

RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY.

The annual meeting of the Derby Auxiliary of the above society was held in the Athenaeum-room on Tuesday evening. The chair was taken by Dr. Ogle, and there were also present the Revs. W. F. Wilkinson, E. W. Foley, A. L. Simpson, S. B. Brasher, and J. R. Heard (deputation).

The CHAIRMAN said the objects and operations of the Religious Tract Society were too well known to need any exposition from him. He fully approved of the objects of the society, and these meetings were needful, that the supporters of the society might meet to testify their sympathy by their prayers and pecuniary assistance. The institution was one of the preservatives of society in England, and the need of such a society and its effects were especially felt in such times as these.

The Secretary of the Derby Auxiliary (the Rev. W. F. Wilkinson) then read the report, which showed that the efforts of the Derby Auxiliary of the Society had been attended with considerable success, and proved the society to be financially and otherwise in a prosperous condition.

The Rev. A. L. SIMPSON then proposed the adoption of the report and its publication and circulation among the members. He then paid a high tribute to the energies of the retiring secretary, the Rev. W. F. Wilkinson. His loss would be felt by the society, and indeed by the community at large. This was the only circumstance which was not of a hopeful character in the report, and he must express his regret personally and on behalf of the society at the departure of Mr. Wilkinson. His assiduity and care for the interests of the society, which had been manifested during a number of years, deserved the highest commendation, and they must all feel the loss they had sustained in the departure of Mr. Wilkinson (Hear, hear). He knew no society which was more antagonistic to the unwholesome literature which emanated from the press at the present day. The society was doing a work for God and for the nation. They were but a small rivulet running into the river, but they must remember all rivers sprung from small sources. He commended the society to the support of all Christians, and had great pleasure in moving the adoption of the report.

The Rev. J. R. HEARD (deputation) in seconding the resolution, said the operations of the society were not merely confined to Great Britain, but extended to India and China, and the nations of the Continent. He then specifically referred to the great success of their mission in Spain. He believed that the evangelisation of Spain might lead to a greater political future for that nation. He referred to the great falling off which had taken place in the subscriptions to the society, owing to the immense sums of money which had been given for the sick and wounded in the war. A large number of tracts had been distributed among the French prisoners in Germany, and he believed that these tracts had been in many cases instrumental in effecting the salvation of souls. They had made many noble grants to France and the tracts which they had circulated in that country were indeed precious grains of seed corn, which he hoped would bring forth much fruit. The work of the society had also been successful in Italy, and in Rome especially. A regular tract depot had been established in that city, and they anticipated many beneficial results from the mission. He then quoted several instances of individual conversions by means of tracts and publications which had issued from the press of the society; and concluded by exhorting his hearers to support the society.

The report was unanimously adopted.

The Rev. W. F. WILKINSON expressed his deep regret at the termination of his official connection with the Derby auxiliary of the society. He always regarded that connection as a great privilege, and he felt much regret in separating from a body of friends in the town with whom he had been associated in the work of assisting the parent society. He then referred to the success which had attended the auxiliary in Derby, and the large amount of business that had been done by the Repository. He earnestly prayed that success might continue to attend the efforts of the society in this town and in society generally. He concluded by moving that the Rev. J. Chancellor be appointed secretary in his place, and that Mr. Clarke be appointed tract distributor to the auxiliary. The qualifications of Mr. Chancellor for the office were too well known and appreciated to need further comment from him, and the appointment of that gentleman in his stead would afford him a very large amount of satisfaction (Applause).

The Rev. E. W. FOLEY, in seconding the resolution, begged to add a proviso according to a vote of thanks to the Rev. W. F. Wilkinson, the retiring secretary, for his valuable services to the society as chief secretary for a number of years, and in doing so expressed his sincere regret at the departure of that rev. gentleman.

The resolution was carried with acclamation.

The meeting then terminated, and a collection was made for the funds of the society.

DERBY BOARD OF GUARDIANS.

At the weekly meeting of the Derby Guardians on Tuesday, the Clerk laid before the Board a communication received from the Medical Department of the Privy Council in reference to the outbreak of small-pox in London and Liverpool, and pointing out that it was the urgent duty of all Boards of Guardians to see to the population of their respective Unions being protected by vaccination, and, as far as necessary, by re-vaccination against the disease of small-pox.

The CHAIRMAN (the Rev. E. H. Abney) said how to counteract the influence of the anti-vaccinators was the great thing.

Mr. BRINDLEY said great credit was due to the Vaccination Committee and the medical officers of the Union for attending to their duties in this matter. He had not heard of a single case of small-pox in Derby.

