

BASINGSTOKE DISTURBANCES.

RETURN to an Address of the Honourable The House of Commons
dated 20 March 1882;—for,

“RETURN containing COPIES of any CORRESPONDENCE which has passed
between the HOME OFFICE and the LOCAL AUTHORITIES of BASINGSTOKE,
or other Places, with reference to the Suppression of DISTURBANCES.”

Home Office, }
March 1882. }

ROSEBERRY.

— No. 1. —

(TELEGRAM.)

From the Under Secretary of State, Home Office, to the Clerk of the County
Justices, *Liverpool*.

13 December 1867.

ISSUE proclamation similar to that by the borough; collect county police; ask assistance of borough police; swear in special constables; give notice to military authorities; apply to Orange leaders to stop their meeting and procession; apply to Roman Catholic clergy to dissuade the people; do everything in your power to prevent a collision and breach of the peace; to do this you are justified in preventing meetings and stopping processions; let the people know that they are stopped on these grounds.

Magistrates are not to be bound by this, but must exercise their own discretion—depending on locality, where meeting is held, and numbers attending, force they can have at their disposal, and other elements that cannot be known to the Secretary of State.

Note.—This telegram was sent after a personal consultation with Sir John Karslake, who attended at the Home Office and settled it.

— No. 2. —

The Secretary of State for the Home Department to the Sheriff of
Renfrewshire.

Sir,

Whitehall, 14 July 1873.

WITH reference to your letter of the 3rd instant, I am directed by Mr. Secretary Bruce to inform you that he caused it to be submitted to the Law Officers of the Crown and the Lord Advocate for their opinion as to the extent of your authority, as Sheriff of Renfrewshire, in dealing with party processions tending to a breach of the peace.

I am at the same time to enclose, for your information and guidance, a copy of a letter which Mr. Bruce caused to be addressed to the justices of the county of Lancaster, sitting at Liverpool, on a similar occasion, in the year 1869, founded on an opinion of Sir John Karslake, taken when he was Attorney General in 1867, and to add that every effort should be made to avoid having

RETURN RELATING TO THE

to use force, and chiefly by explaining to the people the reasons why the meetings and processions are not allowed, viz., the fear of a breach of the peace from a collision of parties.

I am, &c.
(signed) A. F. O. Liddell.

Patrick Fraser, Esq.,
Sheriff of Renfrewshire, 8, Moray-place, Edinburgh.

Note.—This letter was written after consultation with the Law Officers, Sir J. Coleridge, Sir G. Jessel, and the Right Hon. G. Young, then Lord Advocate, who approved of the letter of 7th July 1869.

Enclosure in No. 2.

Sir,

I AM directed by Mr. Secretary Bruce to transmit to you, to be laid before the justices of Lancashire, extract from a report from a member of the Royal Irish Constabulary, stationed at Liverpool, relative to an intended Orange procession on the 12th instant, and I am to inform you that if the justices have reason to believe that the procession, if allowed, will lead to a breach of the peace, by reason of a collision with the Roman Catholics being probable, they must cause an information to be laid before them on oath to that effect, and then take means to stop the procession, giving public notice, and applying to the heads of the parties to use their influence to stop it.

If the procession is persevered in after such steps being taken, the justices must ensure having such a force, by swearing in special constables, and, if necessary, applying for the military assistance, as will enable them to prevent an assembly taking place and a procession being formed.

If an assembly takes place, and an attempt is made to form a procession, force may be used to disperse it, but every endeavour should be made to avoid the use of force by telling the people why it is that the procession cannot be allowed (viz., the danger of a collision), and inducing them to disperse quietly.

To the Clerk to the County Justices,
Liverpool.

I am, &c.
(signed) A. F. O. Liddell.

— No. 3. —

The Secretary of State for the Home Department to the
Mayor of *Salisbury*.

Sir,

Whitehall, 23 February 1881.
WITH reference to the interview you had with the Secretary of State this day, I am directed to inform you that it is the duty of the local magistrates to preserve the peace of the town of Salisbury if they anticipate a riot in consequence of the foolish conduct of a body of persons in persisting in parading the town in procession.

They should at once cause a sworn information to be laid before them by the Chief Constable, who would prove the placard to have been extensively posted, and that in his judgment if a procession takes place, the threats of forcibly breaking through their ranks set out in the placard would be carried out, and lead to a breach of the peace, and probably to a riot.

The justices should then issue notices and promulgate them to the effect that such information having been laid before them on oath, they give notice to all persons who intend to take part in any procession, that such procession cannot be permitted.

They should call upon the leaders of that movement to prevent it, and upon all peaceably disposed persons to abstain from joining in it. They should call upon all persons to abstain from collecting a crowd for the purpose of interfering with the procession.

They should get all the assistance they can from the county police, and swear in special constables.

The forming of the procession should be stopped, each person being told the reason why it will not be allowed, and they should be urged to disperse quietly before force is used.

The people should be made to understand as much as possible that the procession is not permitted for fear of a collision and breach of the peace, and every effort should be made to preserve the peace without the use of force.

If, however, in spite of every effort to prevent it the attempt to form a procession is persevered in, force may be used to disperse it, and care should be taken that sufficient force for that purpose is at hand.

It would be easier to prevent the procession from forming than to deal with an excited mob after a collision had taken place.

The Mayor of Salisbury.

I am, &c.
(signed) A. F. O. Liddell.

— No. 4. —

The Clerk to the Justices of the Borough of *Basingstoke* to the Secretary of State for the Home Department.

Basingstoke, Hants,
29 March 1881.

Sir,

IN pursuance of the request of Mr. Courtney, expressed yesterday to the deputation of the Justices of this Borough, and by their direction, I have the honour to forward you a report of the disturbances and proceedings in connection with the persons calling themselves the Salvation Army.

