

SKETCH OF THE HISTORY OF THE LIVERPOOL
BLUE COAT HOSPITAL.

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(READ 2ND MAY, 1861.)

PART II.

HAVING in a former paper, read before this society,* given a sketch of the origin and early history of the Liverpool Blue Coat Hospital, embracing a period of fifty years, viz., from the eighth year of the reign of Queen Anne, 1709,—when the Hospital, the oldest of our local charitable institutions, was founded,—to the death of its distinguished founder, Bryan Blundell, and the closing years of the reign of Geo. II., 1759-60, I now venture, agreeably to an expressed wish of several members of this society, to prosecute my task further, and so far as my knowledge, or means of acquiring that knowledge, permits, to lay before you a few facts which I hope may prove interesting. At the same time I am compelled to request the society's indulgence for laying before it so crude and hasty, and by consequence, so imperfect a paper.

Animated by the best and holiest of motives, our ancestors erected the Hospital, as they declared, in gratitude to God for the many blessings he had bestowed upon their "Port town;" and the Institution has, for many years, participated in the increasing wealth of the town, and stood forth, not only as a monument of charity, but also a memorial of the continuance among us of that spirit of religious dependence on Providence which actuated and directed the original founders.

In my former sketch I have endeavoured to shew the course and effect of the management under its early founders.

* Transactions, vol. xi. p. 163.

At the period of Bryan Blundell's death in 1756, when he had been forty-two years treasurer, there were 100 children wholly maintained, fed, clothed and taught on the foundation. The funds he left amounted to £7,150. His son Richard Blundell, who succeeded him, died 1760, leaving a capital of £7,650 and 120 children on the foundation.

I may here mention that, since writing the former paper, I have been shewn, by a gentleman of my acquaintance, an old deed, being the conveyance of a seat, No. 45, in the gallery of St. Thomas's Church, which had formerly belonged to the Blundell family. In this deed it is named that Richard Blundell died intestate. Finding in the Hospital records for 1760 a legacy of £100 made in his name, I was curious to understand how it had been paid. It appeared that among his memoranda, found in the Hospital after his death, was a written request that one hundred pounds should be paid to the School: this accordingly was the legacy so entered.

It is at this point of time, 1760,—the period of Richard Blundell's death,—that my present record begins.

Jonathan Blundell, the youngest son—as I gathered from the above-named deed—of Bryan Blundell, succeeded, 31st March, 1760, as Treasurer, on his brother Richard's death: his two elder brothers, Bryan and William, becoming his sureties, according to the requirements of the charter obtained in 1739, in a bond of £2,000, for the due performance of his office. This office he held for the long period of thirty-six years, devoting himself with singular energy to the development of those pious ends which he had seen his father pursue with so much fixedness of purpose and high resolve. Old age and its consequent infirmities could alone induce his relinquishment of it. In a letter addressed to the Trustees of the Hospital, dated 28th March, 1796, a copy of which is entered on the minutes—he states “now
“ being in years, and my health requiring me to live in the

“country, of consequence I find myself not so able to be of that service to this charity I could wish.” He then proceeds to direct that proper notice be given at the Exchange and in the Churches for choosing another Treasurer. This notice was agreeable to the charter, which directed that fourteen days’ notice be given immediately after divine service on the Sabbath at both Churches (St. Nicholas’ and St. Peter’s) and at the Exchange. This practice is, of course, complied with even to this day. Before any Governor or Trustee of the Hospital, as well as Treasurer, can be elected, placards are affixed to the Church doors and put up at the Exchange. It is also incumbent that every Trustee shall be an inhabitant of Liverpool, or seized of property to the amount of £100 per annum in the County of Lancaster. The Treasurer must always be an inhabitant. The latter clause, altogether apart from private motives, while it deterred Mr. Blundell from holding the Treasurership, did not necessarily require his relinquishment of the Trusteeship, which he continued to hold to the period of his death, which occurred in 1801. At the close of his Treasurership, the School funds amounted to £11,220 principal, at interest. A pleasing as well as notable instance of “continuance in well doing,” is presented to us in the history of those three worthies, Bryan Blundell and his two sons, who for the long period of eighty-two years, continued with noble self-devotedness and untiring zeal, to manage the affairs of this Hospital; and their descendants of our own day shew themselves equally zealous in behalf of its best interests whenever occasion offers.

Soon after Jonathan Blundell’s assumption of the Treasurership, the number of inmates in the Hospital materially increased. In 1763, an addition of eighty children was made, making the number on the foundation at this period 200, viz., 150 boys and 50 girls. In order to accommodate the additional number, a purchase was made of Cheshire’s

premises, adjoining the School, which were leasehold under the Corporation, and for which the sum of £780 was paid Mr. Aspinall, July 2nd of this year. A committee was appointed to survey the ground, which formerly was covered with tan-pits, and occupied by John Syers at a rental of £35. The Trustees proposed to erect a new building to run eastward from the end of the then School, to the end of the ground purchased from Cheshire, and therein to have proper accommodation for the whole number of boys, with the conveniences for work-room, lodging-room, dining-room, store-room, sick-room, &c. A plan was proposed which the Trustees approved.

The above mention of a work-room, &c., at once suggests to us that the children at that period were engaged in manual labour part of their time. The old records of the School in 1765 state also that £220 were paid to the proprietors of the stocking manufactory towards a building for boys to weave in. Jonathan Blundell, the Treasurer, was a partner in the stocking manufactory which was carried on in School Lane, and he with his partners proposed to the Trustees of the Hospital to employ the children in that manufactory; the proposals they made were so fair, and the pecuniary advantages so much greater than any which had before been realized from the labour of the children, that the Trustees gratefully and readily consented. This arrangement was continued up to 1771, when it was given up, the following reason, extracted from the Board-room Minutes, being assigned:—"Whereas several base reflections have been cast upon Messrs. Blundell and Co., proprietors of the stocking manufactory, as only consulting their own private lucre and advantage in employing the children, and some persons make a handle to withdraw their subscriptions; it is now proposed by the said Mr. Blundell to discontinue the manufactory and employ the number of children some other

