress as the French, and indeed the continental nations generally, had made in the course of the time that elapsed.

4598. Are you aware of the introduction of Irish machinery into the continent?—

inent?—Yes; when I was over, in 1849, I went to the King of Prussia's bleaching works at Erdmannsdorf, and I saw a set of traverses there for working beetling engines; and I knew those traverses to be of the same model as Messrs. Richardson's, of Glenmore. I made inquiry, and I found that to be the case; and in a short time a person jumped from between the beetling engines; I thought he would have embraced me; it seems he had left my place about ten years before, although he was earning very good wages there; and that he then went to the King of Prussia's spinning mill; and in going through the establishment, I saw a number of Belfast girls; I knew they were Irish by their accent, and I asked them where they came from, and they told me from Belfast.

4599. So that not only is the machinery imported into Prussia and France, but also the very persons who worked the machinery in Ireland?—Yes; one of the largest Prussian manufacturers, I believe, in existence in Prussian Silesia, is the house of Messrs. Kramsta & Co., with whom I am very well acquainted. One of that firm was over with me for six or eight months, and he knew the process of bleaching linen as well as I do: they are very large bleachers; and so far from the King of Prussia, who is himself a bleacher and spinner, restricting them in their hours of labour, or anything of that kind, he conferred some order, I forget the name of it now, but one of the highest orders of merit in Prussia that can be given to a civilian, upon old Mr. Kramsta, who is now dead.

4600. For what did he get that order?—In consequence of the extent to which he had made improvements in bleaching machinery, and in consequence of the extent to which he was carrying on spinning and manufactures. I saw a large quantity of cloth woven by the poorer class of people living in the neighbouring country of Bohemia. There is a valley, with a beautiful stream of pure water, which flows from the base of the mountains down to Erdmannsdorf. There was a great number of bleaching places upon that water, and I saw their process. I saw how rude and simple that process was, compared with the processes in Messrs. Kramsta's works, nearer Breslau.

4601. Then the introduction of this machinery, and the introduction of hands accustomed to work it, must have a very serious effect, added to the low price of labour in that country, upon the trade both in Scotland and in Ireland, must it not?—Decidedly. I should not be at all surprised if before seven years a very large quantity of linen may be sent into England from those countries, now we have free trade, because the wages for labour are very low, while the intelligence of the people employed there is very extraordinary. I found a man working at Mr. Kramsta's works dressing up cloth; I asked him the use of the machinery near to which he was engaged; he at once explained it to me, and said, "Sir, I will give you a drawing of it," and he took out his pencil, and made me a drawing of it, at which I was perfectly surprised. When we had passed away from him, I asked young Mr. Kramsta what wages he gave this man; I calculated the amount of it in Prussian money, and found that he was getting about 9s. a week, and that man had a decidedly superior education to myself. I never saw a man who could more readily make a draft, or make calculations more readily. I have no doubt that in Prussia they find better education for their workpeople; whether it is compulsory or not, I really do not pretend to know; but I certainly found an extraordinary degree of intelligence amongst the people, especially amongst the workmen.

4602. Do you happen to know that premiums are given by the Prussian Government for the erection of machinery?—I do not mean to say that I know it personally; but I have been told by parties that they have got a premium for the erection of machinery for spinning.

4603. You stated, I think, that there was no restriction of the hours of labour in Prussia?—None whatever. I do not know what the amount of wages is now; but when I was there in 1849, I went minutely into that, and into their social condition generally, as far as I had the opportunity; and as to their farming and manufacturing population, the wages for labour were, I think, upon an average, about 7d. a day of our money, with unrestricted time; and I found that the wages of their farm servants was 3l. a year for an active man, with food and lodgings.

4604. Then, independent altogether of the question of the work of women and of children, is it your opinion that the imposition of a law restricting you, as is now proposed, would have an injurious effect upon the trade of Ireland and Scotland?—Decidedly, I think so. I think, if I mistake not, it will be found that trade will be much better for all parties if it be allowed to settle itself. I have

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been all my life a free trader, and I believe that demand and supply will very soon balance each other, and that nothing can be more injurious in a State than to interfere. I am a firm convert to the wisdom of Sir Robert Peel; I believe that anything like restriction in trade is neither more nor less than an evil.

4605. Mr. *Massey*.] You say, I think, that you employ only three women in your works?—That is all.

4606. And you employ no boys under the age of 14 years?—No.

4607. Have you any boys at so early an age as that?—They come to us at about 14; I do not exactly take their ages.

4608. How many boys altogether have you?—Eighty-one; that is including the lapping rooms.

4609. Have you visited many bleaching works in Prussia and other places?—I visited all the bleach-works in the district, and several others on the river from Erdmannsdorf upwards.

4610. Do you consider, upon the whole, that they are in a condition successfully to compete with similar establishments in Scotland and Ireland?—If the thing goes on for the next 15 years as it has gone on for the last eight or ten, unquestionably they will.

4611. Do I understand you to say that a measure limiting the hours of labour in the English works would throw the balance in favour of the foreign establishments?—I think it has a tendency so to do, because I believe there is no necessity whatever for the limitation of the hours as far as Ireland is concerned; and I know the working of the thing in my own country pretty well.

4612. You have spoken of stove rooms in which the temperature is about 85?—From 80 to 85.

4613. Are boys employed in that room?—No, adult males, and they are only in it for a short time. The cloth is hung up, and the men leave it, and go back at the end of two or three hours, and take it down again.

4614. You say that no boys under the age of 14, and no women are employed in your works; is that the case with other similar establishments in Ireland?—I know of no place where women are employed, except where they are cambric handkerchiefs finished, or very light goods.

4615. Then when you are speaking of your own establishment, you are speaking for all similar establishments in Ireland?—All similar establishments. There are about 32 mills on our own river; I am speaking of those establishments that I know, and a great number of others; I suppose I could point out 12 or 15 more.

4616. You make that statement from your own personal knowledge?—Yes.

4617. *Chairman*.] I think your observations are confined to the linen bleaching establishments in France and Prussia, are they not?—Yes; I think that the cotton bleaching in the neighbourhood I was through, seems to me to be conducted in a somewhat similar manner to those in the neighbourhood of Manchester; that is, the ends of the pieces are sewed together, and they are passed through rollers and dropped into the boiler just in the same manner as they are in the neighbourhood of Manchester; in fact, I think they have imitated the Manchester or Bolton people.

4618. And did you inquire at all into the regulations of the cotton spinning mills in Prussia?—No, I did not attend to the cotton spinning.

4619. Therefore you do not know whether the hours of labour in the spinning mills in Prussia are restricted by law or not?—In a large spinning mill that I was in they worked 12 hours.

4620. Was that flax or cotton?—Flax; a very large spinning mill, I think it was, of 15,000 spindles, and they were preparing to build more.

4621. I think you gave us the heat in the steam stoves, but I am not sure whether you did give us the heat in the hot-air stoves?—I was not asked that question.

4622. Perhaps you will be good enough to mention it now?—I should say that the heat in the hot-air stoves was about 100; but, I was going to observe, I did not follow the thing out; that that is used for drying in the mordants: you are no doubt aware that linen will receive no colour except blue without a mordant; that is a chemical substance, generally speaking a neutral salt, formed by the dissolution of metal by an acid. This neutral salt is spread over the cloth, which has an affinity at once for the cloth and for the dye; and, in order to make that colour fast, it is necessary to spread this over the surface of the cloth, and dry it in the stove. The men go in and leave this cloth hanging till the morning;

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they then change it, and leave it all day, and go back in the afternoon, or whatever time it was dry; then they take it down, and fill it again, and then it is left all night; there is no continuous labour in the stoves.

4623. In that stove I think you stated that only adult males were employed?—No; nobody but adult males could do it, because the cloth is hung upon rollers high up, and the men are raised up for the purpose of filling it.

4624. *Mr. Davison.*] And they only go in at stated intervals?—They go in in the morning, and pull off the cloth which has been dried in the night, and re-fill it, and then go in in the afternoon again, and remove it and re-fill it, and leave it for the night.

4625. They are at other work during the interval, are they not?—Yes, they are.

4626. *Mr. Turner.*] I think you said the workpeople in your works objected to the boys being taken away, and machinery substituted for their attending to the beetles; they did not like the idea?—I do not think that the boys were taken away; but when we altered 48 of our beetling engines, they, the boys who were on the list of applicants for employment, were not taken on so rapidly, and then the people began to grumble and complain, and said it was very hard; and some of them even talked of leaving if I did not employ them.

4627. Could those boys have been employed in farm-labour, or upon land?—Yes.

4628. Then that was not considered so good as your labour?—Oh, no; because the way in which the farmers employ them with us is to feed them and give them very small wages. I suppose a boy would not get more than 3*l.* in the half year, or it might be only 50*s.*

4629. Then you infer that your labour was preferred?—Yes.

4630. You require them, at the age of 14, to come to you educated to a certain extent?—You must be aware, from what I said in the House the other night, that I conceive that national education in Ireland, while it has diffused itself over a larger surface, has lowered its quality.

4631. But they can read and write and cypher?—Those that come to the lapping-room must be able to read, write, and cypher; but those that come to the other operations are simply taught to read; some can write, but not many.

4632. Do the landowners, the agriculturists, and farmers, require any standard of education for the boys whom they employ?—I think not at all; they take them in any kind of way; the boys go very often to herd in the summer season, and then, whatever education they get, they get in the winter.

4633. Then there is not the same care exercised by the farmers and agriculturists as to the education of the boys, as there is in your case?—That is scarcely a fair question to ask me; I believe we are as good as our neighbours; I should not like to say we were better.

4634. You say that damage would accrue to the goods in its processes, if you were compelled to stop at six o'clock?—That would extend to the breakfast hour; we must have a fixed breakfast hour and a fixed dinner hour, and if we were filling a pot of cloth which would contain 320 pieces of linen, and if we put in 50 or 60 pieces, and then when the hour comes we must stop; a portion must stop, at all events.

4635. Would not the same damage occur in time of hay-making, for instance, if the haymakers were all compelled to knock off work at six o'clock?—Of course.

4636. Do the farmers adopt that idea?—I do not know that damage would occur, but there would be a certain amount of loss in that case; but what I mean by the word damage, is this; I want to explain myself fully: suppose we put a certain quantity of alkaline lees in a pot, and the steam is turned off, and in order to fill it we put in 50 or 60 pieces where the lye in pot is sufficient for 300 pieces, and allow them to lie for an hour, they would be injured; the vegetable fibre would be destroyed.

4637. You say your workpeople were not at all complaining or uneasy as to their hours, until a certain visit was paid upon the part of Mr. Waring?—Yes; I did not see Waring, but I was told it was him.

4638. You infer that he created a deal of uneasiness in your neighbourhood?—The people brought me down a great number of placards printed on different coloured papers on one side for the pasting up.

4639. You did not think he was a promoter of peace in your district?—No, I think not.

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4640. You say that in foreign countries you found the same machinery in use?—Similar machinery.

