In the Report of Mr Chapman for the west riding of Yorkshire, there is a detailed statement, from the weavers’ own lips, of the earnings of thirty-three individuals, ranging from 7s. 6d. per week to 26s., varying according to age, strength, industry, and skill. These varying circumstances are stated, and certainly give a better view of the possible and actual earnings of men than any statement of averages. But although an average may be fallacious, it may be ser­viceable to ascertain at what points in the scale the largest number of cases occurs. We find it stated that

4 earned above 20s. 4 earned from 10s. to l2s.

9 ... from l6s. to 20s. 3 ... under 10s.

13 12s. to 16s.

As the manufacture of the west riding has improved, the quantity of work has much increased without any increase of price, so that the weekly earnings are said greatly to have diminished within the last twenty years. Wages in Yorkshire are paid by the *string,* a measure of ten feet, be­ing higher according to the *set,* as it is called, that is, the number of *porteths* or thirty-eight threads of warp in the width. Thus eighty is deemed a medium set, and has now 22,800 yards of weft in each string, or 5700 picks or shoots; whereas in 1817 the same set had only 12,540 yards, or 3135 picks, the effect of this increased wefting. The necessary consequence of the improvement in the manufac­ture upon wages is shown in the following table.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Years.** | **Weight of Weft per String.** | | **Number of Skeins per String.** | **Number of Yards of**  **Weft per String.** | **Price paid for Weav­ing per String.** | | **Average Weekly Earnings.** | |
| **1817 to 1822** | ***Lbs***  **2** | ***oz*.**  **12** | **8** | **12,540** | ***».***  **1** | ***d.***  **10** | ***L.***  **1** | ***».***  **4** |
| **1822 to 1827** | **3** | **0** | **9**½ | **14,440** | **2** | **0** | **1** | **0** |
| **1827 to 1832** | **3** | **4** | **12** | **18,240** | **2** | **0** | **0** | **15** |
| **1832 to 1837** | **3** | **8** | **15** | **22,800** | **2** | **1** | **0** | **9** |

The wages of the several operatives employed in Octo­ber 1838 in the establishment of Messrs Hindes and Der- ham were as follows :

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | | ***L.*** | ***s.*** | ***d.*** |  | ***L.*** | ***s.*** | ***d.*** |
| **Wool-sorters** | | **1** | ***G*** | **3**½ | **to** | **1** | **10** | **0** |
| **Overlooker** | |  |  | **1** | **10** | **0** |
| **Combers, by hand** | | **0** | **14** | **9** | **to** | **1** | **6** | **6** |
| **Overlooker, 28s., with a house ∖vortl** | | **15s to** | | | | **1** | **13** | **0** |
| **Bv machine (boys)** | |  | **4** | **0** | **to** | **0** | **10** | **0** |
| **Overlooker** | |  |  |  |  | **1** | **4** | **0** |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | ***L.*** | ***s.*** | ***d.*** |  | ***L.*** | ***s.*** | ***d.*** |
| **Washers (paid bv the week, not by the job)** |  |  |  |  | **0** | **18** | **0** |
| **Preparers (at the drawing frames), girls....** | **0** | **6** | **6** | **to** | **0** | 7 | **0** |
| **Spinners, girls under 13** | **0** | **1** | **6** | **to** | **0** | **2** | **0** |
| **over 13** | **0** | **3** | **0** | **to** | **0** | **6** | **0** |
| **Overlookers in both departments** | **0** | **18** | **0** | **to** | **1** | **1** | **0** |
| **Reelers, girls and women** | **0** | **8** | **5** | **to** | **0** | **13** | **9** |
| **Bunchers, who make up the hanks into ) packets, girls and women** | **0** | 7 | **6** | **to** | **0** | **8** | **0** |
| **Men (who are overlookers)** | **0** | **18** | **0** | **to** | **1** | **4** | **0** |
| **Packers, men** | | | | | **0** | **18** | **0** |
| **Engine-man** | | | | | **1** | **4** | **0** |
|
| **Fireman** |  | | | | **0** | **16** | **0** |

But the most important feature in the condition of the weavers, as pointed out in Mr Chapman’s Report, is, that in 1800, and for some few years after, money wages were as low, and perhaps lower, than in 1838 ; that about the year 1804 or 1806, wages advanced; that they continued high until 1815 or 1816, since which time they have declined, but not quite to the point they were at in 1800. The fol­lowing statement confirms this view.

