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Children's Employment Commission.

REPORTS by R. H. HORNE, ESQ., on the Employment of Children and Young Persons in the Iron Trades and other Manufactures of South Staffordshire, and the neighbouring parts of Worcestershire and Shropshire; and on the actual State, Condition, and Treatment of such Children and Young Persons.

WOLVERHAMPTON.

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TO HER MAJESTY'S COMMISSIONERS.

Wolverhampton, May 25th, 1841.

TOWN OF WOLVERHAMPTON.

Report by *R. H. Horne,* Esq.

GENTLEMEN,

1. Before leaving the district of South Staffordshire I beg leave to transmit you my Report on the moral and physical condition of the children and young persons, of both sexes, employed in the manufactories and trades of Wolverhampton.

2. This Report does not include the whole parish (except in a very few cases where the inclusion is expressly stated), but the town of Wolverhampton only, which, as you are aware, has been the centre of my examinations and inquiries in this district.

3. I herewith also transmit you the whole of the evidence I have taken in this town, comprising the statements of 123 witnesses, from all classes and grades of life, of both sexes and of all ages. Among these witnesses you will find that 96 are children and young persons.

4. The chief articles of trade here are ironmongery, in nearly all its branches. Great numbers of children and young persons are employed in these works; next to these, in the numbers of children and young persons employed, are the japanners and tin-plate workers; and next, the workers in steel, and the founders in brass.

5. I trust you will find that the other trades, coming within the province of this inquiry, have received due attention in the following Report.

6. There are no mines, pits, blast-furnaces, or rolling-mills (except one) in the town.

7. The whole population of the town of Wolverhampton, all ranks and grades inclusive, are engaged in the various manufactures previously mentioned, and others to which allusion has been made.

8. All matters of a private nature, relating to patents, secret processes in

EVIDENCE COLLECTED BY R. H. HORNE, Esq.

WOLVERHAMPTON.

No. 1. March 6. Mr. *William Walters*, aged 38, Registrar of Births, Deaths, and Marriages:

TOWN OF WOLVERHAMPTON. Evidence collected by *R. H. Horne*, Esq. No. 1.

Has been all his life a resident in Wolverhampton, except five years. Thinks the children and young persons employed in the various kinds of manufactures, especially that of the locksmiths, are worked too hard; they work too many hours daily, and get too little wages for it—decidedly too little. They work from 14 to 16 hours each day on an average, particularly those employed by the locksmiths; they could not live else. The small masters among the locksmiths all work just as hard; they must do it to live. The treatment, as regards the conduct of these masters towards the children and young persons, is pretty fair generally; but their living is poor; they are bare of means. The children have not enough to eat. They are allowed sufficient time to take their meals. The places where they work are often unwholesome enough—foul enough, goodness knows. They only think of getting up the work. All places are filthy from neglect, not from the unwholesomeness of the neighbourhood. The unwholesomeness is the case, also, in some places, from the neglect and dirtiness of the inhabitants, who live wretchedly—dreadful. Salop-street, and its courts, are the worst in his district; yet his district (the western) is more healthy than the other. His return of births is considerably more than that of his deaths. Accidents from machinery, and in the pits, occur very frequently in the course of every year; those in the pits numerous; those from machinery comparatively few—very few. Thinks the children and young persons have no holidays; never heard of any, except the Sabbath-day, and then he expects some of them are employed some way or other. Is not aware of any sort of care being taken of the children after they have done work. In the winter they go to bed, in the summer they run the streets. The parents say that their children are cut off. Thinks that there is not so much difference in the mortality of those employed and those not employed as one might expect; there is no great difference in the condition, apparently, of those employed and those not employed, as to food and clothing; there is no difference in their clothing in winter and summer—not a bit. When they grow up, they are not good for much in property or person. Those who went to work very early get broken up in spirit. They have no time for education, barring the Sabbath-day, and very few avail themselves of this; they are very ignorant. Thinks they die earlier than others; such work for years must shorten their days. They look old when they are not; they seldom live to be really old—very rarely.

No. 2. March 6. Mr. *George Young*, aged 38, Registrar and Schoolmaster:

No. 2.

Thinks the general treatment of the children by masters is not severe, but tolerant. Thinks the boys are best treated by the japanners, and worst treated by the locksmiths. Ample time is allowed for meals; wishes they had any time for recreation and improvement; they have none, except with a few of the japanners. The places where children work in are in general bad, owing to the nature of their employments and the construction of the buildings, which are very much confined. There is a general want of ventilation, more particularly among the japanners. Not many accidents occur from the machinery, but a great many in the pits. Thinks the children have two half holidays and five whole-day holidays in the course of a twelvemonth, generally; some masters do not give so many. In general and almost invariably the children and young persons are hired by the adult workmen, and paid by them. Believes the parents receive the money. Corporal punishments are inflicted by butties (as they are called in the pits), and by gaffers (as they are called in the manufactories), for neglect of labour; thinks for nothing else. They give them a good threshing with anything that comes to hand, rope, strap, or stick, or the hand. Does not recollect any being seriously injured by it. Thinks they are never punished for any moral delinquency; never knew of one. Considers the physical condition of the children in manufactories worse than that of those in the neighbourhood who are not so employed; worse than the children of mechanics, stonemasons, bricklayers, and carpenters; thinks their size and stature is injured. Their food is precarious; sometimes they have plenty, sometimes not enough; the quality of the food equally varies; it is principally owing to the improvidence and intemperate habits of the parents. The children are very badly clothed; if they have a change-suit, the pawnbroker is the wardrobe-keeper generally; no difference in their clothing, summer and winter. Cleanliness is not encouraged; filthiness prevails to a very alarming extent. Amount of sickness among them is very great; a great deal of consumption in his district—the Wolverhampton Eastern District; thinks the cases of consumption are induced by the nature of their work, their food, and want of cleanliness and proper clothing. They do not leave work till eight, some not till nine o'clock at night, and then they are thrown upon the streets. The moral condition of the children and young persons, he should say, was very bad; morals were very low. The whole amount of religious instruction they obtain is from the Sunday-schools, but they are not generally well attended. Considers the instructions the children, who come to his

TOWN OF WOLVERHAMPTON.

Evidence collected by *H. Horne*, Esq.

No. 2.

school, receive, are lost, because they are taken away just as their intellects are beginning to develop; they are always taken away at the ages of eight and nine—sometimes as early as seven: the instructor has no chance; has more satisfaction from the children of those who are not in the manufactories, and who remain till 12 years of age. Teaches upon the system of the British and Foreign School Society. The school has no clerical superintendent; religious instruction is communicated by the master; was educated himself at a private school, and graduated at the Borough-road institution. Thinks the instructions given at the girls' school were recently of the best order, both as to utility and morality; is not sufficiently conversant with its state at present. The children's schooling is paid by the parents; it is 2*d.* per week each scholar; at the National School the children only pay 1*d.* per week, until they write in copy-books, and then 2*d.*; but the parents would rather spend the 2*d.* The employers do not take an interest in the attendance of the children at the schools—at least they never manifested it; the parents no interest at all.

No. 3. March 6. Mr. *Henry Nicholls Payne*, aged 37, Superintendent Registrar of Wolverhampton and Seisdon district:

No. 3.

Thinks the treatment of the children varies with the class of employers; thinks it worst with the locksmiths—that is, the small masters dependent upon their own labour and that of their apprentices; most particularly at Willenhall and Wednesfield. Children have extra holidays sometimes when important parts of the machinery are broken, or work is slack; during that holiday they run wild. Children are apprenticed to the masters in the japan trade, not to the adult workmen. Thinks the growth injured among the japanners, iron-foundries, and more particularly among the screw and tip-makers; with these it is all piece-work, therefore strength is over-taxed for profit. The food of the children is not of a sufficiently good quality; inferior meat is often given them; calves, which come prematurely into the world, find a ready sale by candle-light in the markets, together with very bad beef of old cows which it was necessary to kill hastily, or which are sometimes dead before they come into the hands of the butcher; and all these are frequently purchased for apprenticed children. This, of course, is not the case with all masters, some of them being careful to supply proper provisions—they would be disgusted at the meat which is thus purchased by so many. Thinks the physical condition of the children in the mines much better than that of the children in the manufactories; attributes it to a better supply of food among the former, and not working piece-work, which is so general in the manufactories. The children in the latter work from 12 to 14 hours daily, deducting two hours for meals; but with the screw and tip makers they work more—perhaps an hour more. No systematic plan of ascertaining the ages of children, when about to be apprenticed, is adopted; the parents say the child is such an age, and that is received by the magistrates. Cannot reply as to the comparative mortality of children employed in the mines and manufactories with that of children not so employed, because such information could only be correctly given from tables, which are not kept; has no authority for keeping them. Out of 500 registers of deaths in Wolverhampton (eastern district), the relative proportions up to 18 years of age are as follow:—Under 1 year, 130; from 1 and under 3, 72; from 3 to 6, 22; from 6 to 9, 6; from 9 to 13, 10; from 13 to 16, 4; from 16 to 18, 3.

(Signed) HENRY NICHOLLS PAYNE.

No. 4. March 6. *Thomas Stonor Simkiss*, Esq., late surgeon:

No. 4.