4641. And apparently equally effective?—Yes.

4642. And you saw many of the same hands as you had seen in Ireland?—Yes; I saw one person who had been in my own employment; and I saw a number of persons who had gone from the neighbourhood of Belfast.

4643. The same machinery being employed, or machinery of the same description, and the same hands being employed and the hours unlimited there, what is to prevent the rapid progress of Prussian manufacture, in comparison with Irish, if you are put under restriction?—The fact is, I have been told, and believe it to be true, that numbers of persons come over to this country and serve a species of apprenticeship to bleaching; I know one person, who told me himself that he had no less than six foreigners with him, and that they remained six, nine, or twelve months with him to acquire a knowledge of bleaching, they having previously acquired a knowledge of chemistry, and that they left, and were now managing bleaching works on the continent. I know also that in America there is a very large joint stock company, under the limited liability system, who got a young gentleman named Ferguson from the neighbourhood of Belfast; he went out there, superintended the erections, and left them at work.

4644. I understand you to say that to all these facts you speak a little doubtfully; but that in a series of years they might compete successfully with us?—I have no doubt that they will.

4645. What should prevent their doing so rapidly; you speak of a long period of years?—I will give you my reasons for that; I know this much, that one great thing which serves us is the large quantity we do, and the very small profit we are content with. If I can get 4*d.* a piece, or something like that, upon a piece of linen, I am quite glad to get quit of it, and it will take them time to extend their works, and do a like quantity to enable them to compete with us.

4646. But the progression will be in that direction?—Clearly it must be.

4647. Mr. Davison.] Are you able to form an opinion as to the effect that will be produced upon the Lancashire trade in the bleaching of cotton; have you remarked the bleaching of cotton in Prussia?—No. I have remarked that it seems the same, but I am not sufficiently at home in cotton bleaching. I know the theory, but I do not know the practical effects; I might walk into a cotton bleaching mill, and I might suppose I knew it, when in reality I might miss some minute thing which might form an important feature in it, and I therefore speak with great diffidence.

4648. Assuming that they got the machinery from England, and assuming that they had no restriction with regard to the hours of labour, and further assuming that they got their hands from England to work that machinery, does it not appear to you likely that it must interfere with the cotton bleaching in England?—Yes; in looking through the bleaching establishment, I asked them, “Did you buy this cloth in Manchester?” they said no, they did not; I said “Where did you get it?” “Oh!” said they, “we buy the yarn in Manchester; we can get it wove here as cheap or cheaper, and we can bleach it as well as they can;” that was a remark that was quite incidental; but I am speaking of what they told me; I do not know it of my own knowledge.

4649. Mr. Clark.] Has the agitation caused by Mr. Waring’s visit subsided?—Yes.

4650. What is the feeling of the workpeople with regard to legislation?—The feeling of my people is that there is no necessity for it: I could have brought them over here, and it may perhaps appear strange that I did not, but the reason was, that my son John, who is the principal manager of the bleaching works, is at present in England, and we could not leave the establishment, nor be taking away some of our most intelligent hands while the masters are both absent; it might cause a great loss, and our processes are so delicate, that we are afraid to take parties away.

4651. If there is any restriction with regard to hours, would it influence your conduct with regard to the boys and women employed in your bleaching works?—If there was a restriction as regards hours, I, as a matter of course, should put belts on the beetling machines, and do away with all boys at beetling engines.

4652. Then the consequence of legislation would be that you would dismiss the boys and women?—I do not employ any women; the three women I have spoken

spoken of are only employed a few hours in the day; they do not begin till eight or nine in the morning, and have generally done by four or five in the afternoon; they work by task.

4653. But you would dismiss the boys in preference to having an oversight over your establishment?—Decidedly; I have read you the clause to which I object, and which this Act would be likely to carry out.

4654. Do the observations you make with regard to your own establishment apply generally to the other establishments in the north of Ireland?—Yes; there is one important point that I think I have neglected to explain to the Committee, and that is, that nearly all the bleaching-engines that I know of, except a very few, are driven by water-power; but at the head of the rivers there are generally reservoirs made; at the head of our river we have four large reservoirs; they cover a space of 300 or 350 acres of ground, upon which we lock up water during the winter season, varying from 12 to 25 feet in depth, and these are drawn off; there is a committee of management, who draw this off in certain quantities, so as to give us, according to the depth of water in the lakes, about three-quarters of a horse power per foot of fall; this falls from one to another, and must go on continuously; I am nearest the lake, at least nearest but one; there is a spinning-mill above me; but if I was to stop the water, and keep it all night, and work only by day, from six in the morning till six in the evening, the man below me would not be able to begin until seven o'clock, because he would have no water, and he would immediately bring an action against me, and so on with people three or four miles lower down the river; they would have no water till one or two o'clock in the afternoon, and I should be liable to an action from each, because it is settled law, that where there is a stream of water worked, you must work that stream, but you must not retain the water; you must immediately pass it on to your next neighbour.

4655. *Mr. Davison.*] Is it not generally the case with regard to bleaching-mills in the north of Ireland, that they are worked by water?—Yes.

4656. The steam-power is an exception?—Yes; we have steam-power because we found it was more economical; therefore we got up three or four steam-boilers for the purpose of boiling, and we added a steam-engine, for the purpose of progressing with our work in the autumn season, when the streams are low.

4657. But the generality of the bleach-mills are driven by water?—Yes, 19 out of 20.

4658. And they generally lie down the river in the way you have described?—Precisely so.

4659. The result of course would be the same as to those down the river as in your own case?—Yes, I know that, because I had to bring an action myself against the man who held the mill above me, who being a flax spinner, stopped the water for four or five hours, and I succeeded in obliging him to pass the water on, and I know there is an action pending, in which a large firm are concerned, which is about to be referred to arbitration upon the same subject.

4660. These great reservoirs are formed for the purpose of husbanding the water, and giving a supply when it would not otherwise be given?—Yes, just so, as Sir Robert Kane recommended; but we anticipated and had the thing done before he wrote his book.

4661. *Mr. Crook.*] You were speaking of the heat of your stoves; have you any women or boys working in those stoves?—I have already answered that; we have adult males only.

4662. Do you consider the people working in those stoves are at all that class which would be affected at all by the Bill which we are considering?—Certainly not; I never thought they would.

4663. What sort of school do the children go to who are in your employ?—I have no children in my employment.

4664. But the boys; you spoke of boys; I presume that there are young men under the age of 18?—Yes; I spoke of boys from the age of 14 to 18.

4665. Am I to understand that the rule is that these boys must go to school before they can be employed by you?—We always prefer taking boys who are able to read, and, if possible, to write, but at all events to read.

4666. They must read?—I do not mean to say that they must read; I say that we prefer having them if they can read, and generally speaking they can.

4667. Is this school one of the national schools?—We are free traders in schools; there is an old Kildare-street school within about a quarter of a mile

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from my works; there is a school belonging to the Society for Discouraging Vice in the village, and there are two national schools about three quarters of a mile from my works; then there is the Church Education Society's School, about three quarters of a mile on the other side; so that there are five different schools, two national, and three others belonging to different societies within less than a mile of my works; we have a national school of our own at the spinning mill.

4668. And the nation contributes towards that school?—No.

4669. Is it entirely supported by voluntary contributions?—No; the master gets a premium; all that we get from the Government is inspection, and they give the master a gratuity if they think he deserves it; we pay him a certain sum, and the scholars pay a penny a week.

4670. And have you one of these schools at your own works?—At the spinning mill, not at the works.

4671. So far as it goes, I may infer that you approve of the national school which you have at your works?—Certainly.

4672. And which receives money from the State?—I have not said that it receives money from the State; I say that the State finds its inspectors to inspect it.

4673. Does not the teacher receive something?—He receives a gratuity.

4674. To your knowledge the teacher receives a gratuity from the State?—Yes.

4675. Do you conceive that to be in accordance with your free-trade principles?—Decidedly; I do not mean to say that the Irish national system is perfect; but I believe it to be a very admirable system of education for the children of the poor.

4676. My object is to ascertain what your standard of free trade is; perhaps you will be kind enough to inform the Committee what you consider your standard of free trade?—If you will ask me any special question I shall be very glad to answer it.

4677. Do you conceive that this national school is on the principle of free trade?—I do.

4678. You say that trade will best settle itself?—Yes.

4679. Do you refer at present to the question of education?—I was speaking of trade; but I have not the least objection to give you my opinion about education; I believe that if you leave the people to educate themselves, they will not be educated, for they say they will not educate themselves.

4680. Do you think education is not a question of trade?—I think education and trade are not the same.

4681. Do you think that the sanitary question, that is, whether it is productive of disease in women and children to work long hours, is a question of free trade?—I do not understand the question.

4682. If it is proved to you that women and children suffer by extremely protracted hours of labour, or by working in the night, or that it is injurious to their health or to their morals, would you consider it a violation of free trade to correct that state of things?—For my part, I do not know anything of the state of the working classes in England, except what I have heard here. If it be true that all the cruelties which are stated to be practised are practised, and there is no opposite case to be got up, then in that case I would say I think it wrong; but as a man accustomed to exercise my judgment, and, generally speaking, since I have had the honour of a seat in this House, and upon Committees, I never came to any conclusion upon an *ex-parte* statement; but I hear both sides, and then I fairly and honestly come to that conclusion which my conscience and knowledge dictates; and I think, with all submission, that questions of this kind are just now rather premature.

4683. I simply asked this question: supposing an evil to be proved of this kind, in consequence of the needlessly protracted hours of labour of women and children, do you think to remedy that evil would be a violation of free trade?—No; I do not think it would.

4684. Do you know whether formerly the hours of labour were more protracted in Ireland than they are now?—I have no knowledge upon that subject; I have lived where I now live since the year 1823, and we have had no change in the hours, and no change in the mode of working.

4685. Your hours, you say, do not average ten hours a day?—They do not the year round, or certainly not more.

4686. Are

4686. Are you aware whether your bleaching works have worked later than six o'clock within the last week?—I said half-past six o'clock; my bleachers work on till half-past six o'clock; from half-past five o'clock in the morning till half-past six o'clock at night; those are our settled working hours.

4687. Are you aware whether you have exceeded those hours in the last week?—I am not aware; I was here, and therefore I cannot tell.

4688. You have no reason to suppose that they have been exceeded in the last week?—I should suppose not; I do not know why they should be.

4689. Have you exceeded those hours much this year?—No; we never exceed those hours in the bleaching works, except it may be in the case of a few men who are finishing putting in a keive, or there may be something wrong with the machinery, and a few of the workmen with the mechanics may remain over to put it right; but in such a case it would be only a few of the adult men.

4690. Then if this Bill passed, it would not affect your works at all, except so far as this 14th clause goes?—I have stated the contrary.

4691. You tell me that your works are not exceeding the time; that nobody is working in your works after half-past six o'clock?—Certainly, I did not; I spoke of my bleaching works.

4692. Where these boys are employed, you tell me they have not been engaged after half-past six o'clock?—Certainly not, in bleaching or dye-works.