I have, &c.
(signed) F. S. Chandler,
Clerk to the Justices of the Borough
of Basingstoke.

To the Right Hon.
Sir W. V. Harcourt, Secretary of State.

Town of Basingstoke, in the County of Southampton.

FOR the past six months, or thereabouts, a number of persons, styling themselves the Salvation Army, have been in the habit of parading the streets of the town and singing hymns on their way. Their usual course on week-days is to assemble in the market-place about 7 p.m., and, after holding a short service, to proceed four abreast to their place of worship, which is situate on the outskirts of the town. On Sundays they usually hold three of such services in the market-place, and walk to and from their place of worship in procession as before mentioned.

They appear to use their best endeavours not to block up or stop in any way the streets, but march on the left hand side of the road.

For some weeks past a feeling of opposition to these open air services and processions seems to have arisen, and the Salvation Army have been considerably annoyed and interfered with by a crowd of men and boys.

Several persons have been punished severely for creating disturbances within the meeting house of the Salvation Army. About the 17th inst. an anonymous bill, calling upon persons to assemble in the market-place the following Sunday, was circulated. On the morning of Sunday, the 20th day of March inst., the Salvation Army was proceeding, as usual, along the street, singing hymns and carrying at their head a banner or flag.

When they arrived at the junction of Church-street and Cross-street, a considerable crowd of persons, carrying a flag at their head, was observed coming down Church-street. The Salvation Army, in order, it is supposed, not to come into collision with this crowd, turned up Cross-street, and proceeded from thence up New-street. When about half way up this street, they came into collision with the crowd, who seemed to have turned back from Church-street,

and proceeded down Winchester-street and New-street, for the purpose of meeting the Army. A great deal of pushing and hustling took place, and the flags of both parties were broken and torn, and the Army, after a great deal of struggling and pushing, succeeded in reaching their place of worship. In the afternoon, the Army again proceeded from their place of worship up Church-street, intending, it is supposed, to proceed to the market-place, but, when near the Church, a large crowd with a flag at their head, shouting and making great noise, was perceived coming towards them. To prevent a collision, the leader of the Salvation Army turned into Church-square. The crowd immediately rushed on the Army and broke up their ranks. The Army then formed a ring on the grass plot in the centre of the square, and commenced singing a hymn, but the crowd rushed upon them and broke up the ring, and fighting took place in all directions, and a most riotous disturbance ensued. One man's arm was broken, and a considerable number of the Salvation Army and their partizans, and other persons, received bruises and cuts about the head and face. The mayor of the town was present, and, together with the police, did all in their power to restore order, and were eventually successful in so doing, and the crowd dispersed. It is estimated that quite 3,000 persons were present, although comparatively a small number only took part in the affray. No arrests were made by the police, and no informations were laid or summonses issued with respect to the disturbance.

During the ensuing week the Salvation Army confined themselves to their place of worship, and did not parade the streets, but stated their intention of doing so on the following Sunday, the 27th inst.

The magistrates of the town, fearing that a most serious disturbance and riot would be the consequence, issued summonses to 100 of the principal tradesmen and inhabitants of the town to attend and be sworn as special constables, and also called out the 16 constables who were appointed for the year in October last.

On Sunday morning last, half an hour previous to the time when it was expected the Salvation Army would leave their place of worship and parade the town, the special constables assembled at the Town Hall, and, shortly afterwards, a large crowd of men and boys proceeded down Church-street in the direction of the place of worship of the Salvation Army. The police and special constables, under the direction of the superintendent of police, followed, and were drawn up at the bottom of Church-street.

The Salvation Army presently made its appearance, marching four abreast, and singing a hymn as usual. A portion of the constables were stationed in front of the Army, a number on either side, and the remainder at the rear, and, thus escorted, the Army marched round the town, an immense crowd of people following, some of whom were blowing horns and whistle pipes, shouting, and making a great noise.

No violence, however, was used.

After the Army had reached their place of worship about three-fourths of the special constables interviewed the mayor, and protested against being required to escort and protect the Salvation Army, and some of them actually refused to do so.

The mayor, however, fearing a great disturbance in the afternoon, prevailed on them to obey the directions of the superintendent of police for that day, and informed them the magistrates would consider any objection or protest they pleased to make on the morrow.

Shortly before two o'clock, the hour when it was expected the Army would again parade the town, a great crowd of persons appeared in the market-place, with a number of persons at their head, blowing old brass instruments, fog-horns, whistles, &c.

They proceeded to the place of worship of the Army, and the constables, under the direction of the superintendent, as before, followed.

The Army came out of their building, and walked in procession some 100 yards along the road, but seeing such a large crowd of people approaching them, returned to their building and posted themselves on the outside of it, leaving, however, ample space for the crowd to go by, and the persons before-mentioned, who were blowing the brass instruments, &c., marched up and down the road, in front of the building.

A great

A great deal of hustling and pushing took place, and it is reported that some of the crowd laid hands on a Mr. Jordan, one of the leaders of the army. The superintendent then called to the mayor, who was present, that there was fighting going on all round him, and requested him (the mayor) to read the Riot Act. The mayor did so, and fearing a general riot, and also believing that the majority of the special constables would sympathise with the crowd, sent a request to the commanding officer of a battery of artillery then staying in the town, *en route* from Christchurch to London, that he would call out a sufficient number of his men to assist the police in dispersing the mob and clearing the streets.

After some difficulty, and at the expiration of about an hour from the reading of the Riot Act, order was restored. There is no doubt that there is an organised opposition to the Salvation Army, and that it is being conducted under the guidance and direction of some few persons of good average position in the town.