Practised during 20 years at Wolverhampton and the neighbourhood. Thinks the treatment of the children very much depends upon the masters' circumstances; they share the privations of the small masters. Their morals are not at all attended to, in general. Some of the Dissenters send their apprentices to Sunday-schools; with the majority they run wild on the Sunday. Education is entirely neglected, except with those occasionally availing themselves of the Sunday-schools. The small masters generally take no sort of interest in the education of their apprentices, nor do their parents; the large masters, who take no in-door apprentices, seldom trouble themselves in any way as to the education and moral conduct of the boys and girls employed by them, so that they do their work and attend to their hours. There are numerous and serious accidents in the collieries, but comparatively very few in the manufactories of this district; there is little machinery used that is dangerous; most of the operations are manual. The physical condition of the children and young persons in the collieries is superior to that of the children and young persons engaged in manufactories; they are better fed, and do not work so many hours; has not observed any malformations among the latter, but considers their size and stature deteriorated where they began to work at an early age. Cleanliness is not encouraged at all. Children of the poorer classes are nearly all employed in some way or other, consequently there can be no comparison drawn as to their condition of health, or anything else, with others of the same class in the neighbourhood. After the daily labour of the children and young persons they would be in no fit state to receive any instruction; they need all the remainder of their time for rest. Thinks that girls who have worked during childhood are not injured so as to be rendered less fit than others for performing the duties of wives and mothers in after-life; they are not, generally speaking, employed laboriously; many of them work in manufactories and go out to service alternately. The habits of the parents are improvident, and often dissolute. Has noticed that in trade where large numbers congregate, and the occupation admits of conversation, that those adults thus employed are more depraved than others. Thinks that this applies to all trades, propor-

tionately; and that sedentary employments have a vicious effect, which does not result from more active employments.

No. 5. March 7. Mr. *Richard Castle*, aged 36, Superintendent of Police:

No. 5.

Has held that office in the town of Wolverhampton four years. Thinks that the general treatment of the children and young persons by masters is hard. There are frequently complaints made by the masters that the boys are idle; the boys say, in their defence, that the stent (or work allotted them to do) is too heavy; thinks that, from the number of hours they work, it *is* too heavy. Has not heard of children or young persons making the complaints themselves, nor of the parents doing so; thinks that the reason they do not is from fear. Considers it disgraceful that boys should be bound from as early an age as they can tumble them down the pit—from seven or eight years of age—to the butties or doggies of the collieries for a period, he thinks, not less than seven years. Considers that the japanners treat the children and young persons best of any of the different classes of employers in the town, and the locksmiths treat them worst. The hour at which the boys and young persons leave work in the town varies from eight to nine in the evening; at the same hour the factory-girls, not regular street-walkers, are out to meet them; one makes the other bad, and whether this begins with the girls or the boys, it ends in the same thing. Some of these factory-girls are ultimately driven to be commonly on the town.

Depositions taken from the Queen Street Chapel Sunday School.

No. 6. March 7. *Harriet Bisbey*, aged 12:

No. 6.

Works at punching washers; finds it rather hard work; likes it pretty well—as well as any other work. Works 12 hours a-day, with an hour and a half for meals. Her master treats her kindly. Gets 3*s.* 6*d.* a-week; does not work piece-work; is paid by the day; has holidays two or three times a-year; is not an apprentice; is hired by the week. Has attended the Sunday-school; does not know how long, but a great while—three or four years, take one with the other; can read a little, not write. Does not know on which side her heart is; does not know what month it is, nor what year; has heard of Valentine's day; knows the Queen's name—Victoria; never heard of Wellington, nor of Nelson; has heard of Buonaparte. Always says her prayers before she goes to sleep.

Healthy, but of stunted stature; read very poorly; had a serious, hard-working expression of face; was cleanly in appearance, and well clothed.

No. 7. March 7. *Anna Beddoes*, aged 12:

No. 7.

Works at japan-polishing, at the old Hall, Ryton and Walton's; finds the work easy for her; likes it very well; her master treats her kindly—she is sure he does; gets 2*s.* per week; is hired by the week. Has attended the Sunday-school a great while; cannot tell how long; thinks about three years; can read in the Testament. Feels happy at the Old Hall; hopes she is not to be fetched away by this here—by my doing anything at her. The last thing she thinks of before she goes to sleep is her prayers.

Not unhealthy, but her size and stature were very meagre and indifferent. Had an anxious look. Read very well. Was not particularly cleanly, nor well clothed.

No. 8. March 7. *William Cox*, aged 13:

No. 8.

Works at stop-locks, with his father; finds it pretty fairish hardish.

Indifferent in appearance. Dialect unintelligible.

No. 9. March 7. *Enoch Sidebottom*, aged 13:

No. 9.

Works at Keys, with his father. They do well, as far as he knows.

Appearance indifferent. Excessively stupid and unconcerned.

No. 10. March 7. *John Barnsley*, aged 15:

No. 10.

Works at Keys; an in-door apprentice to James Sidebottom; has enough to eat; thinks his meat good. His master seldom beats him; only beats him for one thing—going out without leave; has no wages. Does not know which side his heart is. Says his prayers the last thing at night. Has never heard of Nelson, nor of Wellington; has heard talk of Boney; has never heard of Guy Fox. Can read, not write.

He could not read a word; he could only read (that is, he knew) his letters. These three last witnesses were not of healthful appearance, nor cleanly, nor well clothed—they were disagreeable, even after they had left the room.

No. 11. March 7. * * * * * *, aged 17 nearly:

No. 11.

Works at brass cabinet locks; is an in-door apprentice; master treats him well; has enough to eat; the same as his master eats for himself; is beaten when he does anything wrong or that; not beaten very often; feels it only for a day or two when beaten badly; thinks he deserves it sometimes. Can read pretty well; has never been put to writing; has attended a Sunday-school now and then, never regularly; that was his own fault. Has never heard of St. George and the Dragon, or Guy Fox, or Nelson, or Wellington; has heard of Robinson Crusoe. Thinks most about marble-playing, when he is alone; can

only play when he gets out at meal-times. Works from six in the morning till nine at night in the summer; from seven till eight or nine in the winter. Was bound apprentice at 13; has to serve till he is 21, with no wages.

Seemed in good health, but was of very stunted stature; was tolerably clean and well clothed: he read very well. 5

No. 12. March 7. * * * * * *, age "going a 9:"

No. 12. Is a nail-caster. His master treats him well; has not enough to eat; thinks his master has enough; his master never beats him, but is good natured. Gets 4*s*. a-week; has worked eight years at it—that is as long as he can recollect—four or five years; does not know. Can read, not write; has attended the Sunday-school, he thinks, about two years 10 regularly. Does not often get into disgrace. Says his prayers at night. Does not know what is the use of the sun or the moon; understands for light, when explained. Works from six in the morning till five at night in summer, and from seven till eight at night in winter.

A poor little meagre creature; he could not read, only knew his letters: was not clean nor well 15 clothed.

No. 13. March 7. *John Venables*, aged 13:

No. 13. Is a japanner. Works at Shoolbred's, late Mander's; many boys work with him there; is an out-door apprentice. His master and the foremen treat him kindly. Has worked a year there; has wages, 3*s*. a-week; wages are regularly raised at certain times, according to age. 20 Works from seven in the morning till eight at night, with two hours and twenty minutes allowed in the course of the day for meals, in the summer; one hour and twenty minutes allowed in winter; they have not the hour allowed for breakfast, but go to work at eight o'clock in the morning instead of seven. Can read very well; write very well; has attended the Queen-street Sunday-school several years; plays games of ball and marbles 25 sometimes, and is happy enough; does not wish to change his work—a japanner; has got to serve till he is 21; would not like to be a locksmith; they (the boys) are not so well treated by the locksmiths. Generally says his prayers the last thing at night, and the first thing in the morning; says the Lord's Prayer.

This boy was healthy and intelligent; read and wrote very well; was cleanly and well clothed. 30

No. 14. March 7. *George Darby*, aged 13:

No. 14. Works at a foundry; makes saucepans; works for his brother, who is a workman in the same manufactory, who gives his mother 5*s*. a-week for him. Works only five days a week at most, sometimes only four; not enough work to do for more in his business. Works from six in the morning and knocking off sometimes at five. Boys are pretty well 35 treated in his foundry, some of them, some not, it is according to what work they do. Has not been to school above a month or two in his life; can't spell very well in a book.

This boy seemed healthy, but not well grown; was not cleanly nor well clothed.

No. 15. March 7. *Thomas Pardoe*, aged 12:

No. 15. Works at locks at Mr. Hicken's—an out-door apprentice; there are two other apprentices where he is, one about 16, the other about 18. His master does not beat any of 40 them; treats him well; jaws the other chaps when they don't mind their eye. Goes to work at six in the summer and leaves off at eight at night, with half an hour allowed for breakfast, one hour for dinner, and half an hour for tea. He is well. One of the apprentices, he as is 16, sometimes gets sick; does not know why. Thinks Mr. Hicken is kind 45 to them. Has been at the Blue School three years and a half, and at the Queen Street Sunday-school about six months, he thinks. Knows what month it is—the 7th of March; does not know what year. Has never heard of Solomon; has never heard the name of Moses; has never read it in any lesson; has never heard of King George; has heard of Nelson; has never heard of Wellington; has never heard of Robinson Crusoe, nor Don 50 Quixote, nor Bonaparte; has heard of Boney. Can read and write; wishes most, that is oftenest, he could go to a night-school, only it would be too late. Says his prayers at night; thinks when he wakes of what his master will say if he is late; is often late when he has been kept late at night.