4693. Then if this Bill passed, would it at all interfere with your business?—Not in that department.

4694. Then am I correct in saying that your only objection to this is this 14th clause?—I beg your pardon; I have told you what my objections are.

4695. Are the boys in the dye-works at present exceeding half-past six o'clock?—I have already told you that the work in the dye-works stops at half-past six o'clock.

4696. Then to what extent would it affect your operations at present, if this Bill passed?—There are 55 boys who work at the beetling engines, and who work alternately in relays of hands, one set of hands beginning at night, and the other set of hands beginning in the morning.

4697. Then rather more than 20 boys would be employed working at night?—Yes.

4698. And that is the extent to which the Bill would affect you?—Yes.

4699. But you say that the tendency is to shorten the hours; what evidence have you of that; you say you have had no alterations for 34 years; what evidence, therefore, have you of a tendency to shorten hours?—I have already informed the Committee (I do not know whether the honourable Member was present at the time or not) that we were anxious to change the work from day-work to piece-work some time back, but that I saw these Bills brought into Parliament one after the other, and as I thought there was a chance of their being enacted, I felt that it was useless to change to piecework, as, if they were passed, we must go back to day-work; if we went to piecework, I think that they would not work more than eight or nine hours a day, and they would get from 40 to 50 per cent. more wages.

4700. Do they object to piecework?—I tell you we had not begun to try it, because I saw this thing coming; we were just on the eve of it; we had not changed our arrangements; but I had spoken to several of our neighbours, and we had had a meeting, in order to arrange about the change from day-work to piece-work, and as to giving the same price, so as to make our people alike content.

4701. You say you saw the process of bleaching, I think, in Prussia?—I did.

4702. Did you see any thing to apprehend from Prussian competition?—I did, great reason.

4703. Did you inquire what the processes of bleaching were as compared with the process of bleaching in Ireland?—I did not; I was looking at the process; I was not looking at the economical question at the moment; I was looking at the nature of the process, and the intelligence of the persons, and I was inquiring the wages paid for the labour.

4704. As a free trader, do you apprehend much from the competition of a rival who is subsidised by the State; you say some of these works have received a premium?—That refers to spinning mills.

4705. But you are not aware whether the bleaching works have?—I told you the King of Prussia had bestowed an order on Mr. Kramsta; that shows the appreciation in which a man of his kind is held.

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4706. It may be a commercial question whether these bleachers receive a premium; they are subsidised by the State?—I told you I was not aware of any bleacher having received a premium; that observation applied to spinning mills.

4707. Have you any idea what time the process takes abroad as compared with that at home?—I think it takes rather less time than ours; and they go upon the old-fashioned principle that obtained in the days of my grandfather, who was also a bleacher; and their mode is this, to spread their cloth with the alkali in, and then water it; that produces a very peculiar effect if they are careful in watering; they have wooden pipes laid over the field, which supply water, which they cause to fall upon it in a shower that bleaches very rapidly in the summer season; or at any time from March to October.

4708. Do you apprehend any danger of competition from these persons who are using this old-fashioned mode?—I think if you limit, and cripple, and tramp us to prevent our operations, and they are left free, it is likely that in the race of competition they will successfully compete with us, when their establishments become as large as ours are at present.

4709. That is, if we were to stop your 20 lads at night, these people would overtake you?—I think that question is not exactly appropriate; I think this: if I am going to run a race, I should not make a very good hand of it if I had one of my legs tied up.

4710. You tell us you cannot work your water-power at night?—No; I tell you the reverse; I cannot stop it at night.

4711. That it must run night and day?—Clearly that is the law of the land, the settled law.

4712. With regard to these meal-times, have you not regular meal-times in the bleaching and dye works now?—Yes, one hour for breakfast, and one hour for dinner.

4713. Can you tell the Committee at what time the boys go to breakfast?—They go at eight o'clock, and return at nine; and they go to dinner at two, and return at three o'clock.

4714. Then if this Bill passes, it would not make any alteration in the breakfast hour, perhaps?—No, I should say not; we find those hours suitable for our purpose.

4715. Mr. Davison.] The honourable Member assumes that if this Bill passed, it would only interfere with these 20 boys; did I understand you to state in your direct evidence that your work is continuous, and if one department of the process is interfered with, it might retard the whole?—Just so.

4716. And you gave as a reason for that, that if you were obliged to stop at a particular hour, and to leave off at a late hour, when these keives were being filled, although it might cause a certain loss of one-half hour, it might be injurious to other parts of the works?—Decidedly; it is a well-known fact.

4717. So that in that respect it would interfere to a most serious extent?—Decidedly.

4718. Bleaching mills in the country, I believe, are situated in the open country, in the midst of bleaching fields?—Yes, they must be in a place where there is pure air and pure water; we could not bleach without.

4719. A great portion of the work is done in the open air?—Yes; and persons going out and in, the labour not being continuous in the bleaching mills, and when they are out, a place is provided for them in which they can go and sit.

Hugh Seymour Tremenheere, Esq., called in; and Examined.

H. S. Tremenheere,
Esq.

4720. Chairman.] HAS your attention been called to the evidence which has been given to this Committee by Dr. Boase?—It has.

4721. Are you anxious to make any comment on the evidence that you find reported?—I should like to make an observation on one or two of Dr. Boase's remarks; I observe, at Question 3629 and 3630, Dr. Boase states that he does not accept the evidence on which the report was founded as complete and satisfactory; he states that it is not enough; it gives one a general idea; that, in order to be satisfactory, the report ought to have gone more minutely into investigations, and that the people from the different works were not examined, nor their case made out. I did not think it necessary to examine the people at the different works; the inquiry did not relate to the condition of the adult males employed, but more especially to the fact of the nature of the employment for the females
and

and the boys. Into that inquiry I went, with what I believed to be sufficient particularity, as I ascertained that in Scotland there were altogether 618 females, and 223 boys employed at the different works; that these females were occasionally employed at night-work, and the boys also, especially in the beetling machines, and that therefore the case, as related to the inquiry, was amply made out.

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4722. Mr. Crook.] Did you state the number of women and females employed in the bleaching and dyeing works in Scotland in 1818?—In the east of Scotland, to which Dr. Boase's evidence refers, 618 females and 223 boys. Dr. Boase also stated that one of my allegations was not strictly correct, namely, that deviations from the arrangement as regarded not working overtime would be prevented, if, when resorted to, it placed those employers who adhered to it under considerable disadvantage. Dr. Boase states that, as far as he was aware, there had been no such deviations. I find, according to the evidence of Mr. Petrie, the manager of Mr. Richards' works, near Montrose, that he stated, in works of the same company, near Aberdeen, the recognised hours of work were from six to seven; and although, in the present state of the trade, they seldom continued to work so late as seven, they would do so if trade revived, and work overtime, if the work required it, the work after seven o'clock being paid for as overtime. The fact of deviations from understandings with regard to the limitation of hours of work had been so completely brought before my mind in the inquiry in the west of Scotland, and it had been so satisfactorily shown that, although with the best intention, a large number of employers might desire to keep to any arrangement, nevertheless circumstances would arise when a certain number of them would break through it. I thought that the principle had been sufficiently established; the general principle that, however much it might be desired to adhere to a general arrangement, it was liable to be broken through, under certain circumstances, which could only be made permanent by an Act of Parliament. I observe that exception is taken to the evidence of Mr. Daniel Forbes, who stated the circumstance as to the operatives employed in the beetling works falling down, and going to sleep; and Mr. Forbes' character is stated not to have been very correct; that he was dismissed from his employment; and Dr. Boase is asked whether he is aware that I made any inquiry as to the truthfulness of Mr. Daniel Forbes, or of other parties from whom I took evidence. In an inquiry of this kind, if I found a person in a responsible situation, managing a bleach-work, I did not think I had the least right to inquire into his private character; his position appeared to me to be a sufficient guarantee of the correctness of his evidence; and I found that Mr. Turnbull, whose character stands deservedly very high in the country, and who owns an adjoining work, gives evidence to the same point as Mr. Forbes. I observe also that Dr. Boase, at Question 3683, states, that at times, even in their works, although that was five years ago, they worked six months together day and night.

4723. Mr. Baxter.] You have stated that you did not think it necessary to examine any of the operatives upon the east coast of Scotland, as the object of the Bill was not at all to interfere with adult labour; I wish to know why you did not consider it necessary upon the east coast of Scotland, when you did consider it necessary in England?—I think that I had gone so fully in England into the general principle of a measure tending to restrict the labour of females and boys, that there was no necessity for going over the same ground again.

4724. Then you were not aware that in Scotland there was no dissatisfaction, no feeling whatever in favour of the restriction of labour on the part of the labouring population?—I am not prepared to assent to that proposition; I believe there was some dissatisfaction.

4725. Then may I ask why you did not send for the operatives themselves, and ask the question?—The question was made quite clear to my mind; the necessity for legislation had been made out with regard to the English bleaching-works; it was put to me particularly by several of the bleaching masters in England, "If Ireland and Scotland are excluded, we shall be under a great disadvantage;" therefore I thought it was sufficient for me to ascertain whether there was a sufficient number of females and boys in Scotland and Ireland to require the protection of the law.

4726. When you speak of Scotland and Ireland being excluded, of course you are aware that there is a very manifest distinction between the cotton bleaching works on the west coast of Scotland and those on the east coast?—Yes.

4727. But you did not examine any operatives connected with flax, yarn, or cloth bleach-fields on the east coast of Scotland?—No.

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4728. Then you had no means of ascertaining the sentiments or feelings of the labouring classes, or of the operatives employed in those bleach-fields?—I did not think it at all necessary to ascertain whether they would like legislation or not.

4729. Mr. *Crook*.] Did you presume that the work-people would be favourable upon finding the masters generally favourable?—I presumed that if the case with regard to females and boys in the east of Scotland was the same as in the west of Scotland and in England, the question of legislation would not turn at all upon the opinion of the labouring people, but upon the fact whether the condition of the females and boys so employed was the same, or nearly the same, as it was elsewhere.

4730. Mr. *Barter*.] Then you are prepared to say that the condition of the females and boys in these bleach-fields on the east coast of Scotland is the same, or nearly the same, as in the cotton bleach-works in Lancashire, or the west of Scotland?—I think, in regard to the principle of their employment, it is the same.

4731. You have stated that their condition is the same: I understand their condition to have reference to the number of hours they worked, and their social condition, is that so?—If they were occasionally liable to excessive hours of work, and also to night-work, I thought, and I still think, that that brings them within the same condition; whether they were more affected or less affected by the number of hours they worked, did not seem to me to affect the general principle.

4732. Then you believe that the women and boys working in the linen bleach-fields on the east coast of Scotland have been affected as to their health by excessive hours of labour?—Wherever they have been employed in hot stoves, wherever they have been employed at night-work, I should say that there can be no doubt, both physically and morally, they have been affected.

4733. You say, wherever they have been employed in hot stoves; are you aware of the number of hot stoves on the east coast of Scotland?—I am aware there are but few.

4734. Do you know how many?—At this moment I cannot state; I beg the Committee to remember that it is two years since I made this inquiry.