It should be mentioned that the magistrates directed some bills to be printed, similar to those issued at Salisbury, with reference to the disturbances in that city, but they were not issued. An interview took place with a so-called captain of the army, at which interview offers of private meadows were made, in which the members of the army could meet, and this person said he thought that would meet the difficulty. The offer of the meadows was afterwards refused, in consequence of orders received by the Salvation Army from their headquarters. The magistrates of the town are most anxious to prevent any repetition of such proceedings, but feel assured that so long as the Salvation Army parades the streets there will be a large number of persons who will endeavour to oppose the army, and that most serious riots and disturbances will be the probable result.

They are, therefore, desirous of ascertaining what steps should be taken on their part to prevent such proceedings in the future, and in the event of their believing it desirable to issue similar proclamations to those issued at Salisbury, their course, in case the Salvation Army parades the streets as heretofore in defiance of such proclamation.

— No. 5. —

The Secretary of State for the Home Department to the Clerk to the Justices of the Borough of *Basingstoke*.

Sir,

Whitehall, 1 April 1881.

I AM directed by the Secretary of State to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 29th ultimo, forwarding, by desire of the Justices of the Borough of Basingstoke, a report of the disturbances caused by processions through the streets of the town, formed by persons styling themselves the "Salvation Army," and of the measures taken by the authorities for preserving the peace. And I am to acquaint you, for the information of the justices, that, while it is their duty by every means in their power to preserve the public peace, they must at the same time exercise their discretion, depending on all the local circumstances, as to whether the conduct of a body of persons in persisting in parading the town of Basingstoke in procession is likely to produce a riot and serious disturbance of the peace.

Such processions, not being illegal in themselves, could not, in the absence of other circumstances and conditions, be legally prevented; but when they provoke antagonism and lead to riotous collision, and that the peace of the town would be endangered if they were allowed to take place, the magistrates, by every means in their power, should endeavour to prevent them.

If, therefore, the magistrates have reason to believe that the procession, if allowed, will lead to a breach of the peace, they should at once cause a sworn information to be laid before them by the head constable, showing grounds why, in his judgment, if the procession takes place, a breach of the peace, and probably a riot, will be the result.

The magistrates should then issue notices, and promulgate them, to the effect that such information having been laid before them on oath, they give notice to all persons intending to take part in any procession that such procession cannot be permitted.

They should call upon the leaders of the movement to prevent it, and upon all peaceably disposed persons to abstain from joining in it. They should call upon all persons to abstain from collecting a crowd for the purpose of interfering with the procession.

They should use their utmost endeavours to collect sufficient force to enable them to prevent an assembly taking place and a procession being formed, by getting assistance from the county police and swearing in special constables.

The forming of the procession should be stopped, each person being told the reason why it will not be allowed; and they should be urged to disperse quietly before force is used.

The people should be made to understand as much as possible that the procession is not permitted, for fear of collision and breach of the peace.

If, however, in spite of every effort to prevent it, the attempt to form a procession is persevered in, force may be used to prevent it; and care should be taken that sufficient force is at hand.

It would be easier to prevent the procession from forming than to deal with an excited mob after a collision has taken place.

I am, &c.
(signed) *A. F. O. Liddell.*

The Clerk to the Justices
of the Borough of Basingstoke, Hants.

— No. 6. —

The Mayor of *Basingstoke* to the Secretary of State for the Home Department.

Basingstoke Town Hall,
31 March 1881.

Sir,

I TAKE the liberty of placing before you an account of the riot on Sunday week here, and the heading of the county paper from which it is cut out. The "Christian World" has an article, I see, in which they recognise the difficulties of our position, and the fact which I have always upheld, that much good is done by the Salvation Army, but that when they press their rights beyond a certain prudent limit much evil follows.

I most respectfully request that in this affair we may have explicit guidance before next Sunday, which is all we want, and that no one magistrate may be allowed to make a private statement without his colleagues having an opportunity of explaining fully. I only ask for fair play, and am prepared to give my reasons for every action, and explain my position and motives in every case.

I am, &c.
(signed) *W. H. Blatch*, Mayor.

The Right Hon. Sir W. G. Vernon Harcourt,
&c. &c. &c.

Enclosure in No. 6.

DISGRACEFUL RIOT AT BASINGSTOKE.

LAST Sunday will be long remembered in Basingstoke as the date on which a disturbance occurred, anything like which cannot be remembered by even our oldest inhabitants. It would be impossible to describe fully the whole proceeding in our columns. We will try, therefore, to lay before our readers as concise a statement of the facts as possible.

For some time past it has been evident to even the most casual looker-on that a fast-growing dislike was springing up amongst various classes of society to the nightly parade of the Salvation Army. Some of this was doubtless due to the proceedings taken by the members of that body to prosecute various individuals whom they charged with disturbing them at their religious gatherings, and some has also risen amongst the more respectable classes in consequence of the noise and the tumult accompanying the army in its marches

marches through the town. Be that as it may, there was no appearance of any organisation amongst their opponents until yesterday week, when a printed manifesto was circulated through the town, headed "Declaration of War by the 'Massaganian' Army (an old name in Basingstoke) against Dirty Dick's Army."

"The Massagians" were requested to assemble in the market-place on Sunday morning at 10 a.m. to rally round their colours, the Union Jack, which it promised should be present. All day Saturday ominous little groups of idlers could be seen gathered about the corners of the street, and from the expressions frequently let drop it could have been easily ascertained that there was something more than usual afoot, but whether the authorities regarded the whole affair as a hoax, and an idle menace, and the Salvation Army knowingly chose to appear, notwithstanding consequences, is a matter best known to themselves.

On Sunday, at 10 a.m., an immense crowd had assembled in response to the invitation issued in the market-place, and there awaited the advent of the Salvationists, who, mustering at their "factory," started at about 10, and took their way up Brook-street and Church-street, singing as usual.