"way, which proposal was agreed to." An opportunity offered in 1778, when the house and buildings lately used as a stocking manufactory, were let to Messrs. Craven, Rosson and Co., for spinning and preparing cotton for weaving: they offered to employ 120 children in carding, roving, &c., for the spinning machines, &c., paying to the Trustees in consideration of the childrens' labour a sum of £312 per annum, payment to be made *half-yearly in bills on London*. The children were to be subjected to no correction in the manufactory but that of the masters. Very soon after, finding from the deadness of the cotton trade that they could not employ 120 children, they humbly requested the Trustees to withdraw thirty, and the Trustees consented. In 1781, they prayed to be wholly relieved of their engagement, and a committee, appointed to enquire into the grievances complained of by Messrs. Craven and Co., reported that their complaint was just, and agreed that the children should be withdrawn, at the same time urging, that the children, in future, should be employed in "carding, spinning, roving, warping, and, if possible, in weaving of cotton." For some short time they were enabled so to employ them, but in 1789 the cotton manufactory was given up, when it was resolved that, "in order to promote habits of industry, the children should be employed in manufacturing their own apparel till something more profitable was adopted."*

The succeeding year "something more profitable" presented itself. Articles of agreement were made 20th December, 1790, between twelve of the Trustees and Mr. James Meredith, of Manchester, for the labour of 200 children in "pin-making," together with the house and warehouse situate

* A respectable inhabitant of this town, now verging on four-score years of age, informed the writer that he well recollected, when in the school, weaving a piece of *velveteen*, and that he himself afterwards *wore it*.

in School Lane, during a term of eleven years. It may be necessary here to note that 280 children, viz., 230 boys and 50 girls were at this time on the foundation. To the number of inmates, which, in 1763 was 200, there were added twenty more in 1770, twenty in 1779, ten in 1781, ten in 1783, and twenty in 1787, making up the number as above stated.

The making of pins was decidedly the most profitable of any in which the children had been engaged, realizing as it did during the later years of the agreement, a sum of £450 per annum, but it was deemed detrimental to the children's health, and seems, besides, from the Treasurer's statement in 1802, which was the period of the expiry of the agreement with Mr. Meredith, to have been productive of "several "inconveniences to the house," as well as otherwise disadvantageous to the children, and it was consequently wholly discontinued at the end of the last named year. The Trustees at the same time stated that it was inconsistent with the object and intention of the institution—which was formed for the purpose of instructing children, not only in reading, writing, and arithmetic, but in the principles of religion—"to connect any manufactory whatever "with it." From this period the whole of the children's time has been devoted to learning, and a more liberal mode of education was soon after adopted.

In the list of donors to the School in 1802, the year in which pin-making was discontinued, are found the names of Messrs. James, George and Robert Meredith, of Manchester, for the sum of £21.

Having referred to the articles of agreement made between those gentlemen and the Trustees of the Blue Coat Hospital, there is one point to which I will venture a particular allusion. We frequently hear that in the eighteenth century old customs, festivals and holidays were much more—much

better, as some would say—observed than at present. In the agreement referred to, we are afforded direct evidence of this fact, as the following list of holidays to be allowed the boys will at once and clearly demonstrate :—

Christmas, fourteen days, (for amusement).
 Good Friday, one day.
 Easter, two afternoons, and from three o'clock the third day.
 Whitsuntide, ditto. ditto. ditto.
 Shrove Tuesday.
 Ash Wednesday.
 Conversion of St. Paul, 25th January.
 King Charles's Martyrdom.
 Purification, 2nd February.
 St. Mathias's, 24th February.
 Annunciation, 25th March.
 St. Mark's, 25th April.
 St. Philip and St. James, 1st May.
 Ascension.
 King Charles restored, 29th May.
 St. Barnabas', 11th June.
 St. John the Baptist, 24th June.
 St. Peter's, 29th June.
 St. James's, summer fair.
 St. Bartholomew's, 24th August.
 St. Matthew's, 21st September.
 St. Michael's, 29th September.
 Liberty Day.
 St. Luke's, 18th October.
 King's Inauguration.
 St. Simon and St. Jude, 28th October.
 All Saints', 1st November.
 Gunpowder Plot.
 Martinmas winter fair.
 St. Andrew's, 30th November.
 St. Thomas's, 21st December.

In connection with the subject of the children's employment in manual labour, I would note that a donation of £93 5s. 7d. is set down in 1766, from Aldn. John Tarleton, Esq., who had been Mayor of Liverpool in 1764, which appears to have been the value of five bags of cotton,

presented by him to the School, weighing 1,314lbs. at 17d. p lb. As this was still the age of the "ancient spindle and loom," while yet the great inventions of Arkwright, Hargreaves, Crompton and Watt were being matured, the fact is, perhaps, noteworthy, and viewed in respect to an occurrence which took place some eighteen years subsequently, and told on the authority of Mr. Bryan Blundell, who was a descendent of the founder of the Blue Coat Hospital, it is equally, if not more, interesting.

A consignment of eight bags of cotton, made *per* an American vessel from the United States, was, it is said, seized by an Officer of the Customs, who believed that cotton was not grown in America! The after history of these eight bags sounds to us in Liverpool, who are now used to such extraordinary importations of this article, as equally singular, viz., that, when thrown on the market, they had the effect of glutting it. Ultimately they were sold to Messrs. Strutt and Co., of Derby.

Having traced the various occupations of the children during the Treasurership of Mr. Jonathan Blundell, and up to the period of the entire discontinuance of all manual labour, I must now advert to other matters which seem to me to claim attention.

The diet used in the Hospital, when Mr. Blundell undertook the management, would seem to be little different from that which had been adopted some eighteen years previously. The caterer or House Stewards' Book of that period, has no entry whatever of diet. Now, however, (and for many years past,) a "Diet Book" is systematically kept up in the Hospital.

The following is the bill of fare which was read, approved and adopted at the first meeting of the Trustees after the exemplification of the Charter, in 1742 :—

	BREAKFAST.	DINNER.	SUPPER.
SUNDAY	Bread, Beer.	fleshmeat, Plucks, Oatmeal, Bread, Beer.	Bread, Broth.
MONDAY	Drinkmeat, Bread.	Bread, Cheese, Beer.	Bread, Milk.
TUESDAY.....	Water Porridge, Butter-milk.	Pease Porridge.	Bread, Cheese, Beer.
WEDNESDAY	Water Porridge, Butter-milk.	Pudding Pyes.	Bread, Butter-milk.
THURSDAY	The same as Sunday.		
FRIDAY	Drinkmeat, Bread.	Bread, Cheese, Beer.	Bread, Sweet-milk.
SATURDAY	Pudding, Butter-milk.	Dumplings, Beer, Butter.	Bread, Sweet-milk.