4735. When you speak of hot stoves, what temperature do you refer to; what do you call a hot stove?—I may be wrong with regard to the hot stoves in the east of Scotland. I see that they were employed occasionally in night-work; but it is quite obvious, in dealing with a question of this kind, you could not separate the east of Scotland from the west; and if I found a great number of females working in hot stoves in the west of Scotland, and if I found females working night-work in the east of Scotland, I presume it would not be justifiable to recommend any separation.

4736. That is a question for the Committee to decide; I am asking you with regard to hot stoves in the linen bleach-fields in the east coast of Scotland; you have stated in your evidence, that when you found women employed in these hot stoves, you supposed, as a matter of course, that it was prejudicial to their health; now you state that you believe there are no such hot stoves; I understand that to be so?—I am sorry to have a defective memory upon a matter which occurred two years ago.

4737. Mr. *Crook*.] Allow me to refer you to Question 1156, at page 880 of the evidence?—“In the stove or day-work,” this is in the evidence of Mr. Petrie, “we have eight females, when we are in full work, to carry in the yarns and carry them out to shake; the temperature was about from 120 to 130.”

4738. Mr. *Barter*.] My question did not refer to the fact; I merely wished to ascertain whether you knew, from your own personal knowledge, that the females were employed in working in these stoves?—From my own personal knowledge I cannot say that I was; for I never entered a bleaching work before, and never turned my attention to the question.

4739. Are the females employed constantly in these hot stoves without going out into the open air?—No; I perceive the evidence of Mr. Petrie is, that they are not in that heat longer at a time than a minute or so; that they then come out to a cool place, and are there for a few minutes before they go back into the stoves.

4740. Are you not aware that these very hot stoves have been, in a great measure, superseded by processes in which the temperature is not nearly so high?—I have no knowledge of what has taken place since I made this inquiry.

4741. Did any one tell you that the health of the females and boys was in the least

least degree affected by any operation whatever connected with the linen yarn and cloth bleaching?—You ask me a question which I cannot answer now, so long after the inquiry; but in the west of Scotland, where a great number of persons were employed and continued for a long time in the stoves, I have no doubt that my general impression was at the time that it did affect their health.

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4742. Are you not aware that there is a distinction between the stoves, even the old-fashioned stoves, in linen yarn and cloth bleaching, and the stoves employed on the west coast of Scotland, Lancashire and Cheshire?—Yes.

4743. Do you know that the operatives in the one case remain constantly in the room, whereas in the other they merely carry in the yarn for very few minutes at a time?—Very true; nevertheless if they work in that number for a considerable number of hours beyond the usual 10 hours, I conceive that it is exceedingly likely to affect their health.

4744. But no one gave you that in evidence?—The evidence is before the Committee; and I really cannot pretend to say whether they did or not.

4745. *Mr. Davison.*] Do you consider that a woman, or a number of women, going into a stove in the morning to take in linen which had been dried in a stove during the night, and then going to their ordinary out-door or in-door avocations, and again returning in the evening to put up a fresh supply, would be so injurious to health as to require legislative enactment?—Certainly not.

4746. *Mr. Crook.*] Do you happen to remember the temperature at which the stoves were regulated on the west coast of Scotland?—I have given a table of the temperatures in the stoves on the west coast of Scotland at page 90 and 91.

4747. That is with reference to the east coast of Scotland; I think you will find it at Question 745?—*Mr. Robertson, junior,* states that the stoves average about 90.

4748. I refer you to 748?—*George Buchanan & Sons:* “We have five stoves, in which the heat varies from 80 to 90.”

4749. Now I refer you to evidence taken on the east coast of Scotland, at 1191?—“The females are very little in the hot stoves; just half an hour or an hour at a time, shaking the yarn half an hour out of every three hours; the temperature is from 85° to 90.”

4750. Then I refer you to 1201?—“We have about 20 females in the stove under one man; the temperature is about 90° to 95°; they are seldom in it more than 10 minutes at a time; their duty is just to take in and take out the yarn; they do not operate upon it within the stove.”

4751. *Mr. Baxter.*] Then they did not work in these stoves at all?—Only 10 minutes at a time.

4752. *Mr. Kirk.*] I think it is only fair to yourself and to the party to read the whole answer?—I have no objection to do so: “They come out to shake it in a cool-air drying loft. It may take them half an hour to fill, and the same to empty the stove; they will then be about half an hour shaking what they have taken out. It is undesirable that the females should be longer at a time in such a heat; and we never allow them to shake the yarn in the stove, as is the case in several bleach-works.” So that it does not appear they are usually confined to that species of work 10 minutes at a time.

4753. *Mr. Baxter.*] This evidence is connected with the county of Fife; were you never told that the females employed in the bleach-works in Fife were notoriously the most healthy females in the country?—I cannot pretend to say whether I was told so or not.

4754. *Mr. Davison.*] Are you aware that the difference between the cotton stove process and the linen stove process, consists exactly in this which you have described, that it is only an occasional work in the one, and that it is continuous in the other?—I believe it is correctly so described.

4755. *Mr. Baxter.*] Then I am to understand you, that you took no evidence with a view of ascertaining the state of health of the operatives employed in the bleaching works on the east coast of Scotland?—Whatever evidence I took, is published in a report; at this moment I do not remember.

4756. *Mr. Crook.*] May I refer you to this Bill which you supplied as the example one, to give the Committee an estimate as to whether there is much overtime made in Scotland?—This table, under the head of “Regular Hours of Work,” will show the general nature of the employment; as regards hours, I find “overtime when trade is good, frequently,” “overtime when busy,” “occasional overtime till nine or twelve at night,” occurs in the east of Scotland.

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4757. Mr. Davison.] I think I put the question somewhat erroneously when I spoke of the cotton stoves; I meant the lapping rooms, as they are called, and not the stoves where the linen is dried, I understand, by the same process; is not the difference between the lapping rooms and the stove rooms, such as I have explained to you?—If I remember rightly, the lapping rooms are the rooms where the females in Scotland go in to move about the goods or to press them together. In Lancashire, the lapping rooms are rooms where they remain continuously; and in Scotland, although they did not remain continuously, if I may speak from my own feeling and observation, although the females in the lapping rooms remained only ten minutes at a time and then went out into the cool air, it is an employment that may be exceedingly oppressive to the females, and especially to the young ones; I saw them in great numbers evidently suffering from the heat in profuse perspiration, and looking wearied by their work.

4758. And do you mean by going in for five or ten minutes at a time?—Yes.

4759. Mr. Baxter.] Does that remark apply to the linen bleach fields?—No, certainly not to the fields.

4760. I mean connected with the bleach fields on the east coast of Scotland?—I cannot charge my memory whether that is so.

4761. You never heard of a woman having been taken ill, and having left her work and gone away from her employment on the east coast?—I thought it very unnecessary to attempt to draw any distinction between the east and west of Scotland in a case of that kind, if legislation was necessary at all; it struck me you could no more separate the east and west of Scotland than you could separate the east of Lancashire from the west of Lancashire; and therefore, if I found a considerable number of females working in the hot stoves in the west of Scotland, and a certain number in the east of Scotland, and a certain number of boys and females occasionally engaged in night work, I thought that a case for legislation was made out.

4762. Mr. Kirk.] May I ask you a few questions with reference to the Irish part of the case; and first I would inquire whether, upon so important a mission as that you were sent upon, you framed a set of questions to ask the different persons, masters and men?—No, I did not.

4763. May I take the liberty of inquiring why you did not?—I thought by making inquiries at the different works upon the points which struck me as they arose I should satisfy my own mind sufficient to enable me to form a judgment in the course of the inquiry; I myself was a learner upon the matter; I knew nothing about the question before I commenced the inquiry; I did not seek the occupation; I did not ask for it, and I did the best, according to my judgment and ability, that I found myself able to do; I did not think it necessary to frame any formal set of questions; I could not have done so *a priori*, because I was at the beginning ignorant on the matter, and by the time I had completed the inquiry, I think, according to the best of my judgment, I had satisfied my mind.

4764. But you aware it was not merely necessary you should satisfy your own mind, but also the minds of others. When you had not a formal set of questions to address either to employers or employed, was it not natural that you should have given in your Appendix the questions which you actually did put?—I am quite aware it was necessary to satisfy other people's minds besides my own, but it appeared to me that the evidence I had collected in a body was calculated to satisfy impartial minds in reading it.

4765. Are you not aware that an answer very much depends upon the question which it is an answer to?—Yes.

4766. Now, taking the very first witness whose testimony you give, do you happen to recollect anything of the kind of question you asked Mr. Alexander Hunter, of Dunmurry, the first witness? You will find it at page 73 of the Appendix; you give five answers, and I am very desirous of knowing what were the exact questions you put to elicit those answers?—I went upon the principle, in collecting the whole of this evidence, that it was not necessary for me to swell the report by printing the questions that I asked; I took down the evidence on the spot, and I threw myself on my general character to bear me out in giving correctly what evidence I took.

4767. I assure you I do not intend to impute your motives, quite the contrary; I believe you to be influenced by perfectly pure and upright motives; but you must give me leave to question, and I shall do it in the gentlest manner possible, whether you did not give Mr. Hunter the idea that there was to be an Act for Scotland

Scotland and Ireland; look at answer 902?—"I think at the same time, that if there is to be an Act for England and Scotland, Ireland ought not to be exempt."

4768. Why should you have that answer unless in answer to some question which implied that there was to be such an Act?—I have no doubt it was.

4769. What authority had you for telling him that there would be an Act for England and Scotland?—I did not tell him upon any authority whatever; I was merely arguing the question with him, and by that means drawing out his opinion, as I did in other cases.

4770. Then I am to understand, that by the time you arrived at Mr. Hunter's, at Dumurry, you had come to the conclusion that there ought to be an Act for England and Scotland?—The master bleachers in Lancashire impressed very strongly upon me the injustice that would be done to them if an Act was to be passed, excluding Ireland and Scotland; and therefore I put it as a supposed case; supposing there is to be an Act for England and Scotland, do you think Ireland ought to be exempted? And I have no doubt that the answer given was the consequence of such a question.

4771. In fact the answer was given under the idea that there was to be such a law, was it not?—I had no authority to convey such an idea; and, as charged with this inquiry by the Government, I was probably strongly impressed with what I had already heard, that it would be undesirable to exclude Ireland and Scotland, and therefore I sought the opinion of a gentleman like Mr. Hunter upon the matter, and I have no doubt that Mr. Hunter's answer confirmed me in that opinion.

4772. But in pursuing this subject, which I think is the one upon which the merits of the case turns, as far as Ireland is concerned, did not you in your conversation with the various persons that you waited upon lead them to believe, or to infer, that an Act was contemplated for England and Scotland, and was likely to be extended to Ireland?—I do not see what right any person had to infer from anything I said to him that I spoke by authority as to there being any Act; that was the whole question of the inquiry.