This last witness was very healthy looking, but very indifferent in size and stature for his age. 55 He could read and write well; was cleanly and well clothed.

No. 16. March 8. Mr. *Thomas Adams*, aged 37, Upholsterer and Cabinet Maker:

No. 16. Has taught gratuitously in Sunday-schools these last twenty-five years; superintends the boys' department of the Queen Street Chapel Sunday-school; has resided in Wolver- 60 hampton eight or nine years. Thinks the japanners treat the children and young persons best; the small masters among the locksmiths treat them worst; and coupled with that some of the small branches in the tin-trade. Knows instances in which he is certain the children had not enough to eat. Considers some of the small masters are more ignorant than the children they employ; thinks the physical condition of the better sort of 65 children in the town very good, and the others tolerable generally. The misery of the lower class of those employed results from the improvidence and bad habits of the pa-

rents. Many of the small masters among the locksmiths, that is, the adult workmen employing apprentices or boys under them, are of dissolute habits. They are often seen wandering about the fields on a Sunday, imperfectly dressed and very dirty. Often stroll about for hours or lie on banks in the day, and pass the evenings in beer-shops; they very often continue doing the same on Monday and Tuesday. As a consequence of this, they work their apprentices very hard at the close of the week to make up for lost time. Hopes he has said nothing which can be construed into a libel—wishes to be careful of that. Thinks that the better class of masters take an interest in the education of those employed, of all ages, but that the great majority of masters are careless of the matter. They are listless. Thinks that the better class of masters would second legislative interference for the benefit, both physical and educational, of the children employed, but only this class. The parents generally would do nothing to forward it. Never heard of an industrial school in the place; such an institution is much wanted; thinks it would be of great benefit if the labouring classes, as well as the masters, could be roused to appreciate it; thinks the labouring classes would all have enough to eat (except at times of very bad trade) if they were provident. Instruction is not communicated at the Queen Street Chapel Sunday-school upon any particular system, but the teachers are anxious to avail themselves of every advantage that might be offered to them in the way of institutions in the town; was educated himself at a private school; teachers are not paid; the children pay nothing. At the Queen Street School the education is chiefly moral and religious. Is very anxious for industrial schools to be established, where labour and education could be combined. The attendance at the Queen Street schools, boys department, averages about 155 in summer and 130 in winter; the rooms are warmed by a hot water apparatus; the attendance is generally about half the number belonging to the school.

No. 17. March 8. *John Barker*, Esq., Magistrate:

No. 17.

Is one of the acting magistrates; superintends the girls' department of the Queen Street Chapel Sunday School. Stated from the books that the average attendance of girls in summer was from 90 to 120, and from 80 to 100 in winter; has observed that (numerically speaking) the number of the parents of children, in this department of the school, who can read and write, closely corresponded with the number of parents who attended some place of worship; and that the number of the parents who could read and write themselves, was double the number of those parents who sent their children to the school, but could *not* read and write themselves.

No. 18. March 8. Mr. *Jeremiah Wynn*, Merchant and Factor, firm of ERP, WYNN, and ERP:

No. 18.

A native of Wolverhamptor, and has resided here these forty years. Thinks the children and young persons are treated best by the factors and japanners, and the worst off with the little locksmiths, who are badly off themselves. If these little masters get into a good run of business, they eat and drink it away and waste their time. At these seasons their boys are better treated, fed, and clothed, but no care is taken of their going to school, generally: there are a few worthy exceptions. The dissenters have done much in this town in the way of education by Sunday schools. What this town is miserably deficient in is a public school of education for all denominations; that is the greatest deprivation they have. Instead of crying out "agitate," thinks we should all cry out "educate." Considers brass-foundry, that is, the casting-shop of a brass-foundry, is the most injurious to health in this town; men are never known to live to an old age; can't say that the boys die off early; they have not strength to lift the pots of metal out of the furnace, but still they are made unwell by the fumes: it does not kill them off at once. The boys in this town are generally apprenticed. Not much machinery in the town; the two principal places for it are Clark and Co., Horsley Fields, Hemingsley and Co., Little's Lane, Stafford Street. The first is an iron-foundry, the second a nail and tip manufactory. The machinery in those places is dangerous, and not boxed off; thinks not at all. Considers that the boys have enough general holidays, such as at the fair, the races, wakes, &c., but have little or no regular time for recreation or improvement: their meal hours are liberal, quite sufficient; would be glad if there was a general playground, a few acres for recreation; is decidedly of opinion it would greatly improve the health of the young people and children. No alterations have taken place in conducting the works since the commencement of the year 1840, none whatever, that he is aware of—none in this place. All the children here are employed after a very young age. When trade is good the schools are better attended, both day and Sunday-schools. The parents are often extremely improvident, and the consequence of this always has a very material effect upon the children. Is not aware that there is any particular maladies among the children. The town stands in a high and healthy situation. Scarcely any of the small masters, whatever they may make at a good brisk time of trade, save or lay by money; they spend it in good living and riotous living; they live away shamefully; their loaves of bread are never cut in regular slices in a good time of trade, but hacked into irregular steps and stairs—and so of the cheese. You may see pieces lying upon the floor and about the courts and alleys. Considers the manner in which the loaf is cut an unfailing test of domestic economy; always looks into the pantry or asks to see the loaf when he wants to judge. The parents greatly need education, not merely to read and write, but

TOWN OF WOLVERHAMPTON.

Evidence collected by *R. H. Horne*, Esq.

No. 18.

moral and prudential habits. The mode of punishing boys in tin and japan manufactories is a very good one: they do not beat them, but reduce them to an inferior sort of work in the business, which mortifies them, and stimulates to a better conduct. There is no night-work in the town of Wolverhampton. Thinks the health of the children generally is not bad, but that the early age at which they are set to labour stunts both mind and body. States distinctly, as a Guardian of the Poor Law Union, that the Board never put out an apprentice, male or female, without stipulating that he or she shall be well fed, well clothed, and sent to a Sunday-school. This applies to the in-door apprentices; the Board has nothing to do with out-door apprentices; the Board never apprentices a boy or girl to a beer, or gin-shop, or to a public-house. If any complaint be made to the Board of children being improperly treated, either in their food or clothing, or being beaten in any violent or unlawful manner, such as being struck with a hammer, a file, or piece of iron, the master would be summoned before a magistrate. These cases do not often occur; but there was such a complaint last board day. A boy had been beaten with a hammer or file. Whenever such an occurrence happens a second time, the indentures are cancelled. Boys are worst treated when small masters are worst off in trade; these masters are worst off when provisions happen to be high at the same time that orders are short. Thinks that if the inhabitants could purchase American flour at the price at which it is brought into port at Liverpool, there would be no such dearness of provisions, and the working classes would be better off and more contented; they are always contented when well off; they all work very hard; in a bad time of trade many of the small locksmiths and other poor manufacturers do not taste animal food more than once or perhaps twice a-week. Being kept on a miserable pittance a long time, a sudden flush of trade, which enhances the price of their goods, makes them indulge in excesses—it is a sort of revolution.

No. 19. March 9. Miss *Anne Ward*:

No. 19.

Has been a housekeeper four years and a half in Wolverhampton. Has observed that great numbers of the adult workmen and workwomen, and parents of children, are often very dirty and ill-behaved during the whole of Sunday, but that they dress themselves on Monday, when they have money, and walk about to amuse themselves; many of them continue to do the same on Tuesday, when the weather is fine; when raining or cold, they go into the beer-shops and public-houses. These houses are often thronged in the afternoons and evenings. Thinks this a very bad example for the children; thinks that the children work during these days; the masters would insist upon it with their apprentices, and the parents would probably insist also, because the children would be earning money while the parents were spending it. March 13. Has noticed that the meat sold in the market was often very offensive indeed. Knows that a dead cow was sold to a butcher of the place by * * *; thinks it not an uncommon occurrence; many people here do not much object to it, either to buy or sell.

No. 20. March 9. *William Malum*, aged 6:

No. 20.

Works at locks with his father; his father works for his self, and has three apprentices in the house. Believes they are his brothers—yes, they are, no, they ain't, yes, they are—three brothers and a babby. Begged of me in the streets for his mother. She told him to beg in the town; she gets drunk a little sometimes, and brings nothing home. Has had enough to eat; haven't got enough to eat at home, nor the apprentices, all hungry together. Father has been drinking, is drunk now, is sure he is. He is out trying to sell locks all the same. Has been at a Sunday-school—at Mary's; a gentleman was the master. Can read; can read a book, ees, can; does not go to school now, has never a smockfrock, else he should. Never heard of heaven, only but once at a Sunday-school; never heard of Jesus Christ. Knows who made him—his mother.

This witness was begging in the streets of Wolverhampton. He was not in bad health at all, but very dirty and ill-clothed; had no appearance of being hungry: knew the names of letters only, but not the right ones: he called *t f*, *i b*, &c.

