

ordinary occurrence. Independently of the extent of the change, the time at which it has taken place, with reference to their peculiar branch of trade, is for the Weavers most unfortunate;—and most, if not all, the ordinary channels of labour are in such a state of repletion, that it is difficult for them to transfer their industry elsewhere.

Though the state of distress bordering upon actual famine, which these causes have produced in districts extensively concerned in the cotton trade, is so notorious as hardly to require pressing upon the House, Your Committee have had it confirmed by the strongest and fullest evidence. These districts appear to embrace in England a large portion of the county of Lancaster, together with parts of Cheshire, of the West Riding of Yorkshire, and of Cumberland; and in Scotland principally, so far as the evidence before Your Committee has gone, the counties of Renfrew and Lanark. In mitigation of this extensive distress, sums to a very large amount have been raised from various funds, by legal provision, by spontaneous contribution, and recently by the King's letter, and have mainly tended to preserve those districts from the immediate horrors of famine, and from the possible evils of riot and disturbance. But Your Committee deem it their duty not to conceal from the House, that, notwithstanding the temporary aid thus afforded, the long continued pressure of the lowest class upon the poor rates legally raised in England, and of the same class of persons on the funds raised in various ways in Scotland, has extended the distress to the ranks immediately above; and that not only the local funds appear in many instances nearly exhausted, but the lower order of rate payers, far from being able to contribute to the relief of their pauper neighbours, are become themselves dependent upon casual or parochial assistance.

Under these circumstances, the Manufacturers' Relief Committee, with the fullest daily information before them, concurring in the statement above made, agreeing with Your Committee in opinion, that there is little hope that any revival of trade can bring back the employment of the distressed Hand-loom Weavers, and that the fulness of other branches of labour renders it difficult for them to transfer their industry;—aware also, that temporary aid, however valuable in itself, and however judiciously applied, can only produce temporary benefit, have been led to turn their attention to the objects which Your Committee have in view. Satisfied of the efficiency and permanence of the benefit to be afforded by Emigration, they have signified their readiness to contribute in furtherance of these objects the sum of £.25,000, being a large proportion of their remaining funds, provided the farther sum of £.50,000 can be obtained from other sources.

The assistance thus tendered appears to Your Committee doubly valuable; first, as marking the strong sense entertained by a most respectable and well-informed body, that the mode suggested is at once the cheapest and most effectual relief which can be afforded; and secondly, as furnishing the means of complying with that which Your Committee have uniformly laid down as a rule of action, and have thought it expedient to make the substance of a special Report presented in the present year;—“That private or local contribution in some shape ought to form the basis of any system of Emigration to which it may be expedient for this Committee to recommend any assistance from the National Funds.”

Your Committee do not consider it necessary, upon the occasion of this Special Report, to enter into details of expense, they deem it sufficient to state