



£140,000. Birkenhead Cemetery, on Flaybrick Hill, occupies 20½ acres of ground, and cost about £40,000.

Woodside Ferry may be regarded as the principal entrance to Birkenhead and Wirral from Liverpool; and its exclusive right of ferryage dates back to 1332. In 1842 the Birkenhead Commissioners purchased this ferry, under an Act of Parliament, from Mr F. R. Price, the lord of the manor. At the present time the annual receipts for passengers alone amount to £36,000, and the number of persons conveyed in the twelve months is upwards of nine millions, the single fare being one penny. A large landing-stage, 800 feet in length and 80 feet in width, is moored at this ferry, the passenger traffic being conducted to and from the stage by means of a double gangway bridge, covered by two circular glass and iron roofs. The goods traffic is conveyed to and from the stage by a well-constructed floating bridge, 670 feet in length and 30 feet in width, which enables the traffic to be carried on at any state of the tide. Handsome and commodious saloon steamers, built and designed upon an improved principle, and capable of carrying above 1700 passengers each, are now used upon this ferry. The late Mr William Laird, whose name is so well known in connection with iron shipbuilding, first conceived the idea of turning to advantage the capabilities of Wallasey Pool for the formation of a dock. After a lapse of many years, the Commissioners of Birkenhead, alive to the advantages which this project would confer upon the town, employed the late Mr Rendel as their engineer, and applied to Parliament for powers to construct the necessary works. The foundation-stone of the new docks was laid in October 1844, and the first dock was opened by the late Lord Morpeth on 5th April 1847. Subsequently, the dock powers of the Commissioners were entrusted to a corporate body of trustees who afterwards transferred the property to the corporation of Liverpool; and ultimately it was vested in the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board, a corporation created by the Act of 1857 for the management of the docks on both sides of the Mersey. At that time the area of the dock space open and in use in Birkenhead was about 7 acres.

The docks bound the town on the north and north-east and partly on the east, extending from the landing-stage at Woodside Ferry to the Wallasey Bridge, a distance of over two miles. The Great Float has been constructed on the site of the Wallasey Pool, forming an immense dock of 150 acres, with a quay space of about five miles. The Great Float separates Birkenhead from Poulton-cum-Sea-combe, in the parish of Wallasey, and communicates on the east with a low water basin of about 14 acres (now being converted into a dock) and the Alfred Dock (about 8 acres, and quay space 460 lineal yards), and on the south-east with the Egerton, Morpeth, and Morpeth Branch Docks. The Morpeth Dock (about 11 acres, quay space 1299 lineal yards) is connected with the Morpeth Branch Dock (about 3½ acres, quay space 600 lineal yards), both set apart for steamers. The total water area of these docks is about 170 acres, and the lineal quay space about 10 miles.

The entrances to the Birkenhead Docks are capable of docking the largest class of steamers afloat. The massive iron bridges across the dock entrances are opened and closed by hydraulic power, which is likewise applied to the cranes, coal hoists, warehouse lifts, and other appliances about the docks. At the extreme western end of the West Float are three large graving docks, two about 750 feet in length, and 130 feet and 80 feet in width respectively, and the largest, now in course of construction, measuring about 900 feet in length and 130 feet in width.

Substantial and commodious sheds and warehouses have been erected at various places along the dock quays for the full development of the traffic.

The block of warehouses known by the name of the corn warehouses are immense piles of buildings, with a canal between to give access to the separate blocks of buildings, and with machinery for carrying the grain, &c., from floor to floor, and for despatching it by railway.

In 1847 the Birkenhead Dock Warehousing Company opened their first warehouses, capable of storing 80,000 tons of goods. Each block is detached, and the whole premises are surrounded by a wall 12 feet high. A railway branch, called the Dock Extension Railway, is carried round the property. The company also built blocks of houses for their workmen, known as the Dock Cottages. This property is now in the hands of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board.