Mr. OAKDEN asked if it would not, as a precautionary measure, be better to have the inmates of the Workhouse re-vaccinated. It would be a fearful thing if the small-pox got amongst them.

The CHAIRMAN thought that Dr. Greaves had better be consulted on the matter.

After some further discussion, on the motion of the Rev. A. McKenna, seconded by Mr. BSWICK, it was agreed that the inmates of the Union and the "casuals" should be re-vaccinated.

CONTRACTS.

The Board then proceeded to examine the quarterly tenders sent in.

GROCERIES.—Mr. J. C. Gribble obtained the in-door contract, and Mr. R. Milne the out-door contract.

MEAT.—Only two tenders for the meat contract, Mr. T. Martin and Mr. Domleo. Mr. Martin's tender was accepted as follows:—Rounds of beef, 7½d.; legs of mutton, 8½d.; forequarters of mutton, 6½d.; necks and breasts of mutton, 6d.; bread, 4d.; legs of beef, 2½d.; officers' meat, 8d.

BREAD, FLOUR, AND OATMEAL.—The following sent in tenders:—Mr. John Holmes, Mr. Charles Wain, Mr. George Johnson, and Mr. Isaac Roome. Mr. Johnson's tender for in-door and out-door was accepted at the following prices—bread, 1s. 9d. per stone; flour, 1s. 10d. per stone; oatmeal, 1s. 6d. per stone.

MILK.—Mrs. Bennett's tender to supply milk at 8d. per gallon was accepted.

COFFINS.—There were two tenders for the supply of coffins, Mr. Mellor, and Mr. Beadles: the former was accepted.

CLOTHING.—Mr. Earp's tender was accepted.

CHEESE.—Mr. Wright's, Sadler-gate tender was accepted for the supply of cheese, at 8½d. per lb.

BUTTER.—Mr. B. Brindley's tender for the supply of butter at 1s. 3d. per lb. was accepted.

BOOTS AND SHOES.—Mr. Bassendine's tender was accepted.

SERIOUS CHARGES OF FORGERY AND EMBEZZLEMENT AGAINST A SOLICITOR'S CLERK AT MATLOCK.

At a special sessions held at Matlock on Friday, the 24th inst., before R. Radford and Childers Radford, Esqrs., John Smith, of Wirksworth, aged 23, who has been in the employment of W. S. Wheatcroft, Esq., solicitor, of Matlock and Derby, was brought up on remand from Buxton, where he had been charged with forgery and embezzlement, having there cashed a forged cheque for 150l. drawn on the Sheffield and Rotherham Bank.

Mr. Potter, of Wirksworth, watched the case on behalf of Mr. Wheatcroft, and the prisoner was defended by Mr. Kingdon.

Mr. Frederick Parker, manager of the Sheffield and Rotherham Branch Bank at Bakewell, produced two cheques which were found to be forgeries; one of the cheques was for 10l.; it was presented on the 18th of February, 1871, signed by "Thomas Walters" and "John Smith," two directors of the Matlock Bridge Hotel and Market Hall Company, of which Mr. Wheatcroft is secretary, by whom it was countersigned and made payable to Thomas Howe. He received the cheque at the bank in an envelope sent by a messenger from Matlock; the handwriting of the envelope was in the handwriting of Smith, the prisoner, and inside was a note to the following effect:—"Dear Sir.—Please pay bearer the sum of 10l. W. G. Wheatcroft. F. Parker, Esq., Bakewell." He sent the cash by a messenger, putting it in an envelope. He (the witness) also produced another cheque for 2l. 5s. dated February 18th, 1871, signed by Thomas Walters and John Smith, directors of the Matlock Bridge Market Hall and Hotel Company, and countersigned by Mr. W. G. Wheatcroft as secretary of the company; it was made payable to Mr. E. Gregory or bearer; he received it from the Derby and Derbyshire Banking Company, and it was passed by them into the County Clearing House; it had been cashed at the Matlock Bank; he received it on the 24th February from the London and Westminster Bank, who were the agents of the Sheffield and Rotherham Bank. It was sent to them by post and paid to their account. The Market Hall Company had a banking account at the Bakewell Branch; he did not know of his own knowledge that it was entered to their account; it came by post, but could not in the absence of his books remember the day.