Bread and beer seem to have been in vogue, not alone for breakfast, but also for supper as well as dinner. Quaint old William Cobbett would, very possibly, have highly approved of such fare.*

On the assumption that the bill of fare of all classes, a hundred years ago, assimilated in some degree, however remote, to that here adopted, so far as beer, perhaps, was concerned, one need scarcely wonder that ale and beer brewers were so plentifully found in Liverpool; the home consumption must have been something terrible, whatever might be said of the exportation. Ample proof is afforded us from many circumstances of such being really the case.

The bread used in the Hospital was, of course, at this time, made with leaven and so continued until 1800, at

* "Ordinary beer for ordinary fare," and "good fat ale for holidays," were themes upon which William Cobbett expatiated with delight.

which time "barm" being used in the Workhouse, where there were a great number of "kneaders of bread" employed, a committee was appointed to enquire into the matter, the two Rectors being of that committee, and the result, as was naturally to be anticipated, was a suggestion that the Blue Coat Hospital should adopt the same plan. The School report of 1800 makes mention, "That the bread is now made "with barm instead of leaven, the expense of which is "more, but the quality of the bread with the saving that "arises from being baked in the Hospital, very greatly over- "balances that consideration." Some seven years later there is a copy of directions for baking the bread :—

112lbs. of good seconds flour will gain 44lbs. in baking.—

Remarks on Baking.

103lbs. of coals and cinders mixed were consumed in making three bakings.

Reference having been made to the Workhouse, it may here be stated that the Old Liverpool Workhouse was built on the land as well as from the funds of the Blue Coat Hospital, the parish paying to the Trust a yearly rental for the same,* but in 1771, much about the time of giving up the stocking manufactory in School Lane, the Workhouse in Brownlow Hill was finished, the poor were removed thither, and what had been the Old Poorhouse became in consequence untenanted. The Trustees of the Blue Coat Hospital resolved that it should be converted into warehouses, and a sum of £281 was expended in making the necessary alterations. To this day these warehouses stand at the corner of College Lane and Hanover Street, where there is a great gateway which opens into the court-yard, in which the old Poor-house, now known as the "wool warehouses," is seen. The buildings are of brick and evidence the fact that very little alteration indeed could have been required to

* *Vide* my former Paper.

adapt them to their present purpose. The rents of these warehouses form part of the income of the Hospital. While occupied by the parish the rental was £40 per annum—£80 with the wings;—but with slight alteration, involving the little outlay we have seen, the Trustees were enabled to let them to Messrs. Earle and Co., at a later period, viz., from 1803 to 1810, for 250 guineas; and from 1810 to 1817 at an advanced rental of 400 guineas per annum, so great has been the rise in value of buildings and land in this locality.

I must necessarily be brief in many of the notices; in some, perhaps, the character of the incident will scarce deserve a more than passing notice, if even that,—in others again, where I might esteem them of greater moment, I must needs be careful that I overstep not the limits usually assigned to readers of papers. On this account I will, briefly, record other and remaining circumstances during Jonathan Blundell's treasurership.

Exactly 100 years ago, in 1761,—when the great Duke of Bridgewater had given, by his example, an impetus to canal undertakings which proved of so signal and immediate advantage to Liverpool,—I find on the records of the Hospital evidence of judicious outlay in placing £500 at interest on the "Weaver Navigation." This sum was repaid in 1771.

The Annals of Liverpool furnish the next record that, in 1765, the "Old Church" organ was presented to the Blue Coat Hospital. From a notice being this year first made of the sum of £6 6s. paid from the School funds to one Ralph Parker for tuning organ, it properly suggests itself that the Trustees had no such instrument in their chapel prior to this date. The organ which they now have cost £230, and was presented them April 3rd, 1821, by the late

John Harrocks, a munificent friend of the Schools, to whom I shall again allude in the course of these pages.

In 1772, the proceeds of the sale of one-sixth of a tract of land were received, amounting, with interest from 29th September, 1767, to £218 0s. 5d. This tract lay at the end of the Salthouse Dock, and the one-sixth part was bequeathed to the use of the School by William Marsh, of Knowsley, under will dated 15th November, 1722. One of the heirs of Mr. Marsh, a Mr. Barnston, sold part of the land in 1768, to his Grace the Duke of Bridgewater,—this was much about the period of his canal enterprizes,—and received £200 for it. In consequence, the Rev. Mr. Mears, an interested party under the will, wished to purchase for a like sum the Charity's share. After some considerable time spent in negotiation, the Trustees ultimately agreed “on behalf of themselves and the other governors of the Hospital, and of the poor scholars thereof, to revise, release, and ensure to the said Mr. Mears, and to his good liking,” the one-sixth part belonging to them, interest being paid from an agreed date.

Several other pious and well-disposed persons have, at various times, given and bequeathed premises and land to the use of the Hospital, and here I may mention that it has been the custom, from the period of obtaining the charter, to have a table of the names of all benefactors of twenty pounds and upwards hung up in the hall of the Hospital. More recently they have been affixed to the walls of the chapel, where they may now be seen.

An interesting, and to many a profitable study, is to be found in the contemplation of the long list of worthy names which these walls silently point to our view.

It has been to me a pleasing task, while looking over the School records, to note, not only the great interest shewn by the early friends of the Institution, but the

great tenacity of purpose with which—convinced they were pursuing a righteous work—they held on and persevered; conjoined to these advantages there was given to many of them “length of days” to consolidate their good work. I have adduced the case of the founder, who, with his two sons, managed, during the long term of eighty-two years, the affairs of the Hospital. I have now to make mention of the death, in 1773, of a more humble, yet valuable agent in the work of instruction, Mr. Houghton, the master of the School.

He had been the schoolmaster for forty-eight years. On his election, in 1725, he had a salary appointed him of thirty-six pounds per annum, with “diet and candles;” but towards the close of his life he seems to have been in receipt of fifty-six pounds per annum. His successor was Mr. John Smith, the usher, who had been brought up in the School, Ellen Smith being at the same time appointed mistress of the girls, who at the period was commonly called the “dame.” Mr. Smith continued to be master till 1798, when he died, having been the head master for a term of twenty-five years.