4773. I should certainly not interrogate you in this way if you had given the questions as well as the answers to the questions; but as there are no questions, and as the answers appear to me to bear the construction I place upon them, I am anxious to know what the questions were?—Since the year 1839 I have been engaged in public inquiries; first of all as an Inspector of Schools; since that as a Commissioner, under the Act of Parliament relating to mines; and in the whole of the voluminous evidence which I have from time to time published, I have never thought of adding the questions to the answers, except in very exceptional cases. The practice, I believe, almost universally with school inspectors and others, in making these inquiries, is not to give the questions. Before a Committee of the House of Commons, question and answer naturally follow each other in the most formal manner, but it has never been my habit to give the questions; and I did not think any gentleman would feel that I had done wrong in omitting the questions.

4774. I should not say so if it was not from the nature of the answers themselves, and because I know they are contrary to the opinions of the parties that give them?—I am very sorry if I should have misrepresented any gentleman, but I invariably took the evidence down on the spot, and my habit was to read it aloud, as I took it down, and therefore if any gentleman had objected I should not have taken it down.

4775. I do not doubt that you took down fairly and faithfully the evidence that was given to you, I quite believe you did; but what I want to ascertain is, how that evidence was obtained, and in answer to what questions; that is the only object I have in the first instance in view?—I may state in my own justification that it is not my habit to put leading questions; and if I did on this or any other occasion, the probability is, that I was led to it by something that had occurred just before; I did not put down in many cases the whole of the conversation or the answers to the whole of the questions, I put down the substance. Sometimes I was walking about for half an hour or an hour with the gentleman about his works, inquiring into the different points, asking his opinion, ascertaining the facts, and at the end of it he would take me into his office, and there I would put down the substance and read it aloud as I took it; I should do that with a gentleman. If I was taking down the evidence of a labouring man, I should read it over to him immediately afterwards, to give him an opportunity of telling me

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whether I had taken down his evidence correctly: I did not think it necessary to do so with a gentleman, because he would understand it.

4776. Leaving that subject, permit me to ask you why you did not make inquiry of the operatives themselves in Ireland?—I did not think it necessary, for the reason I gave before; I have gone into the question very much as to the feeling of the operative bleachers in England, and I have ascertained their feelings in the west of Scotland; I did not think, therefore, that as regards the rest of the inquiry, the opinion of the operatives was of much importance.

4777. But did it not occur to you that there was an immense difference between in-door labour and out-door labour?—Certainly.

4778. Are you not aware that while the labour of the bleaching operative in Lancashire and in the west of Scotland is all in-door labour, the other is, a great portion of it, out-door labour, and did not that occur to you as a most important difference?—Unquestionably, as regards the labour of adult males, but the inquiry related to females and boys.

4779. But the number of boys work out as well as in?—Certainly.

4780. We have it in evidence, even from Lancashire, and very boldly and clearly brought out by Lancashire people themselves, that while the system of bleaching in that part of the country was dissimilar to that in Ireland, the operatives were remarkable for their health and strength; and yet it seems to have escaped you altogether as to the difference between the one and the other, for you report on each alike, or nearly so?—I beg your pardon; I do not think it escaped me. At page 29, I find that in Ireland there were 1,100 females employed; the appearance of the females working habitually in this heat (90°) seemed to me as a general rule perfectly to justify the expression of Mr. James Graham, the manager of Mr. Ewart's works, that no girls are fit to work in this heat longer than the regular hours.

4781. But you did not ask any of the girls about it?—As I said before, with regard to the employment of females in stoves, the question for legislation seemed to me to be made out upon principle, by what I had seen in Lancashire and the west of Scotland, and therefore it was less necessary, considering the small number of females employed in Ireland and in the east of Scotland, that I should take further evidence upon the subject.

4782. I will only trouble you with one more point, and that is with reference to the last paragraph in your Report; at page 31, you say: "In the 'making-up' rooms, called in Ireland 'lapping' rooms, were attached to the bleach or dye-works; very few females or boys are employed; the 'making-up' is, in many instances, performed at a separate establishment in the neighbouring town; where it makes a part of the premises on which steam-power is employed it will come under the regulations as to the labour of females and boys of the proposed Bill." Do you think there is any good reason why boys should be precluded from working in an Irish lapping-room after a certain hour, and permit the work in a lapping-room at Manchester; you are aware that a lapping-room is a warehouse, are you not?—Yes.

4783. Do you think there should be a prohibition for labour in an Irish lapping-room or warehouse, and no such prohibition should be extended to London, or Manchester, Bristol, or any other place?—I understand the distinction to be where there is the labour of females and boys.

4784. I am speaking of boys; you will have it in evidence there are few females?—Yes, employed as against steam-power; there legislation applies in the lapping-room in London and elsewhere; they are not working against steam-power, as I understand.

4785. Are they working against steam-power in Ireland anywhere, or even in connexion with it?—Where the lapping-rooms are in connexion with any other part of the same establishment as a bleach and dye works, I apprehend they may be said to be working against steam-power, because, if you produce in a bleach work a certain quantity of goods by your steam-power in 24 hours, those goods come in the regular course to the lapping-rooms to be prepared for the market, and therefore there is a direct action of steam-power upon the employment in the lapping-room, as I understand.

4786. Did you make any inquiry into this?—I remember being struck with that fact in one of the bleach works in Ireland, which occurs to me at this moment.

4787. Which one was that?—I do not remember the name of it; if I had been examined

examined shortly after the inquiry, I should have been able to satisfy the honourable Member upon this and many other points.

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4788. When you called at my place at Kiddy and saw my son, John Kirk, did he not show you the lapping-rooms?—I cannot remember whether he did or not.

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4789. Because if he had he would have shown you the way of working against steam-power, and you would have seen a large quantity of goods lying piled up in the warehouse waiting for orders?—I can conceive that very well to be the case if there had been a period of slack trade.

4790. But slack trade or not, we must have stopped?—Of course I cannot pretend to contradict the honourable Member on a matter within his own cognizance; all I can say is, that in one work I remember distinctly the person of whom I did ask that question, and they pointed out to me the way in which the thing worked.

4791. *Chairman.*] I understood you to say, that your custom was to read over to the different gentlemen with whom you had these conversations that which you had taken as the result of them, and invite them to express an opinion upon the summary which you had made of those conversations?—Yes.

4792. Do you suppose you did that with regard to Mr. Alexander Hunter?—I should imagine I either did that, or that I repeated what I was writing, what he had said to me, in order that he might be sure I was taking it down correctly.

4793. Will you turn to Question 903, at page 77, and see at the end of that question these words: "These remarks embody my opinion upon the subject;" did you suppose that those words were made use of by Mr. Hunter after you had read to him the little statement which precedes it?—Now that your Lordship has directed my attention to those words, I have not the slightest doubt but that I had either read it to him or directed his attention to what I had been writing; and that in answer to a question as to whether those remarks did embody his opinions upon the subject, he stated that they did.

4794. Had you any complaint from Mr. Hunter of the way in which you reported his conversation?—Not a word, either from Mr. Hunter or any other gentleman whose evidence I took, with the exception of Dr. Boase, and he wrote to me shortly after the report was published a very friendly note, saying, to the best of my recollection, that I had misrepresented him in one point, which was that I had stated that we avoided as much as possible any over-hours, and that it very seldom happens, and never with any but men. To the best of my recollection, for I did not preserve the letter, Dr. Boase said that was a little too strong, and admitted that occasionally they did work over-hours, and that at the time the Bill was before Parliament, my impression was, that I forwarded his letter with one of my own, to one of the Members who had charge of the Bill, requesting that if the occasion arose he would qualify that statement with regard to Dr. Boase; that is the only communication I had, that I am aware of, from any gentleman or other person whose evidence I took, either in Scotland or Ireland; and I was very sorry to see it stated in the House of Commons by the honourable Member, Mr. Baxter, that he considered my report one-sided and unfair; I should be very sorry to be fairly open to such a remark.

4795. Then the Committee are to understand that from your previous experience in conducting inquiries entrusted to you by the Government, that you are of opinion that inquiries are better conducted according to the plan you have described to this Committee, than by putting formal questions?—That is my opinion.

4796. Are you aware whether that opinion is shared by other gentlemen who have had from time to time to conduct analogous inquiries?—I feel confident it is shared by the whole of the school inspectors; I do not remember at present that it is at all the practice of Government Commissioners to add the questions to the evidence which they take in the course of their inquiries.

4797. I will call your attention to the evidence given by Mr. Richardson the other day, referring to page 30 of your Report: "In the case of Mr. Richardson's works, however, it will be seen by that gentleman's statement to me (3911), that he had already made arrangements, by which he would not henceforward have any occasion for employing any of his people over-hours, and would not consequently be affected by any Act that may be passed upon this subject; and as regards the other employers alluded to, the same remark is applicable, in so far that they stated that, without inconvenience to themselves, they would be able to take measures which would prevent night-work or over-time for females or boys in future." You observe there, that you make use of the expression "of his people."

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Then, if you will refer to page 74 of the evidence, at question 911, to which you refer in this statement in the report, you will see Mr. Richardson's statement is, that his people "on such occasions work over-time up to eight or nine o'clock, from three to five consecutive days during a month or six weeks; this depends upon the length and severity of the previous winter; but, although the last winter was both long and severe, we have made arrangements as will prevent the necessity of our working the females over-hours at all for the future." Perhaps you will explain the discrepancy which appears between the statement in the report and the paragraph in Mr. Richardson's evidence upon which the statement in the report is founded?—I am to state the cause of the discrepancy; I think it very likely that the word "people" in my report was a mistake for "females" in the evidence.

4798. Mr. Turner.] I wish to ask you a few questions with regard to your examination the other day as to the Lancashire and Cheshire cases; I understand you to say that you first went to the committee of operatives presiding in Lancashire; had you at that time had any communication with the masters, or were you first instructed in what you call the plaintiffs' case?—I think I had some slight communication with one or two of the masters, but not to any great extent.

4799. You were asked the other day whether the delegates were working bleachers, and you answered "Yes." Do you mean that they were at that time employed in bleaching works?—To the best of my recollection they were all, with one or two exceptions, at that time employed in bleaching-works; that exception was John Waring, who was the paid agent of the men, but who had been employed for a great many years.

4800. Were not both the Warings and Mr. Pearce living upon the agitation which they kept alive out of the industry of others?—I think that is hardly a fair mode of putting the question, if I may be allowed to say so; I do not think it is fair to impute to men who are struggling on behalf of their brethren in trade, that they are living upon the agitation.

4801. But is it the fact that they were living out of the industry of others, and not working themselves?—They were certainly employed by the operatives; but I think, in using the word "agitation," the honourable Member imputes to them indirect motives beyond a fair investigation of the question.

4802. Was there not some agitation?—I know nothing about that; I was not down in the country before that; I am not at all aware of any of their proceedings whatever.

4803. Do I understand you to say you had not any previous knowledge of bleaching works, and had never visited any since the date of your report?—Certainly.

4804. Did not you visit the Lancashire and Cheshire bleaching works early in 1855?—Yes.

4805. I think I understood that you had obtained from the delegates a list of the different works which it was desirable for you to visit, in order to verify the facts which the delegates stated, and also a list of 55 works from Mr. Ainsworth, and that you selected 17 which you visited out of that list, with reference to the list of delegates?—Not at all.