On arriving at the bottom of the hill, they turned to the right up Cross-street into New-street. As soon as they were seen turning into Cross-street the Union Jack was hoisted in the market-place, and a martial crowd marched with the standard bearer at their head down Winchester-street, and turned into the top of New-street, to meet the other party on their way up. Here a collision appeared inevitable, both parties meeting about opposite Dr. Webb's surgery; which side began the conflict it would be hard to say, but the Union Jack was the first to disappear.

A fierce rush, and a successful one, was made to the rescue, and then the Salvation banner was in danger, and but for the determined resistance of the members of the army who rallied around it, and that the material of which it is made must have been unusually tough, there would scarcely have been a shred of it remaining. It was in this encounter either for the rescue of the one flag, or in the attack on the other, that a man named Elms had an arm broken. After a considerable struggle, in which blows were freely interchanged, the Salvation Army slowly passed into Winchester-street, closely pressed on every side by the immense crowd surrounding it. There were but few acts of violence there. Doubtless the presence of the mayor, many of the town councillors, and nearly all the ministers of the gospel of all denominations, had a great effect in restraining the rougher section of the multitude.

The progress down Winchester-street was necessarily slow, and the scene baffles all description.

Windows were opened and closed with alarm and fright.

Every doorstep formed a platform for a knot of spectators, and when emerging into the market-place the Salvationists were forced to return down the deep incline of Church-street, the crush became something fearful. One man was pushed into a plate-glass window of the "Little Dust Pan," and smashed it. Another was thrown down and trampled upon, and many detached struggles and conflicts occurred, which happily the police succeeded in repressing. From here the fighting appeared nearly to cease, and passing the church round by the mayor's residence the mob appeared to be content with escorting its opponent to its place of worship. We noticed that the Union Jack, battered and torn, with a broken pole, was kept carefully hoisted as high as human arms could reach it.

On arriving at the factory the Salvationists filed in at the open doors, many of them looking exceedingly glad to have reached a place of refuge.

It was hoped by every well-meaning inhabitant of the town that these disgraceful disturbances would end here, but the worst (writes the correspondent who furnishes this account) has yet to come. The "Massagians," having refreshed the "inner man," mustered about 2 p.m. at the market-place, with their flag and flagstaff repaired. And now, had the leading members of the Salvationists, well knowing the determined resistance intended, wisely resolved to remain in their chapel in which they had again assembled, all would have been well, at least the town would have been spared the disgrace of another row, for their opponents, finding they did not appear, could have been dispersed by the police without much trouble.

Now, however, in apparent bravado of consequences, the Salvationists marched out from their factory where they meet for worship, and proceeded up Church-street, singing as before. The other party, on receiving intelligence of their approach, immediately marched down the hill from the market-place to meet them. "Major" Moore, who was in command of the Salvation Forces, seeing "his" opponents of the morning approach, wheeled the Salvationists into Church-square, and formed a ring on the grass plot there. The "Massagians" immediately turned into the square also, and charging on the ring broke it in, and then began a sight upon which the grey old tower of St. Michael's Church has, we believe, never gazed before, and we earnestly hope will never see again. Driven into smaller sections, the Salvationists were defending themselves on every hand. Sticks were freely used, and blood flowed from many a head and nose, and hats, particularly high ones, were demolished in a most reckless manner.

Until now it appeared to be the lower class of persons that formed the "Massaganian" Army, and that were engaged in the struggle, but an enraged Salvationist seeing a gentleman whom he believed to be a leader of his enemies standing by, pounced upon

him, bore him to the ground, and getting a firm hold of his throat attempted to throttle him. This led the gentleman's relations and friends to come to the rescue, and then the "melée" became pretty general, and high, low, rich, or poor, had to defend themselves in the best way they could, the mayor himself receiving some ugly knocks. For a time the battle raged. In vain the mayor called on the crowd to cease their fighting. In vain the superintendent of the police ordered the assemblage to disperse in the Queen's name. It was some considerable time, and much damage was done, ere order was restored. At length something like peace was re-established; and upon the mayor once more requesting all parties to disperse, and the superintendent reiterating his charge, the "Massagians" marched off the ground, giving three cheers for the mayor.

They afterwards paraded the town in triumph, singing a parody on one of the Salvation hymns.

We are bound to say that however guilty and inexcusable their conduct was, they had the good sense to turn aside and avoid a funeral they would otherwise have met in the course of their perambulations.

In the evening they mustered again, but now the Salvationists acted the wiser part, and the mob finding no one to oppose them soon dwindled away, and so ended the most disgraceful Sunday we trust ever recorded in the annals of Basingstoke.

On Monday and Tuesday the magistrates had frequent conferences, but though all kinds of rumours are afloat, and all respectable inhabitants are awaiting some decisive action on their part most anxiously (for it is asserted the Salvationists have announced their intention to appear again), up to Wednesday evening nothing apparently had been done.

We cannot close these lines without testifying to the judicious conduct of the borough police on this occasion, though many have judged them harshly.

To have made arrests would have been almost impossible and dangerous in the extreme.

Indeed in a case in which it was so hard to discriminate, their best work was done in endeavouring to intervene in every rupture, and to rescue those who had succumbed to the blows of their antagonists. This they did well and so far effectually, and though many blows were struck we are sure that few, if any of them, were aimed at the police.

It is understood (says our correspondent in a despatch later than the foregoing) that the authorities, in order to prevent a recurrence of the disorder witnessed last Sunday, have sworn in a hundred special constables to assist the police in the maintenance of peace should any attempt be made to-morrow to break the same.

On Monday evening the working men of the town held an indignation meeting at the club room of the British Workmen, in order to protest against the persecution and opposition offered to the Salvation Army. Mr. J. Brazier occupied the chair.