Placing in juxta-position the long servitude of the two masters, a period of seventy-three years, with the servitude (and I use the term advisedly) of the three Treasurers, Bryan Blundell and his two sons, for a period of eighty-two years, the reflection pleasingly forces itself upon us, that these circumstances were of high and lasting importance to the Institution, and must have tended in no small degree to the permanent advantage of the School.

There being no letter of Mr. Jonathan Blundell's extant in the Hospital, save copies which exist on the minutes, I received lately with great pleasure, from a friend of mine, a letter, which he told me he had exhumed, along with other

papers, from an "old curiosity shop" in this town, where it had been buried. As it bears upon my subject, and was written during the period of his treasurership, though of a simple and very unpretending character, I venture to copy it.

"Liverpool, Mar. 21, 1778.

"REV. MR. THO. BROUGHTON,
"No. 5, Bartlett's Buildings,
"Holborn, London.

"Sir,

"Please to send me the books as under, a part are for the
"use of the patients of our infirmary, and part for the children of our
"Blue Coat Hospital, and oblige, Sir,

"Yr. very humble St.,

"JONA. BLUNDELL.

- "50 Bibles.
- "50 Com. prayers, new version.
- "50 Dixon Spelling Books.
- "50 Psalters.
- "50 Christian Monitors.
- "50 Present for Servants.
- "50 Lord's Day.
- "50 Drunkenness.
- "50 Chastity.
- "50 Stealing.
- "50 Lying.
- "50 Gaming.
- "500 Christian Monitors.
- "500 Dr. Sonehouse's advice to Patients."

From the foregoing, it is clear that it was not in one good work alone that he engaged himself. Additional evidence, if such were needed, may be had by a reference to Baines's "History of Liverpool," where at page 413 we have his name entered, along with his worthy father and brother, in the list of the first subscribers, 1745, to the Liverpool Infirmary, the institution he names in his above quoted letter.

Before leaving the subject of Jonathan Blundell's treasurership, I may point out that it was during his time the first

"Account Current Book" was kept in the Hospital, and from which it has since been customary to frame the annual reports of the School. The period of its adoption in 1782-3 was consequently the time in which the first printed report of the School appears, and a report has been annually issued since.

Nicholas Ashton, Esq., who resided at one time in Hanover Street, afterwards in Clayton Square, and still more recently at Woolton Hall, whose name is associated with everything good and great in the annals of our town, succeeded Mr. Blundell as Treasurer, June 27th, 1796. He continued to hold the office for one year, it being at the time understood that the office should thereafter be annual. The number of children in the School was at this time 300, the augmentation having taken place the preceding year; but towards the close of 1796 it was resolved again to increase the number from 300 to 320. Mr. Ashton, at the period of his death, was the oldest Governor and Trustee of the Hospital, having been elected in 1763. The report of 1833, in recording his demise, makes mention of the fact, that for more than seventy years he had been a subscriber of £5 5s. per annum to the funds, and was ever a warm and attached friend to its interests.

Clayton Tarleton, Esq., who succeeded him in 1797, died during his term of office, when Colonel Bolton, a name well known in Liverpool, undertook it for 1798. The number of inmates was at this time 327. As noted in another place Mr. John Smith, the master, died this year, when the Trustees resolved, "That a clergyman be appointed master of the School, but that he shall not be allowed to officiate for any of the clergy in the town or neighbourhood." The salary, including house and other advantages, was fixed at one hundred guineas per annum. They then elected the Rev. John Shakleton, of Thornton, in the parish of Bradford, to be master: Mrs. Shakleton to be matron. A head assistant

was advertised for, salary fifty pounds per annum, but no perquisites. Among the minutes of the following board-day it was entered, "That Lewis Richards, late assistant to the "Rev. Mr. Leach, late of Mold, Flintshire, in Wales, be and "is hereby elected assistant teacher," &c. Owing, however, to a complaint being made against the new master, charging him with, to say the least of it, acts of imprudence, it was deemed necessary to convene a meeting for the 10th May, 1799, to examine into such charges. Among the witnesses to his character the Rev. Mr. Shakleton brought, with others, Mr. Baines, the well known master of the Free School, which at that time was in School Lane, and on the Blue Coat Hospital land. After a patient investigation of the complaints urged against him, the minutes record "That having "taken the premises into our consideration, are of opinion "that he is unfit any longer to be master." Robert Parkes, of Liverpool, an excise officer, was elected to succeed him, the whole of the Trustees voting for him, with the single exception of Thomas Earle, Esq., who voted for Mr. Thomas Davies, another candidate.* The salary was fixed at eighty guineas per annum, besides the use of the house, fire and candles, and also perquisites on apprentices' indentures enjoyed by former masters, which were estimated at sixteen pounds more, making altogether one hundred pounds per annum.

To Colonel Bolton's office Edward Houghton, Esq., succeeded in 1799, and after him James Gerrard, Esq., M.D., became Treasurer for 1800.

The years 1799 and 1800 were remarkable as years of great scarcity, and as such could not fail to operate inju-

* The family of the Earles have always taken a most conspicuous part in the management of the institution. One of the family, John Earle, Esq., was Mayor of Liverpool in Queen Anne's reign, 1709, when the institution was first projected, and one of the Trustees, nine in number, first appointed. The present estimable Treasurer of the Hospital, William Langton, Esq., is likewise one of that family.

riously, and press heavily on the School. A minute to that effect appears on the books in 1800, when it is "ordered that "owing to the great arrears in the accounts, and high price "of provisions, the rule made in 1796 for receiving 270 boys "and 50 girls be for the present rescinded, and that till "further orders the number of both at any time shall not "exceed 300, viz., 250 boys and 50 girls."

When we consider the alarmingly high price of provisions at this time, we find every reason for the adoption of such a course. Recently, in the "Liverpool Mercury," I saw a "Lancashire Man's" reminiscences of two wet seasons. Of one of these (the period in question) he says, "I remember, "in 1799, the harvest only commenced on the 30th September; "all the wheat was unsound; meal was six pounds per load; "and potatoes a guinea per load." The four-pound loaf in 1800, consequent upon this state of things, was sold at the awful price—I can use no milder term—of two shillings.