4806. Having found the 17 works sufficient out of Mr. Ainsworth's list, how came you to visit 10 others not upon that list?—Mr. Ainsworth, the chairman of the association, gave me a list of works, principally in the neighbourhood of Bolton; and I ascertained from the delegates, what I was not aware of before, that there were many bleaching works that Mr. Ainsworth had omitted; I accordingly visited those, and, without imputing any indirect motives to Mr. Ainsworth and the members of the committee of bleachers, I may mention the simple fact, that the evidence afforded by the bleaching works in the neighbourhood of Manchester, which I think I may say was almost conclusive against their own impressions and their own convictions, and in favour of the opinion of the men, and for that reason, having had them pointed out, I visited them; had I not had them pointed out by the men, and if I had relied entirely upon the evidence of the masters, I should not have been aware of the existence of a large body of works, the evidence furnished by which contradicted the evidence of the masters.

4807. Did you visit more than one set of works in Cheshire; if so, how many?—I do not know what the division of the county is between Lancashire and Cheshire; I visited those works in the immediate neighbourhood of Manchester which I have referred to.

4808. Was

4808. Was not every facility afforded you by the masters in visiting the works both in Lancashire and Cheshire?—Certainly. *H. S. Tremheere,*
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4809. Had you interviews from time to time between the various visits that you paid to the Lancashire and Cheshire bleach works, with Waring, Pearce, and other of the delegates?—Frequently. 3 July 1857.

4810. Frequently, during those visits?—Yes.

4811. Did you from time to time communicate to them the evidence you had taken at the works you visited, and the remarks of the masters?—Yes.

4812. Did you communicate to Mr. Ainsworth, Mr. Hardcastle, or any member of the committee of master bleachers, the result of your investigation, when completed, in that district?—I found, after a meeting that I had with the masters, that they were not inclined to enter upon the question of legislation with me in the friendly spirit in which, apparently, they began; and having communicated to them the whole of the evidence of the delegates, and having received from them, through Mr. Ainsworth, the evidence back again, with no remark impugning it to any amount, I did not think it necessary to communicate to the body of the masters the rest of the evidence that I took as the inquiry proceeded; I did not think, from the result of the meeting that I had with them by their own request, that any further communication with them would lead to any satisfactory result. They asked me to meet them in a friendly spirit to discuss the point of legislation; I found, when we were together, that there was a disposition to take a different ground altogether from that which they had previously taken with me, and to dispute the necessity for legislation altogether; from that time I did not feel called upon to communicate personally again with the committee of masters.

4813. Were you not requested to do so as a matter of courtesy, to enable them to reply or object to the statements of the delegates?—I do not remember it; I do not think I was; I had done, as I thought, my part fully in opening a friendly communication with them; we had come to the point of considering what legislation would be acceptable, and when at this meeting they were inclined to repudiate that position, I thought I had done all that in me lay, or that courtesy required, as to making any private communication to them.

4814. You say that both the masters and the workpeople were agreed in opinion that there ought to be some legislative interference, and you repeat that same opinion in answer 133, in your evidence the other day; how is that consistent with what you say in your report, namely, that Mr. Hardcastle and Mr. Ainsworth are adverse to legislative interference?—And yet Mr. Hardcastle drew up, in his own handwriting, what he thought would be a satisfactory solution of the matter as regards legislation, and Mr. Ainsworth also discussed with me the same point, and Mr. Hardcastle sent that very paper, in my presence, to Mr. Ainsworth, to ask his opinion upon it; and although they said they were adverse to legislation, still the fact of their discussing legislation with me showed that, however adverse their own private opinion might be about it, they thought the time had come when legislation was necessary.

4815. Are not those two gentlemen the largest employers of labour in the Lancashire and Cheshire districts?—I believe they are two of the largest.

4816. Are not Messrs. Blair & Sons, and Messrs. Bright & Ridgway, and most of the masters mentioned by you as visited, also opposed to legislative interference?—When gentlemen met me to discuss what kind of Act should be brought in to regulate the employment of females and children in their works, I did not think that they were entitled to say that they were adverse to legislation, except as a matter of private opinion; they had come to the conclusion, that, on public grounds, legislation was impending, and I believe I may state that one or two of them were in favour of legislation.

4817. Did not almost all the master bleachers mention that the occasion for these long hours was becoming less frequent, and did not a number of the operatives of the short-time committee, whom you had examined, also admit this, and attribute it to the introduction of machinery?—The excessive hours may be becoming less frequent at this moment; I do not remember any evidence bearing precisely upon that point; but although it may be less frequent, I should imagine, from the tenor of the evidence, that there would be a continual liability to work these excessive hours if the demand required it.

4818. But do you not yourself believe that the introduction of machinery has a tendency to such a result?—I am not prepared to give an opinion upon that point.

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4819. You say that too much weight is attributed to the fact, that occasionally during the day intervals of rest occur in addition to the hours of meals; do you not find that it is almost universally agreed upon all hands, that such intermissions do take place to a considerable extent, besides the hours of meals?—Yes, such intermissions doubtless may take place more or less; but when young females and boys are employed for 12, 14, or 16 hours for many days together, I do not consider that these occasional intermissions alter very materially the state of the case.

4820. But when they do occur, is it not often from the breaking of machinery, the want of water, or some delay in some one department?—That may be so; the breakage of machinery is a thing which a manufacturer would be sorry to believe could occur very often.

4821. Is there not a considerable change and variation in the amount of work done in a large majority of these works, from three months to three months, not one uniform system at all pursued as to time?—Certainly; but at the same time the evidence shows that many of them go on for much more than three months together, working long hours.

4822. When you examined the master bleachers, which I suppose you did, was there a single one of them who did not speak of the variation in the amount of business which they were from time to time subjected to?—I have no doubt that most of them did; I will not say that a single one did not.

4823. Did not the merchants you examined also admit to you, at all events at that time, that such was the case?—I believe it was so.

4824. With respect to the physical sufferings of the workpeople, you say that you examined two or three medical men with regard to this; have you their evidence in your report?—Yes.

4825. Did not one of them, Mr. Robinson, say that the employment in bleaching works was not in itself an employment obnoxious to the health?—Yes; and that I should imagine applied to the labour of the men, and especially to the work in the bleaching part of the establishment, as contradistinguished from the making-up.

4826. You found the females principally employed in the finishing and packing-rooms, did you not?—Yes.

4827. Are not those rooms generally large and airy, and free from all floating particles and all noxious smells?—I have stated that in my report; and that, therefore, it is only the excessive hours which are objectionable, and not the place in which they work.

4828. But is there not a very striking contrast between the atmosphere and appearance of the rooms of those persons in bleaching works and those of any mill that you visited?—I do not know anything of mills; my knowledge is not sufficient to enable me to say.

4829. As to the majority of the persons employed in the English bleaching works, are they not generally respectable as a class; they describe themselves so, and as above mill-hands?—I am so little acquainted with that part of the country, that I am not qualified to pronounce an opinion upon it.

4830. Did not you observe many instances of boys and females employing their leisure in book-reading and sewing whilst waiting for work?—Yes.

4831. Are not the workpeople composed in fact of families rather than individuals; have they not almost all of them worked for many years in the same employment, and have you not learnt that their fathers and mothers did so before them?—I have heard that that is the case in several of the large works.

4832. Is not that a desirable state to exist in and to occupy?—Undoubtedly; but that leaves out of view entirely the possible fact, which is alleged to be also the real fact, namely, that a great number of females and boys are incapacitated by the length of hours keeping at the work; and, as the medical men say, it is only those who have the strongest constitutions who can stand it for any length of time.

4833. Is it a fact that churches have been built and schools provided for them, in many instances, at the expense of the masters, and rooms provided for them, and books and periodicals, whilst waiting for their work?—There are some most excellent and benevolent masters among the owners of bleach-works, who have exerted themselves most creditably for the intellectual and religious improvement of their workpeople.

4834. You observed just now that it was open to the observation that none but those possessed of healthy constitutions could stand the long hours; do you mean

mean it to be inferred from that, that the bleach-works have the pick of the hands in these districts?—I think the inference is, that in the terms of the question none but persons of healthy constitution can long stand that kind of work in the finishing department.

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4835. But are not the operatives in bleach-works generally of a healthy appearance?—I have given several answers upon that point, and have nothing more to add to what I have stated on the subject.

4836. You said, in one answer to Mr. Cobbett (Question 54) that you observed a considerable number of persons whose appearance indicated their having been subject to overwork; do you remember at which works in Lancashire or Cheshire that occurred?—If I had been asked that question two years ago, I have no doubt I should have been able to specify the works; at present I am unable to do so.

4837. Did you interrogate any of the girls or women in dye-works and packing-rooms where short hours were said to be worked?—I have no doubt I did.

4838. You have not been, I think you said, at numerous mills and factories in these districts to state the difference between one set of hands and another?—No.

4839. Were the complaints that you heard especially of sore feet?—I mentioned the various complaints which the females laboured under.

4840. Was it never stated to you that this wore off after a little time, and was much alleviated by wearing shoes, instead of the heavy clogs which are almost universally worn by the females in these works?—I do not remember; but it is quite conceivable; it may be so; I merely mentioned the fact that I found a great many persons so suffering.

4841. By the shortening the hours as proposed, from six in the morning to six in the evening, would it have the effect, in your opinion, of inducing the masters to dispense with the labour of females and young persons; Mr. Kirk has told us that it would in his case; I want to have your opinion?—I do not think that an opinion of mine upon a matter of that kind would be of much value.

4842. Then you cannot give an opinion whether it is likely to have the effect of decreasing the number of hands employed in bleaching works?—That is a question to which you will obtain much more satisfactory answers from persons more conversant with the locality.

4843. Did you in your visits, because it is connected a good deal with this subject, ever inspect the establishments of any of the merchants whose evidence you took?—I have been shown some of the warehouses of the large merchants in Manchester; but by the term “inspecting”——

4844. You saw the nature of the work carried on?—Yes.

4845. Had you an opportunity of knowing that in many of those establishments calendering, packing and finishing are carried on much in the same way as at bleaching works?—Yes.

4846. Would you propose to put them, then, under similar regulations, whether they bleach or not?—With all due submission, that is a question more for Parliament than myself; my inquiries were confined to the bleaching works.

4847. But you do know that these works are carried on, and of course you must have a similar opinion with regard to them as with regard to similar establishments in bleach-works?—I was not instructed to inquire as to the health and employment of females and boys, or whether there were any females and boys employed in such establishments.

4848. In your opinion, seeing that your commission extended only to bleaching works, and that you extended your inquiry to dyeing and finishing, would it be fair to legislate for calendering and packing only, when carried on in connexion with bleaching works, and not in any other places?—I conceive it very possible that anomalies of that kind may exist in that part of the country where manufacturing operations are so extensive; my business was to inquire particularly with reference to the bleaching works, and those works immediately connected with them.