Cross-examined by Mr. KINGDON—He thought it was a genuine cheque. The Market Hall Company had had an account ever since 1866; the cheque was to be charged in the pass-book (produced), but it was not done so at the time; he had had some conversation with Mr. Wheatcroft last week; he asked for the pass-book, but he had not got it; it was made up to the 17th of February in this year. The date of the last cheque was the 17th of February; the other cheque was the 18th of February; he had entered it since in the pass book. He knew the prisoner's handwriting on the cheques to be his; he debited the 2l. 10s. to the company's account in the regular way. Mr. Wheatcroft has a private account with them; he did not know the messenger who brought the envelope; the messenger could not write, but made his mark; his name was David Elliott; he always took a receipt when a messenger was sent.

David Elliott sworn, said he was a labourer and horse-breaker, residing at Matlock Bank; he knew the prisoner Smith; he gave him a letter to go to Bakewell; it might be five or six weeks ago; he told him to take it to Bakewell Bank; he went by the one o'clock train and returned by the quick train; he did not say what was in the envelope; he could not say the letter produced was it, but he gave it to Mr. Parker and a clerk in the bank; when the envelope was opened he saw the gentleman take something out and saw him put ten sovereigns in an envelope which he gave him to bring back; the envelope was addressed to Mr. Wheatcroft; he made a mark on the cheque as he could not write; when he got back he gave the envelope to Mr. Smith, who was standing at the Local Board-room door at Mr. Wheatcroft's office; he opened it and gave him 2s. or 2s. 6d. for his trouble.

Cross-examined by Mr. KINGDON—There was no one else at the door; Smith stood there; he could not see anybody else, but there might be; he went by the one o'clock train and came back by the fast train; there were very few people in the street; there might be a few cab folks; it was not "so far" from where they were standing, happen about 150 yards; he had never been to Bakewell before; he sent his son up to him saying he wanted some one to go to Bakewell and he went; he was not in the habit of going to the bank.

Mr. Parker re-called, stated—I saw Elliott make his mark on the back of the cheque; I had a letter from Mr. Wheatcroft on Friday last informing me that Smith had absconded and that I was to stop all cheques after Mr. Russell's; I afterwards came down to see Mr. Wheatcroft but he had gone out.

Mr. Richard Chadwick, Manager of the Derby and Derby-

shire Branch Bank at Matlock, stated he knew the prisoner John Smith well; a cheque for 25l. had passed through their bank, but could not recollect it; it was dated the 18th of February, signed by Thomas Walters and John Smith, Directors of the Market Hall Company, and countersigned by W. G. Wheatcroft, Secretary; it was received at the Matlock Bank, and cashed; I did not endorse it; it was passed to our London agents and passed through the clearing house.

Cross-examined by Mr. KINGDON—I have no personal recollection of the cheque; there is an endorsement upon it which I recognised as my brother's, and can swear that it passed through our bank.

Thomas Walters, draper, stated that he was a Director of the Market Hall Company, and was in the habit of signing cheques for them; he had seen his name endorsed at the foot of the cheque produced for 10l.; it was very much like his handwriting, but could not swear that it was as he varied in his mode of writing; Smith came across to his shop at different times for him to sign cheques.

Mr. W. G. Wheatcroft stated—I am a solicitor and reside at Matlock; I am secretary to the Matlock Hotel and Market Hotel Company, also I am clerk to the Local Board of Health; the prisoner has been in my employ for upwards of seven years until he absconded a few days ago; I have a cheque for 10l. in my hands, dated the 13th of February, purported to be signed by "W. G. Wheatcroft;" that signature is not in my handwriting; I believe it to be in the handwriting of the prisoner; the prisoner never has had my authority to sign cheques on my behalf; he never paid me the 10l., nor had I the slightest knowledge of the transaction till Saturday last, when Mr. Parker called at my house; I asked the prisoner a few weeks ago where the pass-book was, and he replied "at the bank;" when I went to Bakewell I found that it was not there; it was afterwards found by another clerk of mine at my office.

Cross-examined by Mr. KINGDON—It might be two or three weeks ago since the question as to where the pass-book was asked; I made enquiries the first time I went to Bakewell, when I found he had told me a falsehood; I did not take any action in the matter; I had no opportunity of seeing him as I was taken ill; I did not see him till after Monday last; I don't keep cash in the safe where the pass-book is kept; I may sometimes, but I generally have it either at home or in my pocket; I saw the cheque (produced) on Saturday last, and discovered the signature to be a forgery; the letter (produced) was written by me to a young man who I see here to-day; the injured parties referred to in it are those whose names have been forged; I have no vindictive feelings; it is a carefully-written letter; I consider it to be a private letter; Smith had to receive and pay monies for me; I gave him special authority with directions when to do so; he had been very extravagant in his expenses; that was why I would not allow him a petty cash-book for some time past; when he has had to go by train I have paid his fare; his salary was 18s. a week, payable quarterly; when he went a journey I gave him cash, and settled with him when he got back; his last quarter's salary was due in January.