No. 21. March 11. *Rebecca Hughes*, aged 7:

No. 21.

Her father and mother were John and Mary Hughes; they worked in a stone-pit; left her all day with her sister, aged five, to mind the house; they were left to themselves all day, from six in the morning till six in the evening. Sometimes they played at hide and seek among the cinder heaps. If she had a penny she would give that boy a halfpenny between him and his brother; that would be a farthing each for the four. She would run and get it changed, and give it him before my face. Thank you, sir.

No. 22. March 11. *Edward Spruce*, aged 8:

No. 22.

His father was Edward Spruce, or *he* was Edward, and he had a mother too. They worked in the stone-pits here, over there. Left him to take care of his little brother, age about four, all day. He could read, yes, he could—meant his father could; could read the Testament; knew Isaiah; father could read him—meant Isaiah. This was his old smockfrock he had on, father's old frock, wot he worked in, not now.

These two last witnesses were seated in front of an old hut among cinder heaps, each with a younger child in its charge. They all looked well in health, and were not very dirty nor in rags. The girl was very intelligent; the boy had ideas, but confused everything.

Depositions taken at HEMINGSLEY and Co.'s Nail and Tip Manufactory.

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Evidence collected by *R. H. Horne*, Esq.

No. 23. March 12. *Catherine Lindom*, aged 10 nearly:

No. 23.

Works at place-irons* in Mr. Hemingsley's; doesn't know how many hours a day she works, but goes from seven in the morning till eight at night; can't spell her own name; finds the work hard for her; is very tired at night; has worked here a good many months, doesn't know how many; likes the work; master treats her kindly, but the man as she works for (one of the workmen of the place) beats her sometimes, not very often; doesn't know if she deserves it; is not much hurt. Goes to a Sunday-school at the old church; don't know who teaches. Has heard of heaven when at church; doesn't know what religion she is. The last thing she thinks of at night before she goes to sleep is Our Father. Never heard of John the Baptist, nor of Moses. Does not know how many twice two are.

Dirty, and a little creature for her age, but not of unhealthy appearance.

No. 24. March 12. *Mary Garner*, aged 16:

No. 24.

As to spelling her name—well, she is no scholar. Has been to school on Sundays, regular once, and a day-school in all. Left school when she was about eight or nine. Has worked at Mr. Hemingsley's ever since; works at tips; finds the work hard for her; its a great many hours to stand to work from seven in the morning till eight at night. Never heard of Job; never heard of king David. Often has pains in her back, and legs and round her legs, and feet used to swell, but are getting over it now. When she goes home at night can hardly stir. Has heard say that Victoria is Queen; never heard of King George; has heard of Valentine's day, and had a valentine; never heard of Pontius Pilate, or Pharaoh. Has heard of heaven; does not know who Jesus Christ was; has heard the name. Has a many thoughts when she is alone by herself; wishes she could go to school.

Very poorly grown for her age, badly clothed, not the least appearance of womanhood about her; rather dirty; an intelligent countenance, very much at variance with her iguorance.

No. 25. March 12. * * * * * *, aged 11:

No. 25.

Can spell his own name; can read a bit, Sir, but it isn't much; knows his letters. Finds his work very hard sometimes—when it has been wanted. Works for one of the men at Mr. Hemingsley's, going on a year and a half. The man he works for beats him sometimes; doesn't feel it for two days—nor one—but he can feel it half one. Goes to school on a Sunday sometimes; sometimes he is taken bad with a headache; thinks it's the noise of the engine all day long. Knows of some accidents; a girl had her finger took off a week afore last, and a boy got under one of the drums; his leg was broken, and the nails of his boots fled out into his legs. Has heard of heaven; can't tell if he expects to go there. Hasn't been enough to school.

Not in any apparent bad health, but very little for his age, and all over smut; ragged.

No. 26. March 12. *Anne Armstrong*, aged 13:

No. 26.

Cannot spell her own name; works at punching tips; finds the work very hard for her, because not used to it; has been at it only three weeks. Did nothing before that, except with grandmother. Went to school a great while at St. John's Sunday-school up in Snow Hill; don't know the governess's name that taught there. Works for one of the workmen; has 2*s*. 6*d*. a week. Never heard of Samson, or Moses, or St. Paul, or any of those; knows who Jesus Christ was—he was God; has heard of heaven; knows what religion she is—a Prodestint. Does not know who is queen of England; does not know the queen's name. Thinks of her grandmother most when she is alone; grandmother is very poorly.

Not well grown; very dirty; thin, straight, strong, and of high spirit; a swearer and a fighter with the fist during play-hours. I had heard her and seen her on Sunday morning; she was filthily dirty then, as now: she was wretched clothed.

No. 27. March 12. *Henry Foster*, aged 14:

No. 27.

Has been to a Sunday-school in Darlington-street; knows his letters and can read easy words, not very hard ones; can't write; would like to write. Has worked at punching washers nearly three years. Is not so very tired at night; but tired enough if that's what I want to know. Works for one of the men, who gives him 5*s*. a week, for piece-work—not for work and play. Does not know who is queen, but knows the king's name—Prince Albert. Does not know on which side his heart is. Has heard of Samson; he was the strongest man. Can count well; does not know his tables; is not a very great scholar. Knows what religion he is—he is betwixt a Methodist and a Protestant. Has heard of heaven.

He was a deformed, limping, squat figure, squinted with one eye, and was all over black smut; in rags; filthy.

No. 28. March 12. *James Lewis*, age "going a 17:"

No. 28.

Has worked at Mr. Hemingsley's nearly six years; finds the work not so very hard for him now; did at first; cannot read an easy book; has read in the Bible, no other. Has

* Probably meaning "fire-place."

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No. 28.

been to a Sunday school; left it at 11 years of age, he thinks; had a good deal of it. It was the Darlington Street Chapel-School. Twice two are four; does not know how many twice three make. Yes—twice three are six, and twice 10 are 20; can count, if he has time given him. Does not know who is queen; never heard of king George; has heard of Robinson Crusoe; has read a bit of that himself. Does not know what religion he is; does not know which side his heart is. Has heard of heaven; last thing at night he thinks of, is what he has done all day; thinks of many things. Would like to go to school again, but not much; has had a good deal of it.

This witness was very poorly grown indeed for his age: scarcely any signs of manhood in his appearance; rather dirty; badly clothed; a melancholy expression of face.

No. 29. March 12. * * * * * *, age "going of 13:"

No. 29.

Can't spell his own name, is no scholard; has worked at Mr. Hemingsley's going four years. Is hired by one of the workmen; is beaten sometimes when he's a punching, if the punches break, and sometimes that can't be helped; and he beats me shamefully; doesn't feel the beating above an hour, sometimes longer. Has been to school; goes every Sunday to the chapel in Darlington-street; has gone there about a month; was never at any school before; does not feel the work so very hard, only when the work's wanted, and they're obliged to work over hours. Does not know who Jesus Christ was, he is sure; never heard the name of Christ that he knows on. His father can read and write, but his mother can't. Would like to go to school; twice two are four; twice three are nine; never sings or whistles.

He was very little for his age, filthily dirty, and badly clothed: there was a fixed melancholy grin upon his face; his right hand, all day long, was in danger of being smashed by a machine hammer; his hand was underneath it, on its rise, about thirty times in every minute.

No. 30. March 12. *Anne Preston*, aged 19:

No 30.

Can't spell her name; has been apprenticed to Mr. Hemingsley since she was nine years old, and a very good master he had been to her all that time; has behaved very well to her. She came out of the workhouse to him; will be out of her time at 20; has 5*s.* 6*d.* a week; one of the men pays her—her master lets her work for this man; thinks that plan her master finds handiest; has worked for that man eight years during the time she has been an apprentice of her master; is an out-door apprentice. Has been to a Sunday-school; does not go now; is a Catholic; Jesus Christ was the Son of God; Solomon was his disciple; Moses was also Jesus Christ's disciple; does not know who John the Baptist was. Would not like to go to school any more; does not know who is the queen; never heard her name; has heard of Victoria—that name; didn't know it was the queen's name.

Filthily black with dirt, and deformed: her work was necessarily dirty, but not to this degree; she did not seem unhealthy, but unwholesome; she was utterly stunted, and her figure almost a square; her dress seemed to be a smutty old sack, out of which her head and limbs were thrust, like a tortoise.

No. 31. March 12. * * * * * *, aged 18:

No. 31.

Can read in the Bible and Prayer Book, reads other books when she can get them: can't write at all, not her own name. Was at a day-school six years; left when she was 10 years old. Worked at screws two years; then went to service two years. Has worked at Mr. Hemingsley's four years; works for one of the men; he treats her kindly, and pays her regularly; she is never short of her money. Is reckoned a clever hand at tip-punching; works very quick, and won't deny but they say she works well. Gets 4*s.* 6*d.* a week; could leave at any time at a week's notice; could get employed again at any time. Accidents often occur at these works; children's arms are broken and fingers cut off; generally at the second joint; of one finger sometimes, perhaps of two; legs are sometimes broken. A boy's leg was broken the week before last. When an accident happens they gather for it—everybody gives something; the master always gives something. An accident does not happen sometimes for months; sometimes there are two or three accidents in a week, and four or five. Nobody ever killed. If either of the wheels between which the tip-punchers have their heads while at work were to catch their hair, it would tear off all it caught. Does not understand what "boxing off" means; thinks the wheels might be covered in. They get half an hour for breakfast at the works, from nine till half past; and an hour for dinner, from one till two, and leave the works. No time allowed for tea; they work from two, till eight at night, without stopping. Is very tired sometimes; has no pains any where now, had at first; would prefer being in service again in a private house. Never plays at any games; when she goes home after her work she reads for her father or mother, they are old; never heard of St. Valentine's day; does not know what a country dance is; was never at a dance in her life; never saw a dance; never heard of Harlequin and Columbine; has no idea what they are like. Does not know what month it is, nor what year; what she thinks most of when alone, is her books. Should like very much to go to school. Feels that she has a great deal to learn.