4849. Would it be sufficient, to satisfy what you believe to be the necessity for legislation, to extend the proposed Bill for bleaching, dyeing, finishing and packing-up, only where carried on in connexion with bleaching works, or would it not be necessary to apply the same law to them separately wherever they are carried on?—If my instructions had directed me to make that inquiry, I should have endeavoured to do so to the best of my power, but they did not.

4850. When you took the merchants' evidence, did you read to any of them the
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evidence you had taken, or did you impart to them the result of such evidence before taking down their answers?—Invariably.

4851. Did you hold yourself as commissioned to inquire into the management of bleaching works, or did you explain that you were extending your inquiry to the processes of bleaching, dyeing, finishing, calendering and packing, wherever carried on, or confine yourself only to the bleaching works?—I found that it was impossible to limit the inquiry to what is, *ex bitermio*, a bleach-work, because so many other processes are immediately connected with it; but I did not extend my inquiry beyond what was in immediate connexion with bleaching; bleaching, dyeing and finishing going on so often in the same premises.

4852. I think I understood you to say that you did read over to the merchants their evidence as written down by yourself?—I not only read it over, but in many cases it was corrected.

4853. Did you do so to Mr. John Pender, whose is, perhaps, the largest packing and finishing establishment connected with a warehouse?—I remember, with regard to that evidence (Question 35), that I went twice to this gentleman's warehouse, the second time for the purpose of submitting to Mr. Pender the evidence that he had previously given me; he was absent, and I read it over to Mr. Cowan; and in the last paragraph of that evidence, I said, "Mr. Pender and Mr. Cowan consider," and I gave it as the evidence of Mr. Pender and Mr. Cowan.

4854. In your opinion, are not the bleachers entirely dependent on the merchants for the supply of the material on which they have to operate?—Certainly.

4855. Is not the requirement of a merchant dependent on the state of the market and his orders?—Yes.

4856. Does he not frequently put off his orders until the last possible moment for the convenience of buying, or the state of the market?—I think that any answer that I shall give to any single question of that nature would convey a wrong impression, unless at the same time I was to add the whole of the evidence that I have given with respect to the dealings and the arrangements made by the merchant and the bleacher, to which I would respectfully refer.

4857. But has it not come within your experience that the merchant very frequently presses the bleacher to do his work in so short a space of time as to lead necessarily to his occasionally over-working?—That has been the case, no doubt; but the whole point is as to whether it is necessary, and the evidence of the merchants is that it is not.

4858. Mr. Crook.] With regard to long hours of labour, do you consider it at all desirable that women and children should work as at present 14 or 16 hours in the day, or in the night?—Certainly.

4859. It is not a desirable thing under any circumstances?—Certainly not.

4860. It cannot be defended as consistent with the health and morals of women and children?—I think not.

4861. Granting that state of things to be an evil, is it practicable at all to remedy that evil by one Act; would you attempt to remedy the evil in the case of dress-makers, or of any warehouses in Manchester, or any place not comprehended in this Bill, or do you think it would be a sensible plan to bring in a Bill to remedy this state of things all at once?—No.

4862. Do you think it more sensible to grapple with one part of the subject, to take a palpable evil which you can bring within certain limits, such as the Factory Act is, or such as the Bleaching Works now is?—Certainly.

4863. Do you think it a more practical mode of remedying the evil?—Certainly.

4864. To act upon the bringing forward of such a measure would entirely frustrate the benevolent object?—I think so.

4865. With regard to your inquiries in Lancashire; before you went down to Lancashire, were you led to suppose that there was any evil of that nature existing, that is to say, the extensive employment of women and children; had your mind been influenced at all by the cause of inquiry?—I do not believe I was aware of the fact.

4866. You were not aware that these long hours were employed?—I knew nothing about the bleaching population, and I never saw a bleaching work.

4867. You had not heard as to whether long hours were customary, and whether

whether women and children were employed in the night?—I do not think I had any knowledge whatever of it. H. S. Tremmleere,
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4868. Was not the theory of your course more to inquire whether there was any evil first, and then to find out whether there was a remedy afterwards?—Certainly.

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4869. And therefore you thought it more sensible to inquire what the nature of the evil was, before inquiring what was to be the remedy?—Undoubtedly.

4870. Are you aware that the factory masters and bleaching masters have their agents about the Houses of Parliament, or that they have put paid agents at the door of the House of Commons, and even in this very room; and that you can hardly move about the House without seeing the agents of the bleaching and factory masters?—I have understood that that is so, and I may say I have seen some.

4871. Do you think there is anything less honourable in the workpeople employing an agent than the masters?—Not at all.

4872. It is quite as honourable?—Quite.

4873. Do you think it less honourable either to the agent or the parties interested to employ an agent?—Not at all.

4874. You think that they stand on a perfect equality with the masters and their agents?—Perfectly, in my opinion.

4875. Do you not consider it very ungenerous to insinuate motives and imputations on the part of one party against the other, that are altogether unfounded in fact?—For my own part, I should most studiously abstain from doing anything of the sort.

4876. Mr. Dalgleish.] The result of your inquiry has been, I believe, to find that it is injurious to persons who work in these hot stoves, that that is the principal injury?—In the west of Scotland.

4877. And all over the districts you visited in Ireland, Scotland, and France?—Not in the hot stoves only, but in the finishing rooms.

4878. You found it injurious to their health to work in the hot stoves?—My observation was, that a great number of the females employed in these hot stoves did look as if they were injuriously affected in their health by it.

4879. Have you any reason to suppose that the other operations in bleaching works are also injurious to health?—In the finishing rooms in Lancashire, although, as has been very properly said, the temperature is low, and there are no floating particles to affect the lungs, still the long hours of labour of young persons had evidently affected the health of many.

4880. Then it is the long hours that you fancy are injurious where the atmosphere is good?—Even where the atmosphere is good.

4881. Where it is cool, agreeable, and well ventilated?—Yes; and, together with the long hours, the other—

4882. Do you think it necessary to shorten the hours of labour, even where there is no sanitary necessity for it?—Yes, in consequence of the length of the hours.

4883. Did you question any of the persons that were not working in stoves, but were working in bleaching works, about their objection to the length of the hours?—Yes, I did.

4884. What was the result of your inquiry?—The general impression left upon my mind was, that the long hours were very much objected to by a considerable number of the other workpeople, although they did not themselves work either in the hot stoves or lapping rooms.

4885. Did you make any inquiry of those persons whether they had taken any means to relieve themselves from working those long hours?—In the west of Scotland they had, by an organisation among themselves, and by inducing the masters to meet with them and discuss the matter; that had to a certain extent produced an alleviation of those hours for a time.

4886. The masters were a party to this?—Yes, and a great number of them most willing parties.

4887. But ultimately that arrangement fell through?—Yes.

4888. Did you find that the persons left those works where these long hours prevailed, and went to some other employment?—I cannot charge my memory with the fact.

4889. Then your opinion is, from your investigation, that the hours of labour in all bleaching works should be limited to ten, according to the Bill?—Yes.

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4890. Do you consider the same description of labour that is carried on in bleaching works in a good atmosphere, more injurious to health than if carried on in a private dwelling?—Not in what is properly speaking a bleach-work, because a great deal of the work in a bleach-work proper is very much in the air; the complaints that I heard about the effects of the employment in the bleaching part of it has reference to the boys being frequently wetted, and that injurious results followed.

4891. And the women the same?—Yes.

4892. This Act I see, clause 5, exempts private dwellings altogether from its operation?—Yes.

4893. I believe in large washing establishments the custom is, that the women get up at an early hour, three or four o'clock on a washing day, so as to make a long day of it; do you suppose it is equally injurious to them working those long hours in a common washing-house with the steam arising from the tubs, as if they were doing the same operation in a bleach-work?—The inquiry had reference to young females and boys chiefly.

4894. Take girls of 18?—It is very possible that in a great number of domestic employments a great deal of work may be done injurious to the health of the persons so employed; but it is a question for the Legislature to determine, first of all the nature and extent of the grievance, and the possibility of remedying it.

4895. But you think that the injury to the health would be the same in both cases?—I dare say it might be, though the analogy is not complete; because as regards the bleaching works, there is another department, the hot stoves and the lapping-rooms.

4896. I am excluding the stoves; I much wish to confine my question to the other operations, to the operations that are perfectly healthful in a bleach-work?—I dare say that effects injurious to health may be produced in a private family, as in a bleach-work.

4897. In answer to a question you have said that it would be better to shorten the hours of labour of women and children, rather than one great measure which would give the whole of the women and children in the country the advantage of short hours?—If anybody would show it to be possible to protect any large class of females who are overworking in such a manner as to be injurious to their health, I dare say it would be a desirable thing to arrive at, but it is generally considered impracticable to extend legislation so as to reach domestic employments.

4898. You think it would be desirable, if it could be made practicable, to shorten the hours of labour to 10 hours a day?—That statement appears to me to be too broad; there are a great number of employments.

4899. Wherever it is possible?—No; because, although it might be possible, it might not be at all necessary; the employment might go on for more than 10 hours a day in many operations, public and private, without any injury.

4900. Then will you explain to me why that employment should not go on in the healthy departments of a bleach-work?—In what is a healthy department of a bleach-work for men, it is asserted, and I believe with truth, that boys are apt to suffer, and especially when the hours of work are very much prolonged; and, therefore, if an Act of Parliament is to be introduced to protect females and boys in one portion of a bleach-work, I do not see how you can very well exclude another portion, although the evil in the latter might not be so great as in the former.

4901. Should you not fancy it possible to increase the stoves so much in the bleach-works that they would do the whole work within 10 hours?—I know so little about the operation that I cannot answer that question.

4902. Should you not suppose, from your knowledge of affairs generally, that that could be done?—I should think it could be done.

4903. Then would it not be amply sufficient for the purpose of this Act, that the Act should only extend to the processes which are found injurious to health?—I apprehend that even what the Honourable Member would call a process not injurious to health, is injurious to the health of a certain number of persons, though not of so many as the other processes.

4904. Then, would it not be more natural that that certain number should leave those works and seek work elsewhere, which is not injurious to their health, than that the whole system of the country should be disturbed for the sake of a few?—That is a question for the Legislature rather than me.

4905. I believe

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4905. I believe you would say that it would be better that they should leave it?—I am not prepared to say.

4906. Then you fancy that three or four delicate people being in a work should be a reason for the whole of the people in that work ceasing to work 10 hours a day?—It is not a question of three or four people in one work; I am speaking of the aggregate.

4907. Your opinion is that, in a sanitary point of view, certain operations in bleach-works are injurious to women and children?—Yes.

4908. That there are operations which are not injurious?—Yes.

4909. Those operations which are not injurious to the health in a bleach-work are allowed by this Act to be carried on in a private house?—Yes.

