

£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

the property of the workmen themselves. The habit exists among all classes of each family (with rare exceptions) occupying a separate house, a practice which greatly affects the area of the town. Thus, to a population of 360,000 there are about 76,000 inhabited houses, giving an average of five persons to a house. Birmingham is a town of rapid growth. In 1700 the population was about 15,000. A century later, at the census of 1801, it had increased to 73,000. In the next thirty years the population doubled, being 147,000 in 1831. The same process was repeated in the following term of thirty years, the population in 1861 being 296,000. Between 1861 and 1871 the increase was 47,000, and the returns of the registrar-general show that the same rate of progress is still going on. It is, however, likely to be checked by the increasing value of land within the borough, by the absorption of available sites for building, and by the consequent overflow of population into the suburbs. If these, inhabited solely by borough people, are taken into account, the real population at present is probably not far short of half a million.

Government.—The government of the town resided originally in the high and low bailiffs, both officers chosen at the court of the lord of the manor, and acting as his deputies. The system was a loose one, but by degrees it became somewhat organized, and Crown writs were addressed to the bailiffs. In 1832, when the town was enfranchised, they were made the returning officers. About the beginning of the century, however, a more regular system was instituted, by an Act creating a body of street Commissioners, who acted for the parish of Birmingham,—the hamlets outside its boundaries having similar boards of their own. The annoyance and difficulty caused by these bodies—thirteen in number—led to a demand for the incorporation of Birmingham as a borough; and a charter was accordingly granted by the Crown in 1838, vesting the general government in a mayor, sixteen aldermen, and forty-seven councillors. The powers of this body were, however, unusually restricted, the other local governing bodies remaining in existence. It was not until 1851 that an Act of Parliament was obtained, abolishing all governing authorities excepting the Town Council, and transferring all powers to this body. Under this Act, and another local Act obtained in 1862, the affairs of the town are now administered, the whole municipal government being in the hands of the Town Council. The importance of the duties discharged by the Council may be inferred from the fact that it has under its control nearly 200 miles of street and road, that it has a police force of nearly 500 men, and that its revenue, derived from tolls and rates, amounts to about £300,000 a year. These responsibilities have been increased by the purchase in 1875 of the gas and water-works (the latter with a daily supply of 17,000,000 gallons), the two purchases making a cost of more than £3,000,000. The growth of the revenue and expenditure of the town, its rateable value, and its ordinary debt, excluding the gas and water-works, will be seen from the following tabular statement:—

Year.	Amount of Assessment to the Borough Rate.	Total Amount of Rate in the £.	Income.	Expenditure.	Balance of Public Debt.
1854	£ 645,349	3 5	120,237	131,723	366,095
1859	824,869	3 4	157,121	136,987	467,002
1864	920,191	3 8	187,620	185,537	638,303
1869	1,052,796	3 2	195,155	199,950	588,449
1874	1,254,911	3 10 ¹	289,655	271,807	664,959

N.B.—The amount of property possessed by the Corporation on 31st December 1874, taken at its original cost, was £1,259,047.

¹ Including rate for School Board, 3d. in the £.

The administration of the poor-law is vested in a Board of Guardians, of sixty members, for the parish of Birmingham. The parish of Edgbaston (wholly within the borough) is in the poor-law union of King's Norton, and that part of the parish of Aston included in the borough is in the Aston Union. There are three workhouses—that for Birmingham parish, situated at Birmingham Heath, is capable of receiving over 2000 inmates. In the week ending June 19, 1875, there were chargeable to the parish (including lunatics and persons receiving outdoor relief) 6949 paupers, a very small number in proportion to population.



Arms of Birmingham.

Birmingham has a grant of quarter sessions, with a recorder, and petty sessions are held daily at the Sessions Court, in Moor Street, before a stipendiary magistrate, and a bench of borough justices. The justices for the borough and Aston division of Warwickshire also sit here occasionally. The borough justices have charge of the administration of the gaol. The town is the head of a county court district, and is the seat of the probate registry for Warwickshire.