Healthy; very short of stature for her age; very clean, considering the nature of her work; read well; was clever at numbers, perfectly well behaved, and very intelligent.

No. 32. March 12. Mr. *Thomas Hemingsley*, firm of HEMINGSLEY and Co., Tip and Nail Manufactory:

No. 32.

Has been a master in this town sixteen years. Employs 50 or 60 boys and girls under 18; would be very glad to allow an hour a day for the children to go to school in his works; not to leave the works, but he would attach a school to the works and find teachers. Has not been affected by the regulations of the Factories Act in any way; no alterations have been made in the method of conducting the works since the year 1840. Some of the children in his works never go to school at all. Is not prepared to say whether, if he gave up an hour in the day for schooling, his work would not require to have that hour made up. Must consult his men who hire the boys—perhaps the men might not agree to it. Would not engage to build a school-room; but he would find a room; would not engage to find books. Was ready to co-operate with others for purposes of education; thought this would be the general feeling of the large masters. Found it difficult to get his work regularly done till the middle of the week. Monday the men made a holiday; Tuesday also with many. Wednesday was market-day, and some who went to the market were hardly fit for work on Thursday. He had recently been obliged to adopt the plan of making up his books on Friday instead of Saturday night, to get another day's work out of the men. His machinery was dangerous, and accidents sometimes happened; he attributed them entirely to the carelessness of the children. It took off the fingers only at the first joint; or they got them pinched or crushed; did not see how his machinery could be boxed off.

No. 33. March 12. The Rev. *Humphrey Pountney*, of St. John's Church:

No. 33.

Stated that education was in a very low condition in this town. He considered Wolverhampton almost a hundred years behind Birmingham with respect to education, yet that the former was a very rich town. Many individuals are here worth from 20,000*l.* to 40,000*l.*; several are worth much more; some worth 100,000*l.* The large masters and manufacturers are all rich; the factors also have all become rich; no such list of wealthy men can be shown in Birmingham. Was not prepared to give an opinion about industrial schools, but was anxious to see much more done with the other schools. Thought the prevailing opinion against the locksmiths who were small masters, or worked for themselves, was not correct of the majority; the majority were very poor; their poverty kept them in a degraded state.

No. 34. March 12. *William Lea*, aged 56:

No. 34.

He was a locksmith; a small master; had an apprentice; found it hard work to live; the discount on ready money, fixed by the factors he worked for, was at this time 55 per cent. in Wolverhampton. He gets 9*s.* ready money for 1*l.* worth of work; has everything to pay out of that; find the iron, keys, tools, labour, and everything; sometimes does not get above 8*s.* or 9*s.* a week clear profit. He is not strong, and sometimes not well. His wife is older than he. A healthy strong man that can get up early, and work a many hours, if they can make 1*l.* worth of work in a week, it is about as much as they can; if they get up at four in the morning, and work till ten at night, they *may* get 15*s.* or 16*s.* a week, discount included—a clear 15*s.* or 16*s*—but few can do this. Factors ask the same price for articles, whatever the discount may be which they choose to fix.

No. 35. March 12. *Charles Heath*, aged 34:

No. 35.

He is a locksmith; a small master. The discount the factors take from him now is 57 and 60 per cent., and he cannot get enough to do at that; has to find everything out of it—nothing allowed; the discount is struck off; can only get 10*s.* a week, if he works hard; reckons from six in the morning till nine at night working hard, and can only get from 10*s.* to 12*s.* a week. Some jobs run rather better—it is just as the work runs—then he gets 12*s.* a week clear.

No. 36. March 12. *John Wilson*, aged 46:

No. 36.

A locksmith; a small master; gets only 8*s.* 6*d.* in the pound from the factors; calls it 57½ per cent. discount; has to find everything out of this—everything in the world—everything to get it up with—everything whatever, and to live out of it. Thinks that when he has paid for the iron, the keys (which he has to buy of the keymakers), and all other materials to get up the work, that he only gets 3*s.* in the pound clear for his own labour; does not consider that he gets a farthing more.

Depositions taken from St. John's Church Sunday School.

No. 37. March 14. *Elizabeth Jones*, aged 16 nearly:

No. 37.

Works at japan polishing; has attended St. John's Sunday-school these last 8 years; has also been at the National School 3 years, every morning and evening, about 5 hours

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No. 37.

a day. Her work is called black-polishing; works at Ryton and Walton's—the Old Hall; is an out-door apprentice; has been a polisher 3 years; is paid by the masters. Can read and write; has read the Bible, Testament, and Spelling-book; has read religious tracts; has also read small books about Ebenezer, another about "My Father," one book about "Susan Brookes;" has never read any other books but religious books; all these were religious books; never read a story-book, nor any book—yes, she has a night sometimes—can't recollect what they were; it was any books that happened to come in her way; would like to read more books of many sorts, if she had time; would like to read story-books; finds the tracts rather dull—very much like one another; has liked some of them, but at last got tired; but her parents make her read religious books always; would like to read books of travels abroad, over the seas, and places over the seas; never read a book that made her laugh. Feels a little tired after reading; not so much as after her work; does not feel so tired with her work now she has got used to it; Ryton and Walton treat her kindly; they behave very well to her; gets 3*s.* 6*d.* a week. Has heard the names of Wellington, Nelson, and Napoleon Buonaparte; does not know who any of them were. Has heard of Robinson Crusoe; never saw a book of it; knows nothing about him. Never heard the name of Robert Burns; never heard the name of Shakspeare; has heard of Jim Crow. Can work at needlework a little. Does not know on which side her heart is—yes, she thinks it's on her right side; when her heart beats she feels it there. Is in very good health. Is of the religion of the Established Church; always goes to St. John's—parents and all.

(Signed) ELIZABETH JONES.

Very poorly grown for her age; read well, wrote legibly, was clean, and pretty well clothed.

No. 38. March 14. *Eliza Morris*, age 12 or 13:

No. 38.

Does not work at anything. Father is a carpenter; mother does not work at anything; Has been to the Blue School three years, and to St. John's one year; can read, not write; never read any books but religious books, but once—the Children in the Wood; has read another about Richard Turpin; and Blue Beard; and Cinderella; her brother has got a book about Buonaparte; has heard where it was—in France. Does not know the name of the Queen of England; knows who Jim Crow was—a black man; never heard of Jonah; has also read a book about Tom Thumb—forgot to tell me that. Cannot write; would like very much to write; thinks she could soon learn if she was taught; mother intended she should go to a writing-school to learn to write as soon as her father got in work.

Very poorly grown for her age, quite a child; very clean; neatly though poorly clothed; read very well; was very intelligent.

No. 39. March 14. *Mary Clive*, age "going in 16:"

No. 39.

Works at making tin toys at Mr. Sidney Cartwright's; has worked there 18 months: finds the work not very hard. Works 13 hours a-day, with one hour allowed for meals.* Is not an apprentice; works piece-work; does not think she is very kindly treated; likes her trade though. Is not beaten, only sometimes master gives her a box; not very often though; doesn't hurt her much; its only when he looks at the work and it is not done right. Some of them can't do their work till they get a box. Gets about 4*s.* a week generally. Can read, not write; can do needle-work; cannot make a pudding—does not know what I mean; does not know what a pudding is.

Clean and well clothed; poor in stature and health; skin eruptive and disgusting.

No. 40. March 14. *Mary Perry*, aged 10:

No. 40.

Works at toy-painting; at Mr. Cartwright's; has worked there about six months. Feels very tired at night; feels ill sometimes—sick. The place feels very hot and close sometimes; master treats her kindly. Gets 1*s.* 6*d.* a week, regularly. Can read, not write—never learnt. Can do needle-work—sewing. Has been a great while to the St. John's Sunday-school; she went when it was first built up years ago, but there was such a cruel governess at that time, mother took her away. Likes the Reverend Mr. Pountney, he's a very nice man. Some of the girls at the shop where she works go to a chapel, but mother says she shouldn't let her leave school. She would learn nothing, going from one to another.

A poor sickly little thing; very little; clean; well clothed; read well; very intelligent.

No. 41. March 14. *Harriet Jones*, aged 14:

No. 41.

Works at toy-painting; does not find it hard for her; is not very tired at night; has worked at it about eight months. Gets 2*s.* 6*d.* a week, standing wages. Paint does not make them feel sick when they get used to it. Can read, cannot write; would like to learn; can't write her own name. Can do needle-work—can sew—nothing to speak of. Does not know the name of the Queen of England. Has read Robinson Crusoe.