The room was crowded, and among those present were several tradesmen and others holding respectable positions.

A resolution in accordance with the object of the meeting was passed, and a memorial to the mayor craving the protection of the law for the Salvation Army was numerously signed.

— No. 7. —

The Secretary of State for the Home Department to the Mayor of *Basingstoke*.

Sir,

Whitehall, 1 April 1881.

I AM directed by the Secretary of State to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 31st ultimo, and enclosures, relative to the recent disturbances at Basingstoke, arising out of the proceedings of certain persons styling themselves the "Salvation Army;" and I am to inform you that the letter sent by messenger to-day to the clerk to the justices of the borough of Basingstoke sufficiently answers the inquiry in your letter.

I am, &c.

(signed) *Godfrey Lushington*.

The Mayor of Basingstoke.

— No. 8. —

Mr. *Eooth* to the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department.

The Salvation Army Headquarters,
272, Whitechapel-road, London,
2 April 1881.

Sir,

PRESUMING that you will have been correctly informed of the proceedings at Basingstoke since my interview with you in company with Mr. Wallace and Mr. Barrow

Barrow of that town, I beg to acquaint you of the exact position of affairs at this moment.

First.—Yesterday the magistrates issued a proclamation forbidding all processions and open-air gatherings in future.

Second.—We are distinctly advised that this proclamation cannot be supported by law, and there is no reference in it to any Act under which it is issued.

Third.—Therefore, we propose to procession to-morrow as usual, for—

(1.) We cannot relinquish our rights as citizens to hold public meetings, &c.

(2.) Supposing that the law is against us, and that their proclamation is issued for the purpose of testing the law, it is manifestly impossible to get a case for the courts unless we do procession in the teeth of it at some time.

Fourth.—The magistrates have given us to understand that we shall get no protection from the mob on Sunday, and the special constables who have already been sworn in and armed with truncheons will be left to join the rabble in attacking our people and doing what they say they will do, “break their heads.” Now what is to be done if there is no right of public right of assembly in the open spaces and streets of this country; the sooner we know it the better; but surely some protection can be afforded to us while we proceed to obtain the opinion of the properly constituted legal authorities.

Fifth.—The magistrates yesterday further showed their animus by refusing to grant summonses against sixteen rioters unless they had written information in every case signed by a responsible person, thus delaying as long as possible our attempt to bring these persons to justice, and giving the opportunities to the others to hatch up cases against us.

Sixth.—The bearer of this letter is an officer of our General Staff, and has been to Basingstoke several times; he can give you any information you wish, and we shall be very glad of any advice you can give him.

I enclose a copy of a memorandum which I have prepared for private use relating to the disturbances in two or three towns, and am glad to add that at Reading the magistrates have themselves put down the whole disturbance in a week. This can very well be done at Basingstoke if the Mayor would do his duty.

I am, &c.

L. H. Courtney, Esq., M.P., (signed) *William Booth.*
Under Secretary of State for the Home Department.

— No. 9. —

The Secretary of State for the Home Department to Mr. *Booth.*

Sir,

Whitehall, 2 April 1881.

I AM directed by the Secretary of State to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of this date, stating that you are advised that the proclamation issued by the magistrates of Basingstoke cannot be supported by law, and that you propose to disregard it to-morrow so as to raise a case upon which to obtain the opinion of properly constituted legal authorities; and I am to inform you that the Secretary of State thinks it needless for him to point out to you the serious character of this determination, but on the assumption that you will proceed with it, he would suggest that you should acquaint the magistrates with your resolution, so that on the appearance of your procession they may take such steps as they deem fit to enforce their proclamation; thus avoiding any subsequent riot or breach of the peace, which it is assumed you do not desire to provoke, whilst ensuring that opportunity of testing the authority of the proclamation which you profess to desire.

With respect to the fifth paragraph of your letter, I am to observe that the Secretary of State does not accept the imputation of animus contained in it, but any discussion on this point would be foreign to the purpose of the present letter.

A copy of your letter and of this reply will be sent to the Mayor of Basingstoke; but the fact that this is done should not in any way interfere with the fulfilment of the suggestion above made, that you should at once communicate your intentions to the Mayor.

Mr. William Booth,
272, Whitechapel Road, London, E.

I am, &c.
(signed) *Godfrey Lushington.*

— No. 10. —

The Secretary of State for the Home Department to the Mayor
of *Basingstoke*.

Sir,

Whitehall, 2 April 1881.

2 April 1881.

Whitehall, 2 April
1881.

I AM directed by the Secretary of State to transmit to you herewith a copy of a letter received this day from Mr. William Booth, London, in regard to the procession of the "Salvation Army" proposed to be held at Basingstoke to-morrow, and also a copy of the reply from this department, in order that you may be cognizant of all the facts of the case.

I am to express a hope that you may be able to furnish the Secretary of State with a satisfactory report of to-morrow's proceedings.

The Mayor of Basingstoke.

I am, &c.
(signed) *Godfrey Lushington.*

— No. 11. —

The Mayor of *Basingstoke* to the Secretary of State for the Home
Department.

Sir,

Basingstoke Town Hall, 3 April 1881.

I AM pleased to inform you that we have no serious disturbance here to-day. We obtained the assistance of Superintendent Rankins and five men from the county constabulary, and these in addition to our own police were quite sufficient under the circumstances.

The leaders of the "Salvation Army," with Mr. Barron, called on me last evening and intimated that they wished this to be a test case simply, and did not intend persisting in their procession after force should have been made use of to stop them by the police. They consequently attempted to march in procession, were prevented doing so by the police, and retired to their own building, when the whole affair was at an end; and our town has been, I am thankful to say, as quiet, if not more so, than usual.

The Right Hon.
Sir W. G. Vernon Harcourt.