There was also another charge against the prisoner, that of forging a cheque for 25l.

Mr. Richard Chadwick, manager of the Matlock Bank, said—I produce a cheque for 25l., dated the 21st of February, 1871, payable to Mrs. Harriet Farnsworth, or bearer. The cheque is signed by C. Rowland, George Staley, and Anthony Walton, members of the Matlock Local Board, and endorsed by J. Smith. I paid it on the 28th of February to the prisoner, who signed for it. The Local Board have an account at our bank, and I debited them with the amount of the cheque. I have had a many of them and am satisfied that it is the prisoner's handwriting. The prisoner has frequently presented cheques.

Charles Rowland, George Staley, and Anthony Walton were then called, and proved that the signatures on the cheques were not in their handwriting.

Mr. Wheatcroft again said that the cheque produced was not countersigned by him, but in his opinion it was in the handwriting of the prisoner Smith. The cheques drawn on the Local Board were invariably drawn upon a minute and inserted in a minute book by the members present at a Local Board meeting. There was no meeting on the 21st of February, but on the 3rd (that being the first Friday in the month, when the meetings are held) there was no order made at that meeting for the payment of money but one, and that was 5l. 10s., being salary to Sergeant Stubbins as inspector of nuisances. The cheque-book and minute-book of the Local Board were kept in a safe of which the prisoner had a duplicate key. The key was handed to him (witness) yesterday; the Board were indebted to Mrs. Farnsworth for the sum of 18l. 10s. for land.

Cross-examined by Mr. KINGDON—Hodgkinson called my attention to the forgery. The prisoner was not at the meeting on the 3rd of February.

This being the end of the charge of forgery two charges of embezzlement were preferred against him. The first was for the sum of 3l. 16s. 4d., received by him from Miss Smedley, Matlock Bath, in December last, but never accounted for; also the sum of 2l. from Thomas Spencer. The facts were fully proved, and the prisoner, who reserved his defence, was fully committed to take his trial at the next assizes.

COUNTY POLICE COURT, FRIDAY.

[Before Lieut.-Col. MOSLEY, Dr. PEACH, and G. F. MEYNELL, Esq.]

Joseph Roome, of Morley, for having been drunk at Little Chester, on the 14th inst., was fined 5s. and costs.—Wm. Chapman, a youth, was fined 5s. and costs for being drunk at Alvaston, on the same day.—Henry Holmes, of Alvaston, was summoned for having been drunk at Litchurch, on the same day, but did not appear. A fine of 5s. and costs was inflicted.

John Jackson, beerhouse keeper, Litchurch, was summoned for having unjust measures on his premises on the 27th February, and was fined 5s. and costs.—Thomas M'undill, also a beerhouse keeper at Litchurch, for a similar offence on the same day, was fined a like amount.

Robert Whittaker, toll collector, Little Chester, was summoned by Charles Chamberlain, of Alfreton, Riddings, for unlawfully demanding toll at Little Chester, on the 18th inst.—Mr. Leech, instructed by Mr. John Hardcastle Mousley, appeared for the complainant and Mr. Briggs for the defendant. It seems that Mr. Oakes, of Riddings House, near Alfreton, has a piece of meadow land at Litchurch, and the complainant is his bailiff. On the day in question, Simon Clark, his man, was proceeding to Derby from Alfreton with a waggon and horses for the purpose of bringing hay from the land at Litchurch. The waggon was empty, and the hay to be taken back was for consumption on Mr. Oakes's farm and not for sale.—Mr. LEECH submitted that the question was purely a question of law, and he quoted from the Turnpike Acts to show that the demand made by the collector was illegal under the circumstances.—Simon Clark, waggoner to Mr. Oakes, was then called, and said that on Saturday morning he was in company with another farm-servant named Cox, and they each had two waggons and horses belonging to Mr. Oakes. They were going from Riddings to Philips's Holmes, Litchurch, to fetch two loads of hay to take back to Mr. Oakes's farm at Riddings. The hay was to be cut up for the stock, and was not going to be sold. It was their intention to return the same day, and they did so. The defendant demanded and they paid 6d. for each waggon as toll.—By Mr. BRIGGS: There was a basket on one waggon, and a coal skip on the other. The basket contained his dinner.—John Fox gave similar evidence, and said the defendant demanded toll after Clark had told him they were going to fetch hay.—Mr. BRIGGS took exception to the summons, and said instead of being for unlawfully demanding toll it should have been either for refusing to give an exemption ticket or for not returning the money. He also quoted from the Act, and contended that the waggons were only exempted on their return, when it was shown that they had been used for the purpose of fetching hay.—Mr. LEECH, on the contrary, argued that for demanding toll on exempted articles the defendant was liable to the penalty.—The Magistrates did not entertain Mr. Briggs's objection but granted him a case, and he then proceeded to state the reasons why the defendant was justified in taking and demanding the toll. He said Mr. Oakes's waggons had been used several times for the purpose of fetching ozers, and on each of those occasions when they passed through the defendant's bar the men paid the toll without making any objection. They told the collector that on the Saturday in question they were going to fetch the last load, and the defendant accordingly demanded the toll when they again passed through with the waggons.—The Bench convicted the defendant, and fined him 1s. and 19s. costs.