The commerce of Birkenhead is in all respects a branch of that of Liverpool, and chiefly devoted to coal, guano and grain,—the quantity of coal alone exported being over one million tons per annum. Many manufactories have sprung up within the last few years on the margin of the Great Float and other parts of the town, such as iron foundries, boiler-works, oilcake and seed mills, &c., some of the engineering works, shipbuilding yards, and forges being on a large scale. The Birkenhead Iron-works of Messrs Laird Brothers employ from 3000 to 4000 men; these works, in connection with their shipbuilding yards, have turned out some of the largest iron-clad ships; the engine-works, also belonging to the same firm, are on a very extensive scale. The Canada Works, belonging to Messrs Thomas Brassey and Co., carry on an extensive business in marine engines, iron-bridge building, pontoon and general railway work. There are also the Britannia Works (Messrs James Taylor and Co.) for portable engines, marine engines, traction engines, steam cranes, &c.; Messrs Clay and Inman's Forge, for heavy shafting, &c.; the Wirral Foundry, for large engine castings, &c.; and the Starbuck Car and Waggon Co.'s Works, for building tramway cars, &c.; and Messrs Clover and Clayton's shipbuilding premises as well as other manufactories of less extent.

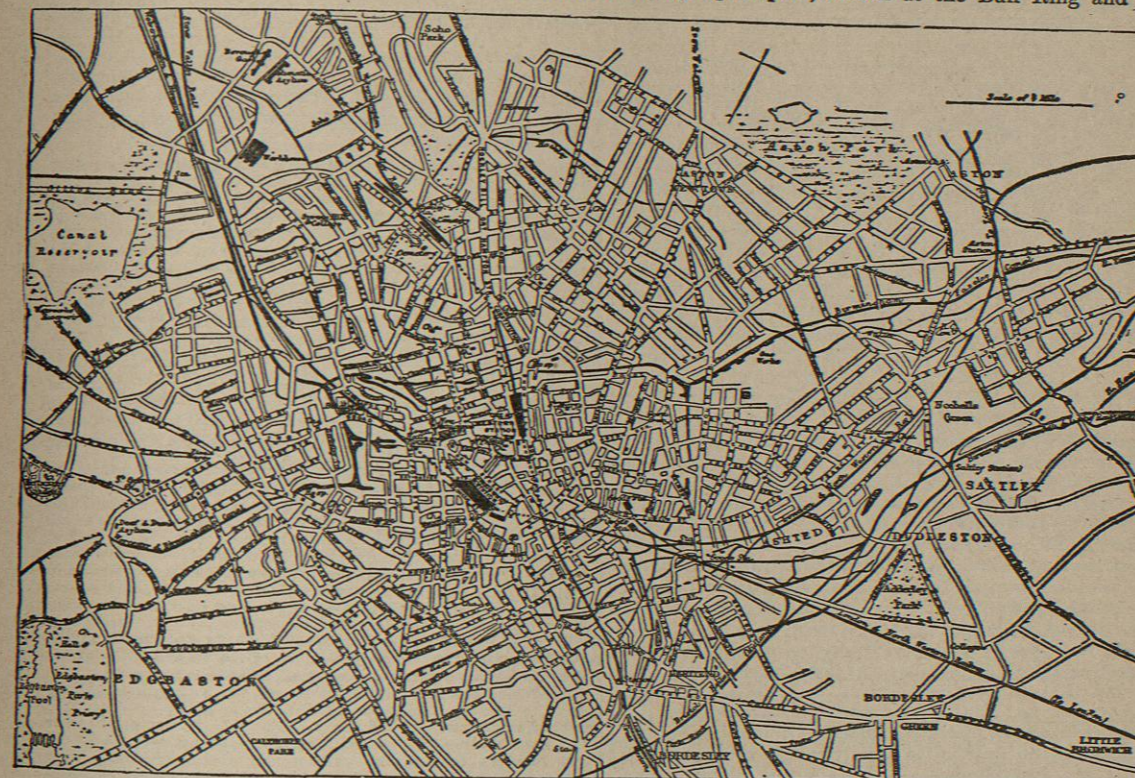
The affairs of the township of Birkenhead and Claughton-cum-Grange are managed by twenty-one Commissioners, chosen by the ratepayers. The town contains a head post-office, county court, police court, petty sessional court for the hundred of Wirral, and two banks. Two newspapers are published weekly. The principal market-day is Saturday, but a large hay, straw, and vegetable market is held on Tuesdays in the hay market, a large open space of ground, having an area of about 1½ acres. The total area of the Commissioners' district is 1684 acres, including 365 acres of water space, viz., Birkenhead, 1248 acres, and Claughton-cum-Grange, 436. The parliamentary borough of Birkenhead was constituted in 1861, and returns one member to parliament. Its parliamentary limits include the extra-parochial chapelry of Birkenhead, the several townships of Claughton, Tranmere, and Oxton, and so much of the township of Higher Bebington as lies to the eastward of the road leading from Higher Tranmere to Lower Bebington. The population of this district in 1861 was 51,649, and in 1871 it had increased to 64,671.