I am, &c.
(signed) *W. H. Blatch, Mayor.*

I may add that the Salvation Army leaders, so the police inform me, were surprised that we did not arrest any of them, but we saw no occasion for doing so, and did not consider it would have been the course most calculated to bring about a peaceable settlement of this question.

— No. 12. —

The Secretary of State for the Home Department to the Mayor
of *Basingstoke*.

Sir,

Whitehall, 7 April 1881.

I AM directed by the Secretary of State to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 3rd instant reporting the steps taken for the preservation of the peace in the town of Basingstoke on that day.

The Mayor of Basingstoke.

I am, &c.
(signed) *Godfrey Lushington*.

— No. 13. —

The Mayor of *Basingstoke* to the Secretary of State for the Home
Department.

Sir,

Basingstoke, 14 August 1881.

In accordance with a request when I was at the Home Office on the 10th instant, with one of my brother magistrates, Mr. Knight, that I would put into writing what I then stated, I now do so.

I have to report that in consequence of the appointment of new magistrates here, I am no longer supported by a majority on the Bench in my endeavour to carry out the instructions I received in writing from you in April last, respecting the Salvation Army processions and the disturbances consequent thereon, to the effect that when on the sworn information of the chief constable that a disturbance or not would ensue, such processions, in fact all processions, should be prevented from forming, or broken up if formed. This was done for a time most successfully, as will be seen from the memorial enclosed; met with the approbation of the great majority of the respectable inhabitants of the town; a few weeks since, immediately the new appointment was known, the Salvation Army renewed their processioning in force, and the result has been a great amount of disturbance, to the annoyance of all quietly disposed persons.

I should state that when the proclamation was enforced, we accorded all the liberty we could safely to the Salvation Army; I made them an offer of my own meadow to meet, and others did the same; this offer they refused.

All I want is to prevent their processioning, and above all singing through the streets at present, which is the primary cause of all the disturbances, and such is the excitement amongst all classes that I apprehend most serious results unless such processions are for a time put a stop to.

It seems hard that I, as mayor, should be held responsible for consequences I could easily prevent, were I still in a position to act, as I did before, up to the spirit of your advice and direction. A few weeks since I acquiesced in a resolution that the police be instructed not to break up the Salvation Army processions for a time; this was done as an experiment, but it has entirely failed. I agreed to this as the only way to avoid what else would have been done, viz., the washing off from the walls the copies of the proclamation.

The Right Hon.
Sir W. V. Harcourt, M.P.

I am, &c.
(signed) *W. H. Blatch*,
Mayor.

Enclosure in No. 13.

To the Worshipful the Mayor and the Magistrates of the Town of *Basingstoke*.

WE, the undersigned residents and ratepayers of the town of Basingstoke, desire most respectfully to address you as the constituted guardians of the peace and order of the said town.

We assure you that we deeply deplore the sad scenes of riot and discord which have taken place in the streets of our town (in connection with what is called the Salvation Army)

Army), and which desecrates our Christian Sabbath and caused the greatest pain and discomfort to hundreds of Christian persons who desire to worship God in the quiet manner to which they have been accustomed.

We had hoped that the steps so prudently taken some weeks ago to prevent these processions in the public streets on account of the danger, riot, and disorder connected therewith, would be strictly and persistently carried out, because the manifest quiet thereby has been so truly appreciated by the inhabitants of the town.

But from present appearances we fear that you are rather disposed to depart from those steps, and to permit such public processions to be renewed notwithstanding the painful remembrance of such deplorable scenes which took place in the past.

We do, therefore, venture to entreat and urge you to continue the prohibition of such in the public streets because of the danger unavoidably connected therewith, and we would add that the liberty to perambulate the streets in such a way (if it be a liberty) is one which could not be conceded to or enjoyed by all. It would be an impossibility. Is it then right or fitting that one body should be permitted so to act as to wound and offend the feelings of many sober-minded religious inhabitants of the place?

We do, therefore, venture to hope that you will see the prudence and advisability of strictly adhering to the decision which was arrived at after much careful thought and deliberation, and we feel confident that the peace, order, and well-being of the town will be promoted thereby, and by that means carry out the wishes of the undermentioned burgesses and ratepayers of the town.

(signed) *J. E. Millard*, D.D., Vicar, The Rectory.
W. R. Workman, M.A., Clergyman, Basingstoke.
J. E. Guntrip, Clerk, Clergyman, Basingstoke.
 (And 496 others.)

— No. 14. —

The Secretary of State for the Home Department to the Mayor
 of *Basingstoke*.

Sir,

Whitehall, 15 August 1881.

I AM directed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 14th instant, and I am to acquaint you that the subject to which it relates will be fully considered.

I am, &c.

(signed) *A. F. O. Liddell*.

The Mayor of Basingstoke.

— No. 15. —

The Clerk to the Justices of the Borough of *Basingstoke* to the Secretary of
 State for the Home Department.

Borough Magistrates' Clerk's Office,
 Basingstoke, 16 August 1881.

Sir,

At a meeting of the justices of this borough, held this day, the following resolution was passed:

“That the Memorial presented by Mr. Pain having been sent to the Home Office, the one now presented by Mr. Barrow be also forwarded by the clerk.”

In pursuance of such resolution, I beg to forward you the Memorial therein referred to.

I have, &c.

(signed) *F. S. Chandler*,
 Clerk to the Borough Justices.

The Right Hon. the Secretary of State,
 Home Office, Whitehall.

Enclosure in No. 15.

To the Worshipful the Mayor and Bench of Magistrates of the Town of *Basingstoke*.

WE, the undersigned burgesses, ratepayers, and other inhabitants of the town of Basingstoke, beg respectfully to address you in reference to the continued opposition to and annoyance of the "*Salvation Army*," on the part of an organised band, promoted and supported by those who are interested in preventing their work.