Towards the close of this year, the Trustees advised "that "the tradesmen's bills be paid, and the Report published as "speedily as possible, and that the benefactions, &c., be "advertized in two newspapers." A strong effort appears to have been made to obtain benefactions, for it is remarked in the report, "Dr. Gerrard collected this year, total benefactions, £1,289 4s. 6d." Yet for all these efforts, the School was compelled to withdraw from the Corporation, "No. 1 Corporation bond for £1,000," and was in debt £1,474 16s. 3½d. I must assume that the good success of Dr. Gerrard must have spurred the Board of Governors, and justified, to some extent, the course pursued by them in 1801; for we find them at this time ordering, "That as "the distress calls for uncommon exertion," forty-six children be admitted, "notwithstanding the reduced state of the funds," they say, "trusting that, though they will, in consequence "thereof, be still further reduced, they may be reinstated in

“ a future day.” They cautiously put off, however, to a more opportune moment, sundry alterations in the premises which had been previously projected.

Turning from a consideration of these matters, to others of a dissimilar character, revealing to us something of the inner life of the boys, I observe it mentioned in 1800, that “ Friday, the 25th July, being the fair day, the boys were so “ determined upon a holyday, that they drew the staple off “ one of the gates and went out, to the number of 107.” It may here be convenient to place a reminder that the Liverpool fair was then held in front of the Town Hall, and continued during ten days preceding, as well as succeeding, the 25th July. That it was not then the mere form of a “ fair day ” as now, is well evidenced by the fact of the boys’ obstreperous wish to see the fun of the fair. Several of the boys did not return immediately from the fair; for a catalogue of names, dated some days after, is found among the papers in the Hospital. In character with the circumstances above narrated, it is noted that seven boys ran away from the School, and one of them threw a brick into a mug shop, and “ broke mugs,” it is solemnly affirmed, “ to the value “ of half-a-crown.” This crashing event took place in the same indecorous year 1800. In strict justice we are compelled to say, that it certainly was very bad; but yet, after all, the true philosophy of the matter resolves itself in the every-day saying—“ Boys will be boys.” Dr. Gerrard and the Trustees of his day seem to have been kindly imbued with the latter sentiment, as we may judge from the tone of the following regulation :—“ that the money arising from the “ sale of sundries, and also part, or perhaps the whole, of the “ money received in the boxes in the chapel, or given by “ any individual to any of the children, shall form one fund “ for supplying them with balls, tops, marbles and other “ indulgences, at the discretion of the master, save and ex-

“cept that the said fund shall first be liable to defray any “expense incurred by the children breaking the windows.” The master had also his instructions to favour the boys whose “diligence, civility, cleanliness and decorum most “deserve it.”

From an entry of this period I gather that the children were instructed in psalmody, and that their services were granted, as singers, to the different churches of the town; but in 1801 it was found that the attendance of the children at the different churches was very inconvenient—it was detrimental to their clothes—it gave them opportunity of rambling out, and committing many irregularities—it made them, returning from distant churches, late for dinner—and it caused further annoyance by their going to practice during the week days at all hours, even after dark, whenever the different organists thought fit,—all these things were urged against the system, and it was added, “It seems, indeed, to “be doing them not only a present injury, but perhaps laying “the foundation for their future ruin, as the talent for singing “makes them more desirable company for those who frequent “public houses. The examples of some of the instructors, “that of keeping their hats on in church, must in young “minds have a tendency to remove all awe for the place.” For the foregoing reasons, it was resolved that the practice should be discontinued from the following Whitsuntide.

The Corporation, at this time, had notice to quit the “Free “School,” or pay double rent—the smallness of the rent being pointed out to them. To the payment of an additional rent the Corporation acceded, and from 1801 £18 per annum was paid, for the short time longer which they continued to occupy it.

The Trustees having, in the early part of 1801, taken in a larger number of boys, in consequence of the general distress, felt themselves constrained, in the course of the same

year, to rule that "until the premises be put in repair, and "the funds in a more flourishing condition," the future complement of boys shall be 200.

During near two years Dr. Gerrard had occupied, with great advantage to the School, the dignified yet onerous post of Treasurer, and by his active and zealous interest in its behalf, had introduced many measures regarding the internal economy of the Institution, which from his special knowledge and ability, he was peculiarly fitted to suggest and cause to be adopted. On his retirement from the office, Wm. Cubbin, Esq., succeeded him, from 1802 to 1805.

Early in 1802 the premises in School Lane, consisting of the Free School and a house, together with the factory, &c., being considered in an untenable condition, the Trustees thought of adapting them to some other purpose; but finding part of the property to be only leasehold, their plan could not be carried into effect without purchasing the reversion. The Treasurer was, in consequence, requested to enquire upon what terms the Corporation would sell the reversion, and to get Messrs. Foster and Eyes, at the same time, to estimate the reversionary interest of some property in Fenwick Street, belonging to the School, and in lease to the Corporation and Mr. Edmund Molyneux. This property, it seems, lay in the line of intended improvements in Fenwick Street, and it was, reasonably enough, surmised that the Corporation would be glad to have the inheritance of it. An exchange was made of these reversionary interests respectively—the Institution deriving a balance of £818 13s. 9d. The Corporation were estimated to pay £1,206 13s. 9d. for the property in Fenwick Street, and the Blue Coat Hospital £388 for the freehold in School Lane, making the balance as above stated. In addition to which, the Corporation appear to have made a liberal grant of some other part of their leasehold property to the use of the School.

The land and buildings which had thus been transferred by the School to the Corporation of Liverpool formed part of the bequest of Mrs. Anne Cleveland, under a will, dated 4th March, 1730, and which accrued to the Hospital on her death in 1735. It may, perhaps, interest the Society to have a few particulars of this property, which was situate in Drybridge (now Fenwick Street), the Old Ropery, &c.

Two dwelling houses and bakehouse, at the corner of Moore Street, let for £10.

A small bakehouse, adjoining the former, £2 15s.

One dwelling house, adjoining the last mentioned bakehouse, let for £3.

A dwelling house, at the East end of Drybridge, £3.

A small house, adjoining the last mentioned, £2 15s.

The ropewalk under the Drybridge, with a small warehouse upon the bridge, £2 15s.

A cellar in Drybridge, £1 15s.