BIRMINGHAM, the fourth town in size and population in England, and the fifth in the United Kingdom, is situated at the extreme north-west of the county of Warwick, in 52° 59' N. lat. and 1° 18' W. long. It is 102 miles in a straight line N.W. of London, from which it is distant 112 miles by the North-Western Railway. The Roman Road, known as the Ikenield Street, runs through the town. On the north Birmingham touches Staffordshire, and on the south and west Worcestershire, the suburbs of the town extending largely into both these counties—Harborne and Handsworth being in the former and Balsall,

Moseley, and Yardley in the latter. The borough itself, however—both parliamentary and municipal, the boundaries being identical—is wholly in the county of Warwick. It covers an area of 8420 acres (of which 5900 are built upon), and includes the whole of the parishes of Birmingham and Edgbaston, and about one-third of the parish of Aston. It is nearly 6 miles long, has an average breadth of 3 miles, is 21 miles in circumference, and has 190 miles of streets and roads. The population, at the census of 1871, was 343,000; and in June 1875 it was estimated by the registrar-general at 360,000. Birmingham was enfranchised by the Reform Act of 1832, when two representatives were assigned to it—and Mr Thomas Attwood and Mr Joshua Scholefield (leaders of the Political Union) were elected; by the Reform Act of 1867 this number was

raised to three. A grant of incorporation was made to the town in 1838, when the first municipal council was elected. In 1870 a School Board of fifteen members was elected, under the Elementary Education Act passed in that year.

The town is built upon the New Red Sandstone, on a boldly undulated site, varying from 200 to 600 feet above the sea-level, steadily rising towards the north and west, so that when looked at from the heights on the south-east side it presents the appearance of a vast semicircle, picturesquely disposed, the masses of houses being broken by spires and lofty chimneys, and the south and west sides being thickly wooded on the slopes. The plan of the town is irregular, and the streets are mostly winding, and many of them somewhat narrow. In the centre, however, is a large open space, known as the Bull Ring and High



Sketch-Plan of Birmingham.

Street, at the foot of which stands the mother church of St Martin, and in which is situated the Market-Hall, one of the largest buildings of its kind in the kingdom. From this centre access is obtained to the principal streets, New Street and High Street; the former, about a quarter of a mile in length, derives a most picturesque appearance from its slightly curved form, and from the effective manner in which the sky-line is broken by lofty buildings alternating with others of lower altitude. This street contains the Exchange, the Grammar School, the Theatre Royal, the rooms of the Royal Society of Artists, which have a fine Corinthian portico stretching across the pavement. At the upper end of the street is the Town-Hall, and close to this are the corporate buildings and the Post-Office. The last quarter of a century has seen a great advancement in the style and accommodation of the public and commercial edifices: streets have been widened and new roads opened,

and the place has altogether put on a livelier and wealthier look. Excepting in some of the older and poorer districts, the private houses have undergone a corresponding improvement. The richer classes live chiefly in the parish of Edgbaston, which belongs almost entirely to Lord Calthorpe, and in which strict rules as to the description, position, and area of the houses are enforced. The streets inhabited by the working-classes are, of course, more crowded, and many of the houses are built in enclosed courts, access to which is gained from the street, either by openings between the houses, or by narrow entries, too commonly built over, and thus impeding the free passage of air. Many of the courts, however, are wide enough to allow of small gardens in front of the houses, while in the suburbs almost every house is provided with a garden of some kind; and in a considerable number of cases the houses, through means of building societies, have become