

## WEST RIDING CHRISTMAS QUARTER SESSIONS, AT WAKEFIELD.

The adjourned Christmas Quarter Sessions for the West Riding were opened at Wakefield, on Tuesday. The Hon. E. Lascelles, M.P., presided, and the other West Riding Magistrates in attendance were—W. W. Battie, Esq., H. W. Wickham, Esq., R. Creyke, Esq., W. Hepworth, Esq., J. Audus, Esq., W. W. Battye, Esq., J. Hague, Esq., J. G. Smyth, Esq., M.P., E. Tew, Esq., J. Rand, Esq., Sir George Armytage, Bart., T. H. Marshall, Esq., J. Brown, Esq., J. Waterhouse, Esq., E. B. Wheatley, Esq., J. M. Hepworth, Esq., W. H. Leatham, Esq., J. Barff, Esq., J. C. D. Charlesworth, Esq., F. Wormald, Esq., J. B. Faviell, Esq., T. P. Crossland, Esq.

The following gentlemen composed the Grand Jury:—

Mr. Charles Exley, Wakefield, maltster, *foreman*.  
Mr. A. B. Barker, Ardsley West, farmer.  
Mr. Robert Blakeley, Dewsbury, merchant.  
Mr. T. M. Brook, Dewsbury, druggist.  
Mr. Wm. Dyson, Ardsley East, farmer.  
Mr. Edward Day, Dewsbury, manufacturer.  
Mr. C. M. Dixon, Wakefield, shopkeeper.  
Mr. David Green, Crigglestone, gentleman.  
Mr. J. O. Greaves, Wakefield, surveyor.  
Mr. Joseph Spurr, Crigglestone, gentleman.  
Mr. James Thurman, Batley, clothier.  
Mr. John Wood, West Bretton, farmer.  
Mr. J. H. Wilkinson, Dewsbury, bookseller.  