Pertinent to the subject of the enumeration of dwellings, &c., in and about Drybridge, I may be permitted to quote an extract from a paper by J. A. Picton, Esq., Vice-President of this Society, entitled "Ancient Liverpool in its Buildings and Architecture," read before the Architectural and Archæological Society, 4th December, 1858. He observes,*

"When Moore laid out Fenwick Street, there was a ropery or spinning place, in lease to Wm. Bushell, extending westward a considerable distance from Castle Street. In order not to interfere with this, the street was carried over the ropery on a bridge, as was done, many years after, in Newington. This went by the name of the Drybridge, and is so named in the maps, long after the bridge was swept away. The bridge is gone, but the lower part of the ropery remains, converted into a street, under the old

* At page 31.

“ name. In respect of this bridge, Master Edward Moore
 “ waxeth poetical. There was a narrow alley running from
 “ Castle Street to Fenwick Street, at one end of which was
 “ the Drybridge; at the other end lived a drunken fellow,
 “ named Thomas Bridge. Moore gave the name of Bridge’s
 “ Alley to this passage, and composes thereupon the following
 “ verses :—

“ Of old, bridges for water were,
 “ But these are made for other fare :
 “ The one for spinning—and, it’s said,
 “ The other’s for the drunken trade.
 “ Let this be set to England’s wonder—
 “ Two bridges, and no water under.”

The foregoing notice precisely accords with the condition of Drybridge at the period when the Blue Coat Hospital became possessed of the property in and about it.

It may be proper to state that a part of the above named property, held “ under lease to James Rutter, tallow chandler, “ and his heirs,” had been previously sold to the Corporation in 1787, for £500: the total sum realized was accordingly £1,706 13s. 9d.

A condition was attached to Mrs. Cleveland’s will, which ordered a payment to be made annually of £5 to one Coppell, and to her poorest relation for ever. This annuity is paid at the present day, to a person named Thompson, and, from what I hear, there seems no immediate fear of the heirs dying out.

Having procured, as we have seen, the reversion of certain premises and land in School Lane, the Trustees in the following year were enabled, after making necessary repairs, to let what had been the pin manufactory to Messrs. Mathews and Phillips, on a ten years’ lease, at £60 per annum; and in the same year the warehouses in Hanover Street, to which reference has been made, to Messrs. Earles and Co., for 250 Guineas per annum, and likewise upon a lease.

About this time an opinion seemed to be formed among the Governors and Trustees of the Hospital, that the welfare of the Institution required some addition to be made to the decree, and it was judged expedient to apply to the Court of Chancery for that purpose. Mr. Corrie had already mooted the matter as early as 1797, with a view, particularly, of increasing the number of Governors and Trustees, which at that time was fifty, as fixed by the original charter.* The opinion of Ralph Peters, Esq., was taken as to the practicability of making such increase, and following his advice, "it was requested that the Registrar of the Court of Chancery be enquired of as to the probable expense of obtaining a decree to increase the number."

A proposal being made some time subsequently by Richard Walker, Esq., to purchase part of the land belonging to the Hospital,—the Trustees doubting their power of disposing of such land,—afterwards resolved "that a proper case shall be stated to John Lloyd and Richard Hollist, barristers, for their opinion whether a decree may be obtained for enabling the Trustees to dispose of any land belonging to this Charity, and apply the money raised by such sale in the erection of another Hospital, and that Robert Richmond prepare such case." Counsel's opinion proved favourable to the proposal, and application was accordingly made to the Duchy court to grant such powers. Certain other alterations and amendments of the former decree were at the same time proposed. Amongst others, it was sought to alter the quarterly and weekly days of meeting of the Board of Governors from Monday to

* In Brooks's History of Liverpool during the latter quarter of the 18th century, page 65, there is seen a list of the fifty Governors and Trustees, first appointed under the charter in 1741, furnished by Anthony Swainson, Esq., who was formerly Treasurer of the School, and who has taken a great interest in its welfare.

Tuesday. It was stated to the Court, "that Monday being the
 " day appointed by the former decree for holding both the
 " quarterly and weekly meetings, is, by the largest part of the
 " said Governors and Trustees (who are merchants), found
 " to be an inconvenient day for, and prevents their attending
 " at, such meetings, by reason of a mail from London arriving
 " at Liverpool on that day (which it formerly did not), and
 " the mail also arriving on Sunday, the next preceding day :
 " and therefore Tuesday (on which day no such mail arrives)
 " would be more convenient for holding the said quarterly
 " meetings. And Friday (being the day on which no mail is
 " sent from Liverpool to London, and the day next preceding
 " that on which the great and general market for the said
 " town of Liverpool is held) would be the most convenient
 " day for holding the said weekly meetings."

These, and sundry other alterations and additions, were, with slight modifications, adopted by the Court of Chancery, and a decree granted in 1803.

Mr. Richmond observed to the Board that the decree was not closed, and recommended it to be left open, as he stated their present purpose was effectually answered ; and upon any future application to the Court for power to sell any part of the premises, or for any other purpose, considerable expense would be saved. The thanks of the Board were rendered to Mr. Richmond, for his great pains and trouble in obtaining the decree, and " more especially for his liberal and exemplary
 " conduct in declining to accept any remuneration for the
 " same."

A special meeting, for the sole purpose of electing fifty additional Trustees, according to the provisions of the decree, was held at the Hospital, 1st November, 1803, when the following gentlemen were appointed :—

- | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Henry Blundell, Esq., Ince. | 26. W. Naylor. |
| 2. Daniel Allen. | 27. W. Barton, Esq. |
| 3. Mr. John Bridge Aspinall. | 28. Thomas Potts. |
| 4. George Brown. | 29. Thomas Rawson. |
| 5. W. Beckwith. | 30. J. Swan, Esq. |
| 6. John Brancker. | 31. John Shaw, Esq. |
| 7. Thomas Bushell. | 32. John Parker, Esq. |
| 8. Thomas Beckwith. | 33. Samuel Staniforth. |
| 9. Nicholas Crooke. | 34. Henry Clay, Esq. |
| 10. Roger Carus. | 35. W. Gibson. |
| 11. James Drinkwater. | 36. W. Earle, Esq. |
| 12. W. Dixon. | 37. T. Case. |
| 13. T. Hinde, Esq. | 38. J. Leay. |
| 14. J. Houghton. | 39. W. Stanistreet. |
| 15. J. Jackson, Esq. | 40. S. Statham, Esq. |
| 16. John Keay. | 41. J. Booth. |
| 17. J. Lightbody, Jun. | 42. W. Roe, Esq. |
| 18. Thomas Leigh. | 43. J. Mather. |
| 19. W. Leigh, Jun. | 44. W. Aspinall. |
| 20. P. Leicester. | 45. Cornelius Bourne, Esq. |
| 21. R. Makin. | 46. Henry Dixon. |
| 22. T. Molyneux, Esq. | 47. J. R. Freme. |
| 23. John Myers, Wavertree. | 48. Samuel Martin. |
| 24. John Myers. | 49. W. C. Lake. |
| 25. W. Neilson, Esq. | 50. Philip Orton. |

The whole of these Trustees are now dead, the last survivor of them being Robert Makin, Esq., who died in 1859. It may be remarked that of the above number of newly appointed Trustees, three of them, viz., George Brown, Thomas Bushell and Thomas Potts, merchants of the town, well known in their day, had been brought up in the School, and through life manifested a great degree of zeal for the prosperity of the Institution.