4910. Is there any reason, in your opinion, why, as they are allowed to be carried on in private houses, they should not be allowed to be carried on in bleach works?—That depends upon how far you would carry out legislation; but I think there is a fallacy in what you put; you assume that none of the persons employed in the bleaching part of the operation are injuriously affected in their health; it is asserted that the boys are; and that, taking the bleach-works generally, there are a great number of boys employed in what to men is a healthy occupation, and that the boys are continually being exposed to wet and to dry heat, and are constantly liable to injury in their health.

4911. Is it your experience that boys exposed to alternations of wet, dry, heat, and cold in a bleach-work are more injured than by working on a farm, exposed to every alternation of heat, cold, wet, and dry?—I can conceive the condition of things very different as regards farm labour and those in bleach-works: there is a dampness about a bleach-work, and a cold given off, which is very different from that which would be found in the open air, frequent draughts. I can conceive it quite possible that a boy might lose his health in a bleach-work, and at the same time be able to stand agricultural work, exposed to all the vicissitudes of weather.

4912. You speak of extending legislation to such and such things; is it not possible to curtail legislation to that portion of a work where legislation is really necessary?—I cannot say that it is not possible; it is for those who think it is possible to show that it is possible, without letting in incidental evils and evasions of an Act.

4913. Supposing that the stoves were proved to be positively injurious to health, and that an Act was brought in to force all persons who have works that have stoves to shut those stoves at six o'clock at night?—I do not think that would do, because a great deal of the work that is injurious to health is in what are called the finishing-rooms, where the stoves are not, or in the lapping-rooms.

4914. Do you suppose this is more injurious to health than a boy apprenticed to a tailor?—I do not know; I never saw a boy apprenticed to a tailor.

4915. Do you suppose that a boy walking about on his feet, and moving about his feet, is likely to have his health more injured than a boy sitting cross-legged for 10, 12 or 14 hours a day?—I have not the means of drawing any comparison between them.

4916. But I am asking merely your opinion; I suppose you think a tailor's boy would be quite as liable to injure his health as a boy moving about?—As a matter of opinion, I should say that he was not as liable, because these boys employed in the lapping-rooms at the bleach works go about a great deal on their legs; and get very tired.

4917. *Mr. Kirk.*] There is one class of employment in this city which comes almost under the observation of everybody, which I will just ask a question or two about; you are aware that a very large number of females, the parties mostly interested in this inquiry, are employed in gin palaces, and as barmaids, and as attendants in cigar shops, every day in the week, Sundays included?—Yes.

4918. Would it be, do you think, well that the hours of those persons should be regulated?—As far as I understand, the principle hitherto followed in legislating for the protection of the health of females and boys, has not attempted to deal with domestic employments or individual interests; it has not yet, as far as I am aware, extended beyond large establishments where numbers of people are collected together, and upon whom the legislature can operate by means of paid agents; if you were to extend the principle to domestic matters, so as to interfere with what goes on in a private house, you would have an army of inspectors and agents, and, in fact, your legislation would be impracticable.

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4919. I am not speaking of private houses, I specially guarded my inquiry with respect to public-houses; I call any gin-shop a public-house licensed by Government, and therefore known by the Government, and recognised by the Government; I applied it to that, and that only?—If I am asked as a matter of opinion, all I can say is that it seems to me that you cannot distinguish between such a house and any other house licensed, such as a grocer's shop, or a tobacconist's, and, therefore, if you apply the same argument to a public-house, you must go further; and if you once admit the principle, there is no reason why you should not protect the washerwomen to whom an honourable Member has just referred.

4920. I carefully excluded everything but public-houses, and I thought I asked you a very simple question, and I had hoped for a candid and straightforward answer, and I expect it from you; whether you do not think that legislation would be necessary there?—I can only repeat my previous answer, which I believe was to the point, as far as I am able.

4921. I was not aware that you had given me an answer; you answered me with reference to domestic houses; I inquire with reference to public-houses?—On the ground that a public-house is licensed, and, therefore, to a certain extent under the inspection of the Government, I say that if that is admitted, you might apply it to grocers; I think that it would be a vicious principle, because it would entrench on domestic employments.

4922. Domestic employments in a public-house; the very term is "public?"—It seems to me that there is that distinction; it is merely a house.

4923. Is there not another reason, that is, that the parties are employed not merely on six days of the week, from six in the morning till 12 or one the next morning, but that they are employed also on the Sunday one-third of the day; should not that be a good reason for a philanthropist?—On grounds of public morality you interfere to prevent public-houses of that description being open more than a certain number of hours, but not on the ground of excess of work; and I think if you take the ground of excess of work you cannot stop with the public-houses; you admit a principle which would carry you into every house where you thought a boy or a girl worked over-hours.

4924. How would it do, supposing you began in that way; how would you manage about those parties here that are constantly employed every night, the great purveyors to the London markets?—When a case is made out for inquiry, I shall be very glad to consider it; at present I am really unacquainted with anything of the sort.

4925. Do you mean to say that you are not aware that parties carry provisions to Covent-garden and other markets during the hours of the night?—I know the fact that Covent-garden is supplied, and that a great deal of labour is necessary in the night for that purpose; but I think that any attempt to interfere with it would be going beyond the principle that has hitherto guided legislation with regard to this subject.

4926. Mr. Turner.] You explained, in answer to a question which I put to you, that you did not choose to confer any further with the masters, because some of them you found were inclined to repudiate what they had stated to you before?—Yes, one of them.

4927. That is rather a sweeping reflection on a number of respectable masters; have you any objection to say to whom your remark applies?—My remark applies more particularly to Mr. Hardcastle; but at the same time there were present at that meeting Mr. Ainsworth and three or four other bleaching masters, whose names I do not at present remember.

4928. Have you a copy of what Mr. Hardcastle wrote, which you call his opinion of what legislation ought to be?—It is given in the evidence.

4929. Did Mr. Hardcastle remonstrate with you, and tell you that you had put words into his mouth which he had never used?—Never.

4930. He never did?—I have not the slightest recollection that he did anything of the kind.

4931. I do not put the question without having ground for doing so; was it not after you had sent him a printed copy of what you called his evidence, that he made that remonstrance?—I wish to be clearly understood with regard to this proceeding; Mr. Hardcastle, in his office, proposed to me a certain basis of legislation; that is to say, he said he thought that such and such a measure would be satisfactory; he drew that up in his own handwriting, gave me a copy of it, or allowed me to take a copy of it, and send it to Mr. Ainsworth; Mr. Ainsworth

made

made some objection to it; I met the masters some time afterwards, in order, as I believed, to discuss these points, as to what legislation would be unobjectionable to them; and when I met the masters on that occasion, I found that Mr. Hardcastle was disposed to repudiate that proposition which he had drawn up. I felt very indignant upon that occasion, and I told him that as I had the original in my possession, I should publish it. The discussion did not last long. I found that the masters were not inclined to entertain the question of the exact amount of legislation with me, and I very soon left.

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4932. Did he not complain that you had ignored the existence of his works, called the Bradshawworks, altogether?—I do not remember that he did, and certainly I did not ignore them because I went over his large works with him, and from all that I heard from him, and from what I saw upon the spot, full in my mind, I drew up my report.

4933. I am afraid there was some little difference of feeling between you and Mr. Hardcastle; had he not some reason to complain of some letter of introduction that you had to him, which you retained for many weeks without delivering?—I really do not remember anything of the kind; I do not believe I ever had a letter of introduction to him, that I am aware of.

4934. Did not Mr. Hardcastle produce a letter of introduction of yours from a Liverpool house to a Lancashire master bleacher, and ask why this had been asked for by you, and why you had kept that letter in your possession six or eight weeks before delivering it?—I had not the slightest recollection of anything of the kind, and I do not believe that any such occurrence took place; I had not the slightest remembrance of it; I believe it is entirely without foundation. May I be allowed just to refer to one paragraph in my Report, at page 34, section 10; and I shall feel obliged if I may be permitted to put this on record, in consequence of some evidence that I heard given relative to the necessity of protecting the linen bleach-works, or rather of giving an opportunity to the linen bleach-works to work over-time upon occasions arising from the emergency of weather:—"To the suggestions embodied in the portion of the Report relating to England (pp. 18 to 20), there is another provision which the circumstances of the linen and linen-yarn bleach-works imperatively require. In consequence of so large a portion of these processes going on in the open air, and their goods being exposed for long periods upon the grass, it will be necessary, as explained in the evidence of Dr. Boase, M.D. (p. 84), and several other gentlemen (pp. 85, 86), to enable them, on emergencies arising from the state of the weather, to employ the labour of females and boys, after the hours above described. It appears, from the concurrent testimony of those gentlemen, that the occasion will not be likely to arise more than a dozen times in the year; that a record of the necessity, when it arises, could be easily kept in a book at the office, and be shown to an inspector, when required; and that, from the nature of the case, no abuse would be likely to arise therefrom."

4935. What comment do you wish to make upon that?—Merely to state that that point had not escaped my attention, and that I was desirous that they should have the opportunity of making up for time lost in consequence of floods, or frost, or rain, and breakage of machinery.

4936. Mr. Davison.] Proof of those facts would lie upon the bleacher; he would be subject to a penalty for his rate of hours, unless he came within the exception you suggest?—I am not sure that that is so.

4937. Are you aware that in the winter those exceptions would occur daily?—According to my understanding, they would not occur daily; they would occasionally occur.

4938. Then the inspector could have the leading merchant perpetually summoned; you do not seem to know from your own actual knowledge the operation of bleaching, except so far as it has been detailed: suppose it was the case that the bleacher would be obliged to give evidence to the inspector on those occasions when he kept them any time beyond the prescribed hours?—He would enter into a book the occasions of over-work.

4939. Would you make that book evidence?—No; I should presume that a Government inspector would be easily satisfied with the evidence of one of the superior workmen or the master, because there would be plenty of persons to contradict him if the evidence brought before him was not true.

4940. Do not interruptions occur in winter from floods very frequently?—In certain localities.

4941. In Ireland?—It may occur.

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4942. And

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4942. And frost, for instance, occurring every day in winter?—Yes.
4943. These frosts and these floods necessarily occasion interruptions, as we have it in evidence, to the bleaching processes?—Yes.
4944. Then I think I may assume, and I think you are justified in assuming, that these interruptions will be frequent in winter?—Yes.
4945. Then if it rested entirely with the inspector to call for evidence, would not the consequence be an interruption to the process almost weekly?—I do not think, practically, it would be found that any inspector would be likely to give any such unreasonable trouble.
4946. Mr. *Dalglish*.] You say you would give a certain license to linen bleachers; is there any reason why the same license should not be extended to bleachers in cotton?—I think the evidence I collected showed that it would be very possible to arrange the work in bleach-works, so that they could stop.
4947. You say you would extend a certain license to the linen bleachers?—Yes.
4948. I want to know why linen should be put in a different position to cotton, under the same circumstances?—Because the liability to interruptions from the weather are very different from those.
4949. The breakage of machinery or any stoppage?—I say, as regards cotton bleach-works, there should be a power for making up time lost by breakage of machinery; but as regards anything else, the evidence seemed to be to show that the process can be so arranged as to enable a bleacher to stop within a few minutes, and there would be no necessity for keeping boys under age to work over-time.

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