We would respectfully submit that—

1. Whereas the said "*Army*" has been the means in many places, including Basingstoke, of raising persons of low, immoral, and drunken habits, to paths of virtue, sobriety, and religion, they are deserving of all legal protection and support.

2. Further, that any temporary annoyance which may be felt on the part of those to whom their singing and marching through the streets are repugnant, is amply counterbalanced by the great good they have been the means of doing, numerous cases of which in our midst can be adduced, which, if examined into by any unprejudiced person, would be found to be *real, abiding*, and consequently of *immense benefit* to the community from a *social*, not to say *religious* point of view.

3. And still further, that whereas the said "*marching*" and "*singing*" are *not illegal*, such objectors have no claim for gaining the suppression of these processions.

4. We also submit, that the unseemly noise and confusion are created by persons in the employ of those interested in hindering the work of the "*Army*," such noise and confusion being made for the avowed purpose of bringing the "*Army*" into disrepute and odium, and that to allow such tactics to succeed, would be to create a most dangerous precedent, and give a power to the lowest and most unscrupulous persons, which would be adverse to the best interests of the town.

5. And finally, we would venture to suggest that the leaders of the "*Army*," who have hitherto shown themselves ready to meet any reasonable suggestion, be requested not to parade the streets, say, more than twice on a Sunday, and by a different route each time, and twice or three times in the week, and that on these occasions they have the fullest protection.

We therefore beg respectfully to urge the above considerations upon your attention, and to ask that the police may receive such orders as shall enable them to do their duty in suppressing, as far as possible, the present disgraceful proceedings.

We are, &c.

(signed) *Henry Barron*, Congregational Minister, Essex-road.
Henry Young, Dissenting Minister, 3, Jarun-villas.
Harriet Young, 3, Jarun-villas.

Basingstoke, 1 August 1881,

(And 611 others.)

— No. 16. —

Magistrates of the Borough of *Basingstoke* to the Secretary of State for the Home Department.

[Not dated. Letter received at the Home Office on 18th August 1881.]

Sir,

WE, the undersigned magistrates of the borough of Basingstoke, beg to lay before you the following facts, and to ask your advice in the discharge of our official duties. Last Tuesday we sent a deputation to Whitehall to make the following statement, but were informed by Sir Adolphus Liddell that it was to be sent to you in writing. We beg most respectfully to submit for your consideration what is herein stated:—

1. The sect calling itself the *Salvation Army* has been carrying on its operations in this town for 10 months, and by their occasional open-air processions and singing have succeeded in reclaiming many immoral persons beyond the reach of ordinary Evangelistic effort, some of whom are known to us. They met with no active opposition for five months, but then, when the effects of their work began to appear in empty public-houses, and in a diminution of drunkenness, disorderly classes employed, as we have reason to believe, by persons interested in the drink trade, began to create disturbances with a view of preventing the "*Salvation Army*" making their way through the streets.

2. It is our opinion that if the mayor, who is the largest brewer in the town; and the whole bench of magistrates, had acted with energy and firmness at the beginning, these disturbances would have been speedily quelled; but by vacillation and indecision in dealing with the cases of assault that were brought before them by the Salvation Army, the rioters were encouraged, and consequently the disturbances greatly increased; but certainly not beyond the power of the police to cope with, had they received stringent orders to summon or arrest these disturbers of the public peace.

3. At the beginning of last April the mayor, acting, as he said, under your orders, issued a proclamation forbidding the Salvation Army and other denominations to procession the streets or hold any open-air assemblage for the future. The Nonconformists of the town loudly and unanimously protested against this prohibitory bill as a violation of a liberty enjoyed for many generations by every body of Christians; and, in conjunction with the Salvation Army, gave notice to the authorities that they would test its legality by breaking it. No proceedings were taken against them for breaking it, consequently the conclusion arrived at was that there was no legality in it. The street processions have therefore continued until the present time, and so have the disturbances.

4. The mayor and Mr. Knight desire to re-issue that proclamation; but we, being the majority of the magistrates (five to two), have a strong objection to such a procedure, regarding it as unnecessary to restore peace and order to the town, and, in our opinion, would be an interference with liberty. We hold the Salvation Army as irresponsible for any of the disgraceful proceedings which may now be witnessed very frequently in our streets, inasmuch as they act in a most peaceful manner under great provocation; but throw the entire blame upon an organised band of roughs, who are, we believe, the paid agents of persons connected with the liquor traffic in the town, and whose aim is, by marching in front and at the sides of the Army, making discordant noises, beating old kettles, trays, &c., and blowing horns, to bring that body into odium and disrepute.

We, therefore, respectfully ask :

1st.—Whether the police cannot summon or arrest the aforesaid roughs for their conduct, as before alluded to ?

2nd.—Whether we cannot take proceedings against their employers, if we can obtain sufficient evidence to incriminate them ?

In conclusion, we respectfully inform you that two memorials, one asking for the re-enactment of the proclamation, with about 350 signatures; the other protesting against it, signed by upwards of 600 persons, have been presented to the Bench; and the clerk has instructions to send them to you.

We remain, &c.
(signed) *Richard Wallis.*
Arthur Wallis.
Arthur Rapp.
T. M. Kingdon.
John Bloper.

The Right Hon. Sir Wm. Harcourt,
Secretary of State
for the Home Department.

— No. 17. —

The Secretary of State for the Home Department to the Mayor
of *Basingstoke.*

Sir,

Whitehall, 19 August 1881.

In reply to your letter of the 14th instant, on the subject of recent disturbances at Basingstoke in connection with the meetings of the "Salvation Army," I am directed by Secretary Sir William Vernon Harcourt to forward
for

for your information the enclosed copy of a letter which has been addressed to Mr. Richard Wallis, in answer to a communication from himself and other magistrates of your borough, having reference to the same subject as your own letter.