Besides contributing liberally to its funds during their life time, all of them, I find, left to it also bequests at their death. Mr. Bushell, who died in 1838, left a legacy of 100 guineas; Mr. George Brown, who died in 1836, left to it £500; and Mr. Thomas Potts, who died in the same year, left £1000, to be paid at the death of his sister, who, dying in 1840, increased her brother's legacy, by adding to it £500 more.

The tablets on the walls of the Institution, to which reference has been made, record numerous instances of similar benefactions and legacies from those brought up in the School, who, in many instances, have chosen pointedly to identify themselves with the venerable Institution to which in early life they had been so much indebted, and towards which in after life many a noble and true heart has turned in grateful remembrance.

In illustration of the foregoing remark, I may instance a case from the very last report of the School, which came to my hands some three or four weeks ago. Among the list of donations during the year 1860 is found the name of "Joseph Blackley, Esq., educated in the School, (5th donation,) "£105." This gentleman has now attained the patriarchal age of eighty-one years. He left the School on the 1st of January, 1794, to follow the sea, and having in process of time become a shipowner, and been successful, he has now for many years lived retired, enjoying a well earned competency. In 1854, sixty years from the time he left the Blue Coat Hospital, he went to the School, and remarked to Mr. Wood, the worthy head master of the Institution, "sixty years ago I left the walls of this venerable Institution, and "I propose to give you sixty guineas, being a guinea for "every year since I left the School." This sum he accordingly paid, and it appears in the year's report, with a brief note of the foregoing circumstances. The last year, while paying the donation to which I have referred, he expressed a wish that a portrait of his, taken some half century ago, might pass into the possession of the School after his death. He left it to the Trustees to elect where it might be placed, his only wish being, as he expressed, that it might have a place in any part of that building he had loved so long and so well.

It is almost needless to remark that Mr. Blackley's pro-

posal was courteously and gratefully received by the Trustees, who have agreed to place it in the Board-room of their Institution. This Board-room contains portraits of the founder, Bryan Blundell, as well as many others. Application was made to the Trustees in 1804, by Hen. Blundell Hollinshead, Esq., for permission to put up, at his own expense, a full-length portrait of his father, Jonathan Blundell, adjoining that of his grandfather. Permission was readily accorded him by the Governors and Trustees, who requested him to attach to the same "an account of the great services rendered to the "charity by those worthy characters."

Pursuing the School records, I find that the children in the Blue Coat Hospital were attended during any sickness by the physician or surgeon to the Dispensary. This is seen on reference to certain rules printed in 1803, on the authority of the Board, respecting the admission, &c., of children, rule eleven enacting, "That the children who are "sick shall be visited by the then attending physician "or surgeon of the Dispensary, and by no other medical "person." The Liverpool Dispensary, from 1782 up to 1829, occupied a position on the South side of Church Street, between Post Office Place and the present Athenæum. It was thus, at this time, within stone's throw of the Blue Coat Hospital. When removed from the site in Church Street the Hospital sought, and obtained, the services of a physician and surgeon specially attached to it.

Following William Cubbin, Esq., who for three years had now held the treasurership, it is recorded that John Keay, Esq., undertook it during another three years—1805 to 1808. The new Treasurer was requested to lay before the Board an estimate of the repairs wanted to the Hospital, and a Committee was appointed to enquire into the real state of the buildings, and the best plan to be adopted for their repair. They were further requested to meet Mr. Foster, and with him to examine particularly into the matter. Mr. Foster

reported that the roof was good, but that the wood work of the windows was incapable of being repaired. We find, accordingly, new door and windows ordered, as well also "that the brickwork be pointed in an effective manner, but "no alteration to be made in the front of the building so "as to injure or affect its present appearance and general "character." The Earl of Sefton gave stone from his quarries in Toxteth Park to repair the front of the building. The value of the freestone given by him we find recorded, 29th December, 1807, to be £16 13s. 4d., at which time a vote of thanks was made to his lordship for the same.

The records of 1806 bear the name of Samuel Austin, entered as admitted into the School at this date, "since celebrated as a perspective delineator." In a valuable and highly interesting paper, read before this Society by Joseph Mayer, Esq., F.S.A., upon "Roscoe, and the influence of his writings "upon the Fine Arts," * reference is made to this gentleman. "Among the friends of William Roscoe"—enumerating those of an early date—Mr. Mayer adds, "at a later period Mr. "Austin, the well known water colour draughtsman, whose "original sketch of the house in which Mr. Roscoe was born "is now before you, together with a letter of Mr. Roscoe's, "confirming it as the place of his birth." †

During the treasurership of Mr. Keay, the observance of an anniversary by the children belonging to the various Church schools, seems to have first suggested itself to the Trustees of the Blue Coat Hospital. A committee of them was appointed in 1807 to manage a plan to carry this into effect. They appear to have been successful, for in 1809 "a special Board" was convened "to consider of the most

* Vol. 5, p. 151.

† Anticipating a little the order of events, it may here be stated, in connection with Art, that Richard Ansdell, A.B.A., whose name deservedly stands high, not alone in Liverpool, but throughout the country at large, received his education in the institution, at a subsequent period. A recent number of the *Illustrated London News* gave, with his portrait, a brief biographical sketch of this distinguished artist.