Religious Denominations, Buildings, &c.—Until the year 1821 Birmingham was in the diocese of Lichfield and Coventry; it is now in the diocese of Worcester and archdeaconry of Coventry, and is a rural deanery. There was formerly a religious house, the priory of St Thomas the Apostle, and a Guild of the Holy Cross, an association partly religious and partly charitable, having a chantry in the parish church. The possessions of the priory went to the Crown at the dissolution, and the building was destroyed before the close of the 16th century. The lands of the Guild of the Holy Cross were granted by Edward VI. to trustees for the support of a free grammar school; they are now of the value of nearly £15,000 a year. Until 1715 there was but one parish church, St Martin's, a rectory, having the tithes of the entire parish of Birmingham. St Martin's was erected about the middle of the 13th century; but in the course of ages was so disfigured, internally and externally, as to present no traces except in the tower and spire of its former character. In 1853 the tower was found to be in a dangerous condition, and together with the spire was rebuilt. In 1873 the remaining part of the old church was removed without disturbing the monuments, and a new and larger edifice was erected in its place, at a cost of nearly £30,000. The new church constitutes the chief ecclesiastical edifice in Birmingham, and indeed the handsomest structure in the town. St Philip's, a stately Italian structure, designed by Archer, a pupil of Wren, was the next church erected. It was consecrated in 1715. Then followed St Bartholomew's in 1749, St Mary's in 1774, St Paul's in 1779, St James's, Ashted, in 1791, and others, which need not be mentioned, followed in due course. At present the mother parish is divided into five rectories, and there are within the borough, including those mentioned, 42 churches (each having an ecclesiastical district assigned to it) of the Church of England, most of these having schools and missions attached to them.

Under the Commonwealth Birmingham was a stronghold of Puritanism. Clarendon speaks of it and the neighbourhood as "the most eminently corrupted of any in England." Baxter, on the other hand, commending the garrison of Coventry, says it contained "the most religious men of the parts round about, especially from Birmingham." The traditional reputation for Nonconformity is maintained by the town, all varieties of dissenters being numerous and influential.

The Unitarians, the oldest body established here, have six chapels. One of these, the Old Meeting, is historically interesting, the congregation having been formed on the Presbyterian model by a number of ministers ejected under the Act of Uniformity. Another chapel, the New Meeting, in Moor Street (now occupied by the Roman Catholics), is memorable as having been the place of Dr Priestley's ministerial labours. In 1862 the Unitarians removed from this place to a new Gothic edifice, called the Church of the Messiah, in Broad Street, where they still preserve a monument of Priestley, with a medallion portrait in profile, and an inscription written by Priestley's friend, Dr Parr. The Society of Friends, whose first meeting-house dates from about 1690, have now three places of meeting. The Independents have now eleven chapels, several of them large and flourishing. The Baptists first erected a chapel in Cannon Street in 1738. They have now 16; one of them, Wycliffe Chapel, Bristol Road, is a singularly handsome structure of 14th century Gothic. The Wesleyan Methodists were established in Birmingham by John Wesley himself in 1745, when he was roughly handled while preaching on Gosta Green. For some years they

worshipped in temporary premises. They have now 17 places of worship; and the other divisions of the Methodist body have 24 in the aggregate. The Presbyterians possess 5 places of worship, and the Jews have a handsome synagogue. The Roman Catholics have paid special attention to Birmingham. From the Revolution of 1688 until 1789 they had no place of worship here. They now have a bishop (who assumes a title from the town), a cathedral, and 9 other churches or chapels, a cemetery, and other establishments in the suburbs, including several religious houses, including the Oratory, founded by Dr Newman. The principal edifice is the cathedral of St Chad, built from the designs of Mr Pugin, at a cost of more than £30,000.

The religious institutions and societies in Birmingham are very numerous, and with these are associated many establishments of a benevolent character, such as almshouses, asylums, refuges, societies for the aid of discharged prisoners, and for the promotion of religious education in Board schools, training institutions for nurses and servants, and others of various kinds, in the management of which persons of different religious opinions are commonly found working together in friendly association.

Charities.—These are numerous. The principal is the General Hospital, Summer Lane, opened in 1779; it was founded by Dr Ash, an eminent local physician. The yearly average of in-patients is about 2300, of out-patients, 25,000. The Queen's Hospital, Bath Row, the other large hospital of the town, was founded in 1840 by Mr W. Sands Cox, F.R.S., an eminent local surgeon, who also founded the Queen's College as a medical school. This hospital receives annually about 1300 in-patients and 17,000 out-patients. The General Dispensary, the officers of which visit patients at their own homes, relieves about 8000 yearly. The Children's Hospital (free), established in 1864 by Dr Heslop, relieves about 15,000 out and 1000 in-patients. It has two establishments—for out-patients (a very handsome Gothic building) in Steelhouse Lane, and an in-patient department in Broad Street. There is also a Women's Hospital (free) for the special diseases of women; a lying-in charity; special hospitals for diseases of the eye, the ear, bodily deformities, and the teeth; and a homoeopathic hospital. The parish of Birmingham maintains a large infirmary at the workhouse (Birmingham Heath), and a dispensary for out-patients in Paradise Street.

Nearly all these medical charities depend upon subscriptions, donations, legacies, and income from invested property; and the sum raised in this way is probably nearly £30,000 a year. There are two public organizations for aiding the charities, both of which were begun in Birmingham. One is a simultaneous collection in October in churches and chapels, called the Hospital Sunday, established in 1859, and now yielding over £5000 a year; the other is the Saturday Hospital collection, made by the work-people in March, which was established in 1873, and yields about £4000.