The Mayor of Basingstoke, Hants.

I am, &c.
(signed) *A. F. O. Liddell.*

— No. 18. —

The Secretary of State for the Home Department to Mr. *Wallis*, J.P.

Sir,

Whitehall, 19 August 1881.

IN reply to the communication addressed to the Secretary of State by yourself and your fellow magistrates on the subject of the disturbances which have been caused at Basingstoke by attempts to interfere with the proceedings of the "Salvation Army,"

I am directed to say that the Secretary of State cannot undertake to advise the magistrates of your borough upon legal questions which must depend upon the facts of the cases as they arise.

With reference to the threatened repetition of the disturbances, he can only refer you to the letter of the 1st of April last, addressed to the mayor. The measures adopted at that time appear to have put an end to the serious riots which were then prevalent. The Secretary of State has simply to repeat that the responsibility of preserving the peace of the town rests upon the magistrates, and that it is their duty to take measures to prevent any proceedings which are calculated to produce disorder.

Richard Wallis, Esq., J.P.,
Basingstoke, Hants.

I am, &c.
(signed) *A. F. O. Liddell.*

— No. 19. —

The Mayor of *Basingstoke* to the Secretary of State for the Home Department.

Sir,

Basingstoke Town Hall,
24 August 1881.

THE magistrates met here yesterday, and the superintendent of police declared himself ready to swear an information that if the Salvation Army were allowed to procession, a disturbance of a serious character would follow. I thereupon proposed that the proclamation we were advised to issue in April should be again resorted to; but I was outvoted. I read the letter sent me dated the 19th, and the copy of that sent to Mr. R. Wallis, and urged the adoption of this course; after which I left the chair and the meeting. They then resolved that the Salvation Army should be specially protected round the town on certain days only. This evening was the first attempt, and the result has been the worst disturbance we have had for a long time. I am now utterly unable to act, being outvoted, and cannot answer for any consequences unless these processions are put a stop to.

To the Right Hon.
Sir William Vernon Harcourt.

I am, &c.
(signed) *W. H. Blatch,*
Mayor.

— No. 20. —

The Secretary of State for the Home Department to the Mayor
of *Basingstoke*.

Sir,

Whitehall, 26 August 1881.

I AM directed by the Secretary of State to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 24th instant relative to disturbances in connection with the "Salvation Army."

The Mayor of Basingstoke.

I am, &c.
(signed) *A. F. O. Liddell*.

— No. 21. —

The Secretary of State for the Home Department to the Clerk to the
Justices of *Exeter*.

Sir,

Whitehall, 14 October 1881.

See No. 22.

IN reply to your letter of the 10th instant, relative to the proceedings of the "Salvation Army," I am directed to acquaint you that the advice given by the Secretary of State to the authorities of Stamford is of general application, and I am to transmit to you herewith, to be laid before the justices, a copy of the letter which was addressed to the Town Clerk of Stamford on this matter.

The Clerk to the Justices,
Guildhall, Exeter.

I am, &c.
(signed) *Godfrey Lushington*.

— No. 22. —

The Secretary of State for the Home Department to the Town
Clerk of *Stamford*.

Sir,

Whitehall, 4 October 1881.

I AM directed by the Secretary of State to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 3rd instant asking on behalf of the justices and town council of Stamford for his advice as to the measures to be adopted to suppress the disturbances created by the proceedings of the "Salvation Army," and in reply thereto, I am to say that while it is the duty of the local magistrates by every means in their power to preserve the public peace, they must at the same time exercise their discretion, depending on all the local circumstances, as to whether the conduct of a body of persons in persisting in parading the streets is likely to produce a riot or serious disturbance of the peace.

Such processions not being illegal in themselves, cannot in the absence of other circumstance be legally prevented; but where they provoke antagonism, and lead to riotous collisions, and where the peace of the town would be endangered if they are allowed to continue, the magistrates should by every means in their power endeavour to prevent them.

If therefore the justices have reason to believe that these processions if permitted will lead to a breach of the peace, they should at once cause a sworn information to be laid before them by the chief constable showing grounds why in his judgment, if the procession continue, a breach of the peace and probably a riot will be the result.

They should then issue notices and promulgate them to the effect that such information having been laid before them on oath, they give notice to all persons who intend to take part in such processions that the processions cannot be permitted to take place.

They should call upon the leaders of the movement to prevent them, and upon all peaceably disposed persons to abstain from joining in them; and upon
all

all persons to abstain from collecting a crowd for the purpose of interfering with the processions.

They should, when about to prevent the processions, endeavour to collect sufficient force to enable them to prevent any assembly from forming by getting assistance from the county police, and swearing in special constables.

The forming of the procession should be stopped, each person being told the reason why it will not be allowed, and they should be urged to disperse quietly before force is used. The people should be made to understand as far as possible that the processions are not permitted for fear of a collision and breach of the peace.

If, however, in spite of every effort to prevent it, the attempt to form a procession is persevered in, force may be used to prevent it, and care should be taken that sufficient force for that purpose is at hand.

It is easier to prevent a procession from forming than to deal with an excited mob after a collision has taken place.

The Town Clerk of Stamford.

I am, &c.
(signed) *Godfrey Lushington.*

BASINGSTOKE DISTURBANCES.

RETURN containing COPIES of the CORRESPONDENCE which has passed between the HOME OFFICE and the LOCAL AUTHORITIES of BASINGSTOKE, or other Places, with reference to the Suppression of DISTURBANCES.

(*Mr. Cainc.*)

*Ordered, by The House of Commons, to be Printed,
27 March 1832.*

132.

Under 2 oz.

H.—19. 4. 82.