“eligible mode of appropriating the money collected at the “first anniversary in July last.” At the present time, on or about the 18th June is the period usually assigned to the anniversary. Upon the last occasion the number of scholars in Church schools who walked in procession, headed by the Blue Coat children, was 23,563.*

The Treasurer of the Hospital after Mr. Keay was W. Leigh, Esq., who undertook it for 1808, and George Brown, Esq., undertook the office in 1809. This was the period of the School’s centenary, and no more appropriate election could have been made than the placing of Mr. Brown, a former pupil, at the head of the establishment in which he had been nurtured.

On October 3rd of the year in which Mr. George Brown was Treasurer, John Harrocks, Esq., was elected a Trustee. In the course of a few years he gave to the Hospital various sums, amounting in the aggregate to £3,022. He died in 1823, and a handsome monument to his memory has been erected in the chapel of the Hospital. It was executed by Mr. W. Spence, of Liverpool. The centre is a pedestal, supporting an urn, and on each side the figure of a boy and girl, in white marble, are represented in an attitude of grief, mourning the loss of their benefactor. Upon the tablet is the following inscription:—

Erected
to record the virtues of
JOHN HARROCKS,
a man whose benevolence
knew no other limits
than the wants of
his fellow creatures;
and whose munificent donations
to the Public Charities
of his native town,
And particularly to this
Hospital,
are the noblest
monument of his own worth,
and the most
persuasive incitement
to the liberality
of others.
1823.

* From a general roll of the schools, kept at the Blue Coat Hospital.

A very good likeness of Mr. Harrocks was presented by Mr. Brown to the Hospital; it now adorns, with others—some already named—the walls of the Board room.

In the course of his treasurership Mr. Brown wrote a letter, of which I annex a copy, to the Rev. Mr. Blacow, which he obligingly submitted to the consideration of the Board. The thanks of the Committee were presented to him, “for a communication so very honourable to his character, and a convincing testimony in favour of the excellency of the Institution.”

“28th September, 1809.

“REV. RICHARD BLACOW.

“I again take the liberty of addressing you on a subject which has given me some degree of concern. When I last saw you at St. James' School, I asked the favour of your giving us a sermon for the benefit of the Blue Coat Hospital, and was much disappointed to find something had occurred that had given cause for your withdrawing your kind aid in behalf of this Charity. I think I then informed you I had been brought up in the School myself, and how gratifying it must be to me being placed at the head of that seminary under the roof of which I had been nurtured, and to which I, in a great measure, owe all my success through life. There are now many applicants for the few vacancies we have for both sex, amongst which are cases most distressing. It recalls to my memory the time I was an applicant myself, under circumstances no less distressing than any which have this day come before me. I may here truly say, I applied an orphan and they took me in, naked and they clothed me, hungry and they fed me; under these circumstances it is natural I should feel a more than common solicitude for its welfare. This emboldens me to renew my application to you in its behalf, and I feel a flattering hope that in again pleading to you (who so often holds forth so many good examples) I shall not plead in vain. On looking over our accounts I find our resources are very inadequate to our expenditure. The collection at your church last year was £70, and has averaged nearly double any of the other churches; to be deprived of such aid, and at a time, too, when our resources are so low, would indeed be severely felt. Do, then, my dear Sir, let me intreat in behalf of these poor children, who so often pray for and lisp their blessings for those kind friends and benefactors (amongst whom you have heretofore been so conspicuous), for all the benefits they enjoy, that you will revoke any determination you may have made, and that you will not only allow us a sermon, but in order to make it the more profitable you will yourself be our advocate on the occasion, in complying with which you will not only essentially serve the Charity, but confer an everlasting obligation on

“Your most obedient,

“GEORGE BROWN.”

This earnest and tender appeal does not appear to have induced a collection to be made at St. Mark's, as is evidenced by the report of 1813, which makes mention of "St. Mark's church, no collection since 1808." Yet it is but right to state, that among the donors in the year 1809, is the name of the "Rev. R. B., £2 2s.," which of course could be no other than the Rev. Mr. Blacow. The very report of 1813, just cited, has also entry of "Rev. Richard Blacow, "St. Mark's, £2," and other £5 subsequently. Whatever cause may have existed to prevent a collection being made for the School, and many causes may suggest themselves, I know, from other evidence than that I have adduced, that the School had no more firm friend than the worthy pastor of St. Mark's.

There is one part of Mr. Brown's letter which suggests a little history of his orphanage. He dwells on the fact of his own position, when an applicant for admission into the Blue Coat Hospital, "under circumstances," he writes, "no less "distressing" than any which had that day come before him.

He appears to have been received into the School in 1765,—the same year in which Daniel M'Lean, a late merchant of this town, and a great friend to the School, was likewise admitted—and so friendless was George Brown that he had no one in the world even to present him before the Board of Governors to state his case. At the tender age of eight years, an orphan, friendless and alone, he brought his papers and, with his own tiny hands, adduced proofs of his parents' marriage, his own baptism, his orphan condition, together with proofs of his possessing a settlement in Liverpool, required under the charter; and, without recommendation,* was admitted. On leaving the School, his condition and prospects were such as

* Anthony Swainson, Esq., who has been long connected with the institution, was my informant of the latter fact; and it is quite reconcileable with the other circumstances. He had heard it from good authority.

might aptly be described by a line in Milton :—

“The world was all before him, where to choose.”

He chose his father's profession—the profession of the founder of the Hospital—the sea. Before, however, he had taken one voyage, his legs got entangled in a rope, breaking them both. For twelve long months he was compelled to lie on his back, and in a sick chamber! A very child of misfortune he truly seemed to be: but a brighter day awaited him. Having recovered from his accident, he determinedly continued to follow the sea, and ere he was twenty years old, became the captain of his ship; while he was yet but thirty years of age, was an owner of a small fleet; in process of time became one of the wealthiest merchants of a wealthy port; and, better still, one of the most exemplary of Christian men. Of his high character, the introduction to the Chapel Hymn Books, used by the children, bears this honourable testimony—“He was one who was no less distinguished for his commercial integrity, than he was in private life for his unaffected piety and Christian benevolence.” And who may tell but that his early misfortunes may have tended to make him great? The experience of men in every age of the world gives force to this assumption. It was said of one of the ancients,* that he invited his pupils to calamity, promising them, from a participation of it, increased knowledge, enlarged views and multiplied ideas. It is a beautiful, and no less certain truth, that changes of outward circumstances, while they have their inconveniences, bear likewise in their train greater and more abiding advantages.

† Seneca.