Thomas Ball and Thomas Priestnell, of Newbold, Frame-work Knitters, Wrought-hose Branch, examined.

7439 Were you deputed to come here and give evidence on behalf of the frame-work knitters of Newbold? (Priestnell) We were

7440 How many frames are there at Newbold? Not above 20 or 25 in the town.

7441 And how many used there to be? I have known as many as 100; and they have all gone out of the trade now.

7442 What is the average net earnings in those frames? I know I work very hard for 1s a day first hand, and that would be an average of the place.

7443 What is the principle work made? Mostly three-and-ninepenny and four shilling worsted. We have very little cotton work in Newbold.

7444 What are the points you have come to speak to particularly? (Ball) We heard that the Commissioner was come, and we thought that we would come and state the case generally of the place. The rest of the hands wished us to come> we think the cut-up work is the greatest evil.

7445 Has that thrown a number of frames out of employment? It has. The hands are not able to compete with them; I mean the cut-ups. (Priestnell) Those that have families of four or five children cannot keep them.

7446 Is there any help given them by the allotment of land? Yes; Lady Byron has done a little for us, and laid 20 acres out in Kirby parish; but it is all occupied in Newbold. It joins our parish.

7447 And do you think that it is of advantage? This is the first year we have entered upon it, and it has been an awkward season for us. We have just got it properly drained.

7448 What do they charge you a hundred? For 9 and 10 hundred each, we pay 6s a-year; but we paid before that for draining about 5s or 5s 6d each.

7449 What conditions have you got it on; will each man be able to keep the same bit of land year after year? We hope so; it has not been the case on some of Lady Byron's property, but that arose from, her requiring the land in consequence of a school being built on a school being built; and we hope now we shall keep the same ground. There is no danger of being removed now. We pay the rent to Mr Noel, the steward. Mr Greenaway, the rector of Newbold, has also let us land out. We have had that for several years, in about 400 apiece, and that has been found to be very beneficial, as it lies near home.

7450 How long have you known the parish? I was bred and born in it.

7451 Have you found any deterioration in the condition of the workpeople? Oh yes; but all that could have been getting from the trade into any other kind of employment they could get into.

7452 Have the frame-rents been always the same as they are now? No; we used to give 9d for a single wrought-hose frame now we give 1s. At the time the wages were much higher, treble to what they are now, in some cases. We consider that to be a great hardship.

7453 Is there any free-school there? Yes. They go to the free-school till they get six or seven years of age, and then they are eligible to go to Lady Byron's school by paying 2d a week. I had two boys there; but one I took away when he was 15 years of age; and the other is still there; he is about 12 years of age. The parents of all the children who go there have the privilege of a bit of land, about 800 or 900 each, at about the same rent as the other. That is extra to the allotment ground that I have spoken of.

7454 What system is pursued at Lady Byron's school? There are some little bits of land for all the boys which they manage entirely themselves, 100 each; they set it with potatoes, or anything they think proper. They pay 6d a year for it. The parents find the seed, and the manure as well, whereby they are instructed. They teach them to them up as agriculturists; the master takes them out two or three hours a day, to work in the gardens.

7455 What are they taught in the school? To read the scriptures, writing and arithmetic, and a good prayer is put up every day at noon, and they are taught to sing hymns.

7456 You say that you have had one child there till he was 15 years of age; what did you put him to when you took him away? I am a carrier, and I take him to market twice a week, and I am in hopes of getting him apprenticed.

7457 Do you find that the education he has received there is good? It is a great satisfaction to me, and think that it will help him on in the world. I should not, by any means think of putting him to be a frame-work knitter; if the trade were as it used to be, it would be the best thing that I could think of.

7458 Have the parents the advantage of any of the produce of the allotments held by the children? Yes; I have derived as much as 10s in the produce of one year, from my own boy's hundred.

7459 Have you any opportunity of seeing whether the boys taught at Lady Byron's school are better conducted and turn out better than others? Decidedly so. Those attending the free-school have not had the advantage of being trained in the same regular and industrious habits, and consequently their conduct is not so good. There are two or three schoolmasters, and they take a great deal of pains with the boys. I would challenge my little boy against any boy in the country to read.

7460 Is there anything else you wish to add? No

(The Witnesses withdrew)