There is also a Sanatorium at Blackwell, near the Lickey Hill, about 10 miles distant, common to all the hospitals. Amongst the non-medical charities the principal are the Blind Institution and the Deaf and Dumb Asylum, both at Edgbaston; and Sir Josiah Mason's Orphanage at Erdington, which receives 300 orphan children, and was built and endowed at the cost of about £250,000 solely by Sir Josiah Mason, a Birmingham penmaker. There are also in the town numerous almshouses for aged persons, the chief of which are Lench's Trust, the James Charities, the Licensed Victuallers' Asylum. Besides the general benefit societies, such as the Oddfellows', Foresters', &c., which are strongly supported in Birmingham, the work-people have numerous clubs of a charitable kind, and there are several important local provident societies of a general character, with many thousand members.

Education.—The oldest and principal institution is the Grammar School of King Edward the Sixth, founded in 1552, out of the lands of the Guild of the Holy Cross, then of the annual value of £21, but now yielding about £15,000 a year, with a prospect of large increase. The principal or high school, in New Street, was erected in 1840, in the Perpendicular period of the Gothic style, from designs by Sir Charles Barry, at a cost, including land, of £71,000. This school is divided into two departments, classical and English, and educates about 600 boys; while connected with it there are four elementary schools for boys and girls, used chiefly by the lower middle class, the number of pupils being 1500. The classical school has ten exhibitions of £50 each, tenable at Oxford or Cambridge. The next most important foundation is that of the Midland Institute, which includes a general literary department (lectures, museums, and reading-rooms), and an industrial department, with classes in science, languages, mathematics, arithmetic, history, literature, and the laws of health. There are about 600 science students, and about 1600 in

the other departments. The Queen's College, originally a school of medicine, founded in 1828, obtained a royal charter in 1843 as a kind of university, with departments of literature, theology, law, science, and engineering. All these branches have now fallen into disuse, excepting medicine and theology; in the latter the college educates candidates for the ministry of the Church of England. An important foundation is Sir Josiah Mason's Scientific College, for the endowment of which Sir Josiah has conveyed to trustees property valued at nearly £100,000, and a capacious building, estimated to cost probably £40,000, is now in erection in Edmund Street, near the Town-Hall. Among the other educational foundations may be mentioned Spring Hill College, Moseley, for the education of Congregational ministers; four industrial schools; a large reformatory for boys at Saltley, and one for girls at Smethwick. For general education there are many private schools, of a good class, for boys and girls. Elementary education is provided in the Church of England day schools, Roman Catholic schools, and Board schools. A total provision, in all the public elementary schools, is made for 41,791 children; there are (July 1875) 51,334 on the books, with an average attendance for the previous quarter of 37,894. The School Board, though it was elected only in 1870, has, by the provision of new schools, and the exercise of compulsory powers, more than doubled the school attendance. It has already built and opened 9 schools, with accommodation for 8500 children, at a cost, for land and buildings, of about £86,000; and 8 other schools are now in progress, providing accommodation for 7400 children, at an estimated cost of about £103,000—making a total expenditure of nearly £200,000, and provision for a total of about 16,000 children.

Libraries, &c.—The principal libraries of the town are the Birmingham Library (belonging to a body of proprietors), founded in 1798 by Dr Priestley, and containing about 40,000 volumes, and the Corporation Free Libraries, in Ratcliff Place, commenced in 1861. These consist of a central reference library and lending library (the former containing 36,000 volumes of carefully chosen books), to which is attached a central reading-room. There are also four lending libraries and news-rooms in other parts of the town, and news-rooms are about to be opened by the Corporation in connection with the Board schools. The total issue of books from the libraries for 1874 was 521,991. Included in the reference library are a special Shakespeare library, containing almost all known editions of the plays and of works illustrating them; a library of nearly 1000 volumes, illustrating the works of Cervantes (presented by Mr W. Bragge of Sheffield); and a large and unique collection of Warwickshire books and antiquities, known as the Staunton collection. An Art Gallery and Industrial Museum is attached to the Free Libraries; and there is at Aston Hall another museum of natural history, &c., belonging to the Corporation. Art instruction is provided by the Royal Society of Artists, which has classes and lectures for students, and which holds two general exhibitions annually; and by the School of Art, which has 900 students, together with affiliated classes in schools, containing nearly 1700 students.

Miscellaneous Institutions, Parks, &c.—These include 8 banks, 4 principal clubs—the Union, the Midland, the Arts, and the Conservative—to which a Liberal Club is about to be added. There are 3 morning and 2 evening daily papers—4 of them Liberal and 1 Conservative—and 2 weekly papers. There are 2 theatres, 2 large music-halls, and several smaller ones. Musical festivals for the benefit of the General Hospital are held triennially, and are usually marked by the production of new and important works, and by the engagement of most of the leading