Jas. Smith, described as a railway clerk from London, was charged with loitering at the railway station, Derby, on the 23rd inst., with intent to commit a felony. The prisoner had been seen about the station nearly the whole of the day. He called a porter and told him to obtain a cab for him to take away four travelling cases which he said composed his luggage. The porter finding that the luggage did not belong to him but to a gentleman who was waiting for a train, persisted in the prisoner into custody. The prisoner, however, gave in maintaining that the articles were his property, but he subsequently stated that he was waiting to obtain a free pass to the North, and that he had only given him the instructions respecting the luggage "for a lark." He also said that it was his intention to proceed to Nottingham, but it transpired that two third class Nottingham trains had gone out of the station whilst he was waiting there. The luggage was worth about 150l.—The magistrates regarded his conduct as a most impudent attempt to commit a robbery, and committed him to prison for two months.

A young man named John Thomas was in custody charged with stealing a coat, the property of Messrs. Thurgood, ready made clothes dealers, Litchurch, on the 18th inst. The prisoner was seen to take the coat from a block in the prosecutor's shop by Eliza Waters, and to put it under his arm. He then walked away, but information was given to Mr. Thurgood, who followed him and gave him into custody.—Prisoner admitted the theft, and was sentenced to a month's imprisonment.

A youth, named Wm. Brown, of Litchurch, charged Thomas Bailey, of Derby, with assaulting him.—Complainant stated that on the 18th inst., when standing at the corner of Russell-street, Litchurch, he was ordered by the defendant to go home. On being asked the reason for giving such an order, the defendant struck him on the mouth, knocking five of his front teeth out.—The defendant complained that Brown and other lads had annoyed him, and he was corroborated in this statement by a witness.—It was evident that he had received provocation, and the Bench only inflicted a penalty of 2s. 6d. and costs.

Benjamin Kent and Joseph Plackett, stewards, of a friendly society, at Breaston, were summoned by Henry Elliott, to show cause why they should not pay to him sick pay for twelve months, which he alleged he was entitled to as a member of the society.—The case was adjourned for a week.

Application for bail was made by Mr. HEXTALL, on behalf of Adam Slater, in custody for stealing from the person of John Harrison, at Brailsford, on the 7th inst., the sum of 156l. 10s.—The application was refused on the ground that the prisoner, and who it will be remembered attempted to commit suicide and was in a critical condition in consequence, had not been charged.

DERBY BOROUGH POLICE COURT.

WEDNESDAY.

[Before J. BAILEY, Esq., and W. T. Cox, Esq.]

Joseph Clark, remanded from Tuesday, charged with drunkenness, was discharged.—Henry Eldridge was accused of being drunk in Bridge-gate, on Tuesday night. More than 11l. had been found in his possession. He was fined 5s. and costs.

Thomas Stone, a moulder, was charged with stealing two fowls and a turkey, value about 10s., the property of Mr. Thos. Newbold. The fowls and turkey had been seen safe and alive in a croft adjoining Mr. Newbold's house in the Wardwick, at half-past six on Monday night. At about nine o'clock the same evening prisoner was offering them for sale in St. Peter's-street. A woman, named Eliza Lambert, who resides in Court, No. 5, in that street, purchased them from him, giving him 1s. 3d. for the fowls and 1s. 6d. for the turkey. He asked 2s. for the fowls, which, as well as the turkey, were then dead.—Prisoner pleaded guilty to the theft, but said that he was under the influence of drink at the time.—He was sentenced to one month's imprisonment.