*Weekly Earnings of a skilful Worsted Weaver, from* 1787 *to* 1838.

|  |
| --- |
| **1787 10s.** |
| **1800 10s.** |
| **1804 17s.** |
| **1814 34s. 6d.** |

|  |
| --- |
| **1815...31s. 6d.** |
| **1820...21s.** |
| **1822...24s.** |
| **1824...21s.** |

|  |
| --- |
| **1829...20s.** |
| **1831...18s.** |
| **1833...17s.** |
| **1834...l6s.** |

|  |
| --- |
| **1835...15s. 6d.** |
| **1836...15s. 6d.** |
| **1837...14s.** |
| **1838...12s. 6d.** |

The high wages which prevailed from 1804 to 1815 arose entirely out of the improvements in spinning. The quantity of yarn was so great that it was difficult to get weavers, and they were enabled to make their own terms ; but the profits of weaving soon increased the supply of weavers. Children were extensively taught to weave; and as, in the case of cotton and worsted, the work is light, the labour of the parent was soon transferred to the child. In the case of woollen cloth, however, this could not take place. Cloth-weaving is emphatically a man’s work ; so that the cloth-weaver’s wages are as much as those of the worsted and cotton-weaver put together, the average pro­portion being as 15s., 9s., and 6s. per week.

But a comparative statement of mere money wages does not inform us respecting the improving, stationary, or re­trograde condition of the operative. For that purpose we must ascertain the command he has over the necessaries, comforts, and conveniencies of life. In this the following table will aid us.

*A Statement of the Prices of various Articles of Food and Household Stores for the use of Greenwich Hospital, from* 1800 *to* 1835.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Year.** | | **Flesh per Cwt.** | | | **Flour per Sack.** | | | **Butter per lb.** | | **Cheese per lb.** | **Oatmeal per Bushel.** | | **Salt per Bushel.** | | **Beer per Barrel.** | | **Candles per doz. lbs.** | | **Price per Ration at Chelsea.** | |
| **1800** | | ***L.***  **8** | ***s.***  **4** | ***d.***  **4** | ***L.***  **4** | ***s.***  **16** | ***d.***  **0** | ***s.***  **0** | **d.**  **111/8** | ***d.***  **6**¼ | ***s.***  **14** | **d.**  **0** | ***s.*** | ***d.*** | ***s.*** | ***d.*** | ***s.*** | ***d.*** | ***s.***  **0** | ***d.***  **8** |
| **1810** | | **3** | **12** | **6** | **4** | **8** | **4** | **1** | **13/8** | **8⅛** | **11** | **7** |  |  | **.** |  | **.** |  | **0** | **11** |
| **1815** | | **3** | **8** | **0** | **2** | **4** | **9** | **1** | **2** | **8** | **10** | **3** | **19** | **9** | **15** | 4¾ | **11** | **7** | **1** | **0** |
| **1820** | | **3** | **10** | **4**½ | **2** | **15** | **1** | **0** | **9**½ | **7** | **13** | **4** | **19** | **9** | **15** | **10**½ | **8** | **2**¾ | **1** | **0** |
| **1825** | | **2** | **19** | **8**½ | **2** | **13** | **4** | **0** | 10½ | **5**¼ | **17** | **6** | **2** | **10** | **16** | 6¼ | **6** | **0** | **0** | **11**¾ |
| **1830** | | **2** | **3** | **6** | **2** | **14** | **11** | **0** | **6**½ | **6**½ | **16** | **11** | **1** | **8** | **12** | 6½ | **5** | **3**½ | **0** | **8**¾ |
| **1835** | | **2** | **0** | 7½ | **1** | **11** | **0**¾ | **0** | 7½ | **4** | **14** | **6** | **1** | **3** | **13** | 9½ | **5** | **2** | **0** | **75/8** |

From this table it appears that every article in which the operative’s wages are expended, is considerably cheaper now than at an earlier period ; and if we could collect a similar comparative table of the price of clothing, the sav­ing would be more conspicuous. In 1800 a week’s wages would purchase ∙71 of a bushel of wheat, or 17½ lbs. of flesh, or fifteen Chelsea rations ; in 1837 a week’s wages would purchase 1∙64 bushels of wheat, or 34 lbs. of flesh, or twenty Chelsea rations, the ration consisting of one day’s food for a man. On so much of the weaver’s earn­ings as he expends in butter, cheese, salt, candles, &c. there is a saving of about 40 per cent., and on his clothing much more, so that 10s. in 1800 was certainly no more than 6s. 8d. at the present time.

The manufacturer’s moral condition has improved with his physical condition. He is careful to educate his chil­dren to the full extent of his means ; he evinces self-re­spect in all the relations of life, and therefore commands the respect of others. The legislature and the government have also of late years done much to elevate and improve his condition. The various provisions for the regulation of factories bring the employer under a system of necessary