Clean, well dressed, poorly grown, but not unhealthy in appearance.

* The meal-times are not correctly stated. See Evidence No. 72, which is correct, both for summer and winter.

No. 42. March 14. *Anne Williams*, aged 11 or 12:

Does not work at anything. Father is a gardener, but has no work; has never a mother. Has not long been to school; has been nearly a twelvemonth; can read easy words; cannot write. Never heard of King Solomon, nor of Job, nor of Jonah, nor of John the Baptist; never heard of King George, nor of Queen Victoria. Has heard the children sing Jim Crow. No. 42.

Healthy, but poorly grown; clean and well clothed.

No. 43. March 14. * * * * * *, aged 16, nearly:

Works at a tin-master's, a japanner; is an out-door apprentice; works piece-work; works for the master. Is stinted to get him 10*s.* a week. Gets 4*s.* a week wages for himself; has worked four years. There are seven or eight apprentices there. Works 11 hours a day, and one out for meals. Master treats him well, and the others too; is a very tidy master; beats them sometimes; he has had it very often for nothing, as you may say—such as coming half-an-hour behind time. Beats them with a whip, sometimes with a rope. Can't complain to a magistrate, because he has got a very bad father who would not back him. His father gets drunk very often—kicking up rows; his father is a collier. Has been at Sunday-schools ever since he could walk. Can read well any book; can read hand-writing. Can write. No. 43.

(Signed) * * * * * *.

Poorly grown; rather dirty; unhappy and depressed in countenance.

No. 44. March 14. *Samuel Tidmarsh*, aged 12:

Works at tin-toys. Gets 3*s.* a week, by piece-work; sometimes does not get so much. Is not an apprentice; does not feel very tired at night. His master treats him well; only beaten when he deserves it. Has been above 12 months at a Sunday-school. Can read very well; cannot write at all, nor read hand-writing. Knows who Sampson was: he was a great man—the strongest man as was; knows who Jonah was, and St. John the Baptist, whom Herod beheaded. Has read many little books; never heard of Robert Burns; has heard of Jack Sheppard—he was a robber. Knows the name of the Queen—Victoria: she married Prince Albert. No. 44.

Rather unhealthy-looking; dirty; well behaved; read very well indeed.

No. 45. March 14. *George Garner*, aged 9:

Works at Mr. Tonks's, brass and bell-founder; has worked there about a year. Gets 1*s.* 6*d.* a week, regular wages; works 13 hours a day, with three-quarters of an hour for breakfast, an hour for dinner, and half an hour for tea; is not very tired, but sometimes he has to work till nine at night, instead of leaving at eight, and then is tired; doesn't often happen that he has to work till nine. His master treats him well—master likes him very well. Is never beaten—is never touched there. Was beaten at Craddock's, a locksmith's who kept two boys; was glad to get away to Tonks's; Mr. Tonks is always very civil to him, and never quilts his hide, but speaks civil. Thinks the smell of the melted brass makes him feel sick sometimes, and the head-ache. Its the sulphur going down their throats that makes all the boys have the head-ache sometimes, and they cannot come to their work. Place is always hot, but the windows and door always open when they are pouring—pouring the melted brass. The little boys use the riddle and shovel. Has been a year and a half at a Sunday-school. Can read very well; can read hand-writing; can write a little, but there is no ink, nor no pens, nor no copy-book at home. Would like to write; only the first class learn to write at the Sunday-school, and he is only in the second class. No. 45.

(Signed) GARNER.

A very little boy for his age, with a head and face looking three times his age: his face was a tawny yellow. Read very well; clean; well clothed; very grave; very intelligent and methodical.

No. 46. March 14. *William Aston*, aged 12:

Works at japanning at Mr. Fearncombe's. Works for one of the men; has 2*s.* a week; the man treats him very well; does not beat him. Is paid by Mr. Fearncombe. Works 13 hours a day, with an hour for breakfast, an hour for dinner, and half an hour for tea; that is, works 10½ hours a day. Does not feel tired at night; likes his work very well; thank you, Sir. Has been at Sunday-schools three or four years in all. Can read any book; can read hand-writing; can write. No. 46.

(Signed) WILLIAM ASTON.

Poorly grown; rather dirty; badly clothed. He looked unhappy—was intelligent.

No. 47. March 14. *William Perry*, aged 15:

Works at Mr. Edwards's brass-foundry; has worked there about three years; works under his father, who takes his wages; father allows him some for pocket-money sometimes. Likes the business; works from seven in the morning to eight at night—sometimes more—over-hours. No regular time is allowed for meals; the men go and come when they like for that. It is necessary as to watching the heats. The boys have regular time—an hour for breakfast generally—an hour for dinner—no time for tea; they take it in the works as they can. Has been at the St. John's Sunday-school about three years; can read; can read hand-writing; cannot write; would like to learn to write. Only the first class write, and he is in the second. The second used to learn, but some of them No. 47.

Town of Wolverhampton.

Evidence collected by *R. H. Horne*, Esq.

No. 47.

wasted the pens and paper and made messes—many were such little ones. His work does not make him ill now; it did at first. He had the brass-ague; his father enjoys a very bad state of health. His father is 38 years of age, but looks older than that; looks as old as some here he has seen at the age of 50. Has heard of Wellington, and Nelson, and Buonaparte, and Shakspeare; saw prints about it (Shakspeare), at a sale. Does not know who or what Shakspeare was; knows all about the others. Never heard of Burns. Has read Jack Sheppard. Never heard of Guy Fox. Knows which side his heart is—the left. He once had a cousin, an infant, whose heart was on the right side, and it died at a month old, that was how he come to know.

Not healthy in appearance, nor well clothed, but clean: he had a melancholy air.

No. 48. March 14. *Edward Blackmore*, aged 15:

No. 48.

Works at Mr. Corn's at coffee-mills and malt-mills. There are eight apprentices besides him; works from six in the morning till eight at night, with two hours allowed for meals. Feels very tired sometimes at night, sometimes not, when there is not so much to do; it is hard work. Has to lift heavy weights. Has no pains anywhere. Feels the head-ache sometimes; the noise and the heat from the fire give it him. Has been three years at St. John's school. Can read any book; cannot write; wishes he could; ha read in very few books, never had any to read, never had any but religious books. Knows who Guy Fox was; he was the man as wanted to blow Parliament House up, but he did 'nt—he was caught. Does not know what he thinks most about when he is alone; never thinks about much. Balls is the best things he can play at. Would like to learn to write; can a little, but it is 'nt much.

(Signed) Edward Blackmore.

Very little indeed for his age; clean; well clothed; looked unhappy.

No. 49. March 14. *Francis Barnett*, aged 12:

No. 49.

Works at files, at Mr. William Pipers. There are five apprentices where he works; his master treats them well; they are not beaten. Works from seven in the morning to eight at night, with two hours allowed for meals. Feels very tired at night sometimes, not generally, Thinks he has his health well; never hears the apprentices complain. Has been at the St. John's Sunday-school about six months. Can read and write; he learnt to write at the Blue-school.

(Signed) Francis Barnett.

Melancholy; mean-looking; not in good health; badly clothed; not very clean.

No. 50. March 14. *Solomon Murray*, aged 11:

No. 50.

Works at iron-casting; works from half-past six in the morning till seven or eight at night, he don't know which; two hours are allowed for meals. Is in the furnace, where they melt; does not feel ill with it; has had the head-ache. Has been three Sundays to St. John's school; was at the National school, and the Cathedral school before this. Can read pretty well; can write; learnt at the National school. His master behaves kindly to him. One of his apprentices ran away—cut off; he was a bad fellow.

(Signed) Solomon Murray.

Very little indeed for his age—like a child of eight years; poorly clothed; was like a little old man in the face; very swarthy and grave.

No. 51. March 14. *David Murray*, aged 13:

No. 51.

Works at brass-casting, at Mr. Evans's in Bell-street; there are six other boys—some of them apprentices. Does not feel sick now; has got used to it; they have all pretty good health. Works from half-past six or seven, and leaves off at seven or eight at night—sometimes at five or six—no certain time; it depends upon things coming in, or things that hinder the casting. Has been at St. John's school three Sundays only; was at the National school, and the Cathedral school before this. Can read pretty tidy, and write, but is not a good writer. His master treats the apprentices well. He works, not for the master, but one of the men, who is the caster. The caster gives him 3*s*. a week, standing wages. Is in the casting-shop where they cast.

(Signed) David Murray.

Poorly grown, delicate boy; pale, sallow; mild eyes; a sweet-toned voice; naturally refined and intelligent.

No. 52. March 14. *James Lavender*, aged 9:

No. 52.

Works in the Rope-walk of Mr. Edward Griffin. Works for one of the men; works from six in the morning till seven or eight at night, with one quarter of an hour for breakfast, half an hour for dinner—they have no tea. The men have more time for meals—half an hour for breakfast, an hour for dinner, and about a quarter of an hour for tea. Does not feel very tired at night; likes his work. Has 1*s*. 10*d*. a week, regular wages; the man he works for gives him a penny for himself every Saturday night besides the 1*s*. 10*d*. He (the boy) gives the 1*s*. 10*d*. to his mother. Has been about two months to the St. John's school; was at the Catholic chapel school before that; cannot read much; never was put to writing. Never heard of Jesus Christ; never heard the name. Has never

heard of our Saviour—not as he knows on. Was at the Catholic school for about a year —did not learn much though. Has heard of Jim Crow—heard boys sing him.

A handsome, healthy little boy, and quite as big as any of the others who were 11 and 12 years of age. His work is all in the open air. Was clean and warmly clothed; did not look stupid, notwithstanding his ignorance; was not deaf, but seemed stolid, the development of his mental faculties not appearing to have commenced.

No. 53. March 17. *Samuel Caddick*, lockmaker, aged 24. Teacher in St. John's School:

No. 53.

Employs one in-door apprentice, and a boy. Finds his trade hampered; the discount he is obliged to allow the factors is 60 per cent.; with some trades more is taken off than that. The bolt-makers have to allow 67½ per cent. Has been a regular teacher in St. John's Church Sunday-school during three years; teaches gratuitously; all the teachers are gratuitous, except one who keeps the books, and has much more to do; prefers, himself, not to be paid, because the school is supported by voluntary contributions; the school is well attended. Teaches spelling, reading, writing, or catechism, which are the routine. Teaches upon no system, the name of which he knows, unless it be the Church Sunday-school system. Was educated himself at this town, at a private school kept by Richard Clarke. The children who can read have easy reading lessons up to the Testament; they then read the Bible and Psalters; no other books. If he was asked what other books he would give them, he should say scriptural stories condensed and simplified in a way to make them more generally intelligible to the minds of children. Subscribes to the mechanics' library. Thinks that out of that library the books most read are novels of the old school; Fielding and Smollet; judges this by the worn condition of the books. Dr. Syntax is also much read; this latter has been so much read that it is hardly fit to touch; it is literally in rags. A few of Combe's works are also much read. The curate of St. John's generally teaches the first class; all the other classes are taught by young persons gratuitously. Thinks the chief good of paid teachers would be the greater regularity of their attendance. Arithmetic is not taught; not at all; thinks it would not do at Sunday-schools, as there would not be time; but highly desirable if it could be taught in the evenings of other days of the week; thinks that children might be taught the first three simple rules of arithmetic by objects rather than figures; has always felt an interest in education; believes that the thing most wanted in education is something to attract the attention and excite an interest in the minds of boys and girls just as they arrive at puberty; considers that the great obstruction to this is because they have to pay for it.

(Signed) SAMUEL CADDICK.

No. 54. March 19. *Eliza Field*, age "going a 10:"

No. 54.

Works at pressing washers; works with an iron machine; has never caught her fingers. Has worked at Mr. Glover's a good time; don't know how long. Never any accidents since she has been there; thinks she has worked there nearly a year. Gets a shilling a week; is paid by the master's wife. Goes at six in the morning and leaves at seven at night; has two hours allowed for meals in the course of the day; is well treated, she thinks; gets a box sometimes because she don't just do her work; does not feel it very hard; does not feel it for an hour; is stinted; works piece-work; if she loses any time she does not get so much as a shilling a-week—sometimes only 10*d.*, or 9*d.*, or 11*d.* Cannot spell her own name; does not know her letters. Used to go to school before she came to this town, but now she don't. Comes from Kidderminster; went to school there at a day-school, and a Sunday-school besides; cannot sew; cannot use a needle at all; says her prayers; does not know the Lord's Prayer. When she says her prayers she says "Our Father"—no more; knows no more. Has never heard of Heaven; nor of Jesus Christ; thinks she has heard of the name of our Saviour; never goes to church, or chapel, or school; has no things to go in; has heard of Jim Crow, and of Jack Sheppard; they were a talking about him, saying what a rum'un he was.

A little object with a round face; apparently in good health. Her clothing was a mass of rags, excessively dirty.

No. 55. March 19. *Mary Field*, age "going of 11:"

No. 55.

Works at washers; has worked at Mr. Glover's three years; no accidents all that time. Gets 1*s.* 6*d.* a week; works piece-work; sometimes only gets 1*s.* a week. Cannot read; cannot spell her own name; does not know her letters; has been to school at Kidderminster, at the Blue School—it was a day school; was at school there about six months every day; went to a Sunday-school besides; can use a needle; could not hem a handkerchief, nor darn a stocking; could not put a patch upon a hole in her clothes. Never heard of another world, nor of heaven, nor of another life; has looked up at the stars very often; thinks there's a good many on'em; that's all she ever thought looking at 'em.

This witness was a sister of the foregoing; her experience and her ignorance were just of the same kind; she looked unhealthy, was very badly grown, and still more filthily dirty.

No. 56. March 19. *Sarah Field*, age "going a 14:"

No 56.

Works at pressing washers; gets 2*s.* a week, piece-work. They are going to rise her to half-a-crown. Is well treated; master sometimes just boxes her, but not to hurt. Can-

not spell her own name; knows her letters; it's little she does know. Has been to school at Kidderminster with her sisters at the old church school, they call it the Blue School in this town, not at Kidderminster; went to a day school besides. Was at these schools about twelve months regular. Girls were put to teach them who could hardly tell their letters themselves. Feels tired after her work at night sometimes when she has worked over-hours, but that does not often happen; feels no pains now. Her second sister, Mary, is very ailing. Thinks it is not the work makes her sister ill, who has always been very ailing. Haven't enough to eat at home; her mother has no work, and another younger child to keep; the three that work keep the family, and the soup they have three times a-week from the old workhouse. Wishes she could go to school; but she has nothing to go in; not a shoe to her foot, but rags; hasn't a bit of toes in 'em.

This was the eldest of the three sisters Field; she was very small for her age, not the least appearance of approaching womanhood—quite a child. Her health seemed very good; not so dirty in her person as her sisters, but her clothes were dirty rags.

No. 57. March 20. *Edward Haling Coleman*, Esq., surgeon:

No. 57.

Has practised 20 years in Wolverhampton; extensively among the working classes. Has noticed that a great many children among them are born ruptured. Many of the fathers are ruptured at Wolverhampton; they send to Willenhall for trusses; the truss-maker at Willenhall has made a fortune. Many children are burnt to death, particularly in the winter, by their parents going out to work and leaving them alone all day. Godfrey's cordial is much given by the mothers to infants to quiet them. Has known many infants die from its effects. Considers that children and young persons are worst treated by the small masters among the locksmiths, key-makers, and bolt makers, who are themselves generally poor. Accidents sometimes happen at the edge-tool makers: they very often happen in the pits, and also at the nail and tip manufactories, particularly at Hemingsley and Co.'s. Only yesterday a boy was killed, another had both legs fractured, and several were injured. Fevers are not at all prevalent here; the chief complaints are affections of the chest. There is scarcely an old locksmith or collier but has an asthmatic complaint. Attributes it to the north and north easterly winds from which there is no protection, the town stands so high. Many children die of affection of the lungs.

No. 58. March 21. * * * * * *, aged 19:

No. 58.

Works at tip-punching at Mr. Hemingsley's. Gets 4*s*. a-week. Was at work at Hemingsley's on Friday night last, when the accident happened. Part of the floor, where she was working, fell. A boy, who worked at the nail-cutting below, was killed on the spot by the weight of the tips that fell upon him; another boy had both his thighs broken and one arm, another boy had his knee hurt, another his arm, and one hurt his back. Attributes the accident to the rottenness of the floor and the weight of the tips. Great weights were constantly laid upon the floor, and the floor was in a broken shattered condition nearly all over; it had been propped up very much, two or three times. You could see from one floor down into the other through the holes. Cannot read or write. Was at a Sunday-school at * * * * about two years. The teachers came one Sunday and not another—very neglectful. Was taken away at 10 years of age to go to work; has never been able to go to school since; would be very glad if she could.

(Signed) * * * her mark * * *.

No. 59. March 22. *Peter Bell*, Esq., M.D.:

No. 59.

Has practised in Wolverhampton many years. Has remarked the superior health of the boys in the collieries, in comparison with the children and young persons in the manufactories. The colliers are so healthy that wounds—large gashes—are cured with a rapidity quite surprising; compound fractures are cured with scarcely a troublesome symptom. As to formation,—the collier, as he walks, rolls along, swinging at the hips as if he were double jointed; the manufacturer creeps along as if his bones were all huddled together. The japanners are very little subject to colds, although they go out of heated rooms in a state of great perspiration into the open air; the heart is excited, and resists the cold. Among the women, labours are comparatively easy. Distortion of the pelvis is very rare. Consumption is common; atrophy generally terminates in consumption. Wolverhampton is remarkably free from fever.

Depositions taken at Mr. NEVE'S Nail and Tip Manufactory.

No. 60. March 30. *Thomas Parker*, aged 15:

No. 60.

Works at nail-cutting, at Mr. Neve's. Works from seven in the morning till seven at night, with half an hour for breakfast and an hour for dinner; no time allowed for tea. Works for one of the men, who gives him 9*s*. a-week; he receives it himself. Went to a day-school till he was 10 years old, then went to work; goes to a Sunday-school now—the Catholic school. Can read, but not write well; can write his name. Never heard of Sam-

son, or King Solomon; has heard of Job; has heard that the Queen's name is Victoria; has heard of London; never heard of St. John the Baptist.

(Signed) THOMAS PARKER.

Very well grown for his age; strong, healthy, not more dirty than could be helped; well clothed.

No. 61. March 30. *Joseph Tomlinson*, aged 15:

No. 61.

Works at nail-cutting. Works the same time and gets the same money as the foregoing witness. Went to a day-school four years—the National School, Mr. Blower's. Never goes to a Sunday-school; has no things to go in; his father and mother cannot afford clothes for him. His father has worked hard in his time as a shipping-clerk; now wheels coals, but has taken to drinking. His father drinks away his clothes. Can read and write. Twice 20 are 40, twice 50 are 100. Take 25 from 100 there remains 65—no, 75. Has left school four years and a half; left at about ten years and a half old.

(Signed) TOMLINSON.

Healthy, dirty, sturdy, and in rags; very well grown.

No. 62. March 30. *Michael Fox*, aged 14 "last Candlemas:"

No. 62.

Works at nail-cutting. Works the same time as the two foregoing witnesses. Gets 7*s.* a-week. Works for one of the men, who pays him. Does not find the work hard for him; easy enough. Went to a day-school in Liverpool. Goes to the Catholic Sunday-school now. Can read and write.

(Signed) MICHAEL FOX.

He read very well indeed; tolerably well grown, rather meagre; not dirtier than necessary.

No. 63. March 30. *William Loyd*, aged 15 nearly:

No. 63.

Cannot spell his name. Was never at a day-school; never goes to a Sunday-school. Has no clothes. Works at nail-cutting. Same time and the same wages (9*s.* a-week) as the two first witnesses from Neve's manufactory. His father is a nail-blower (puts 'em in an oven to turn the colour on 'em), and works at Mr. Neville's, Willenhall. Has not long learnt the trade at Mr. Neve's. They behave very well to him here. Is never beaten; never sees any of the boys or girls beaten here. His father does not drink, nor his mother. Does not know how it is that he has no better clothes for Sundays. Never heard of Moses and Aaron. Does not know who Jesus Christ was—has no idea who he was—nor nothing about it. Has heard of the Queen; knows her name; it is Prince Albert. Has heard of a place called London.

Very badly grown, filthily dirty, not unhealthy, but in rags.

No. 64. March 30. *John Gander*, aged 10 "and 2 months:"

No 64.

Works at sprig-cutting—small nails to go in the boots. Gets 4*s.* a-week. Works for one of the men, who pays him. He gives it to his mother. Does not find the work hard for him; it's very easy work. Is not beaten by the man he works for; very quiet master. Went to a day-school; left when he was six years old, and then came to work. Goes to St. George's Sunday-school. Can read, not write; can read pretty tidy. Wishes he could write. Is going to a night-school next week.

Rather small of his age, rather badly clothed, and more dirty than necessary. He read very well indeed: not very healthy or strong looking.

No. 65. March 30. *Elizabeth Baylis*, aged 14 nearly:

No. 65.

Works at punching-works. Worked same time as the foregoing witness. Gets 3*s.* a-week. Works for one of the men, who pays her, and treats her kindly; never beats any of the girls. Goes to Mount Zion Sunday-school; has been there only these last six weeks; never went to any school before. Has been at work only about five months. Finds the work none too hard for her. Master only puts her to some of the light washers.

Poorly grown; in very good health, like a country girl; poorly clothed.

No. 66. March 30. *Naomi Waters*, aged 14 nearly:

No. 66.

Works at tip-punching. Does not find the work hard for her. Gets 3*s.* 6*d.* a-week. Goes to a Sunday-school. Can read easy words; cannot write. Has attended the Sunday-school regularly for a twelvemonth. Hours and general treatment the same as mentioned by the other witnesses in this manufactory.

She was pretty well grown (compared with others), very cleanly and well clothed.

No. 67. March 30. *Martha Hinks*, aged 14:

No. 67.

Cannot spell her name, Works at the tips, tip-punching. Does not find the work too hard for her. Gets from 5*s.* to 7*s.* a-week, according as she has had a good week, *i. e.* working over-hours—no, when she works every day—that is, when she works Mondays and Tuesdays instead of playing about. Never work anything hardly, none on 'em, on a Monday, nor on Saturday, and sometimes not on a Tuesday. There is not always work enough for them to do; but a great many do not come on Monday whether there's work to do or not. Never went to a day-school; goes to a Sunday-school; has been to one about six months—not very regular. Her mother was bad sometimes, and sometimes she herself did not want to go. Never heard of such a place as London; never heard of such

a place as Willenhall; has heard talk of Wedgbury; never heard of Walsall (nor Warsle); never heard of the Virgin Mary, nor of Mary Magdalen. Never saw a violet nor a primrose—never heard of such things. Never heard of Jack Sheppard, nor of Dick Turpin. Has heard of Jim Crow—he was a black man—he danced and sing'd. Does not know what she thinks of most when she's alone. The last thing she thinks of at night is to get to bed and go to sleep. The first thing she thinks of when she wakes, is to make haste to go to work.

Very dirty, as though she never washed herself; very badly grown; good health and strength; very badly clothed.

Examination of Children and Young Persons working at Mr. SIDNEY CARTWRIGHT'S Tin Toy Manufactory.

No. 68. March 31. *Charles Crisp*, aged 13 "last Pancake-day:"

No. 68.

Works at pressing tin-toy looking-glass frames. Comes at seven in the morning, leaves at seven at night. Has an hour for breakfast, an hour for dinner, and half an hour for tea. Gets 2*s.* 9*d.* a-week. Mr. Cartwright pays him. Is beaten sometimes with a strap on the hand by some of the men, but does not feel it long—not for half an hour; not much hurt; it's for not minding his work. Has been at a day-school—Mr. Dalton's school; was there two or three years. Can read easy words; cannot write—cannot write his name. Goes to Mr. Dalton's Sunday-school. Twice 10 are 20, twice 20 are 40. Take 5 from 20, there remains 30; take 5 from 30, there remains 20. Never heard of Job, nor of Samson, nor of Jonah; has heard of Pontius Pilate; has heard of Christ—he was God; has heard of Moses; has heard of a place called London. Wishes he could write.

Very small of his age; not unhealthy; not dirtier than necessary; pretty well clothed; naturally clever, quick, guarded, yet undaunted.

No. 69. March 31. *William Washer*, aged 10:

No. 69.

Works at tin-work. Does not know how long he has worked here. Gets 2*s.* 9*d*, a-week. Mr. Cartwright pays him. Gets a slap on the head sometimes for not doing his work right; one of the foremen sometimes beats him with his hand or a strap. Gives the money to his mother. His mother works at screws. Has two brothers who works at locks, at Worton's—down in the Pudding-bag, near Snow-hill. Goes to Mr. Dalton's Sunday-school. Cannot read. Does not know his letters—not many. Has been to school about two months.

Very fine, healthy, fresh-coloured boy, well grown, dirty, and in very dirty rags, and not enough of them to cover his nakedness.

No. 70. March 31. *John Moseley*, aged 12 nearly:

No. 70.

Works at pressing tin horses, and things. Gets 2*s.* a-week. Has his wages raised 3*d.* a-month, according as he gets on. Mr. Cartwright pays him. Nobody ever beats him, except sometimes a slap on the head, when he deserves it, for going out without leave, or playing about the shop; don't hurt him much. Does not feel tired at night. Feels sick in the day sometimes, when he's ill, when he gets cold. Gets cold because he's got bad shoes; all his toes are quite out upon the floor and pavement. Gives the money he gets to his mother; her shoes are nearly as bad as his. His mother does not drink, nor his father; but they are all very poor. His mother's shoes are nearly as bad as his. Should go to a Sunday-school, but does not like in such shoes as these. Can read easy words.

A poor little creature for his age, all in rags; unhealthy, unhappy; his expression of face all perplexity, his limbs very nervous.

No. 71. March 31. *Daniel Ford*, aged 10 or 11:

No. 71.

Works at pressing tin hammer-rattles. Works from seven in the morning till seven at night. Has two hours allowed in the day for breakfast and dinner, none for tea—*i. e.* works from two to seven. Works for one of the men. Mr. Cartwright pays him. Gets 2*s.* a-week. Has been to the St. John's school a long time—three or four years. Can read in the Testament. Twice 3 are 12; twice 2 are 6—ayn't it; twice 5 are 10. Never heard of Job, nor St. Paul, nor Moses, nor Jonah, nor Samson. Does not know what month or year it is, but it's Wednesday. Never saw or heard of a snow-drop or crocus. Knows about a nettle—was stung once.

A little dirty boy, healthy and strong; not more dirty than necessary; pretty well clothed. He could not read anything but easy words; intelligent but guarded; a bright dark eye, full of perception and mental reservation.

No. 72. March 31. *Jane Inscoe*, aged 17 nearly:

No. 72.

Works at pressing tin. Has worked here two years next Easter. Gets 3*s.* 6*d.* a-week. Works for the master, Mr. Cartwright, who pays her. Works from seven in the morning till seven at night in summer, with an hour for breakfast and an hour for dinner: in the winter they come at eight in the morning and work till eight at night, with an hour out for dinner, and half an hour for tea; but never leave the shop for tea, summer or winter—they can if they like, but they don't. Does not like her work—its too dirty—properly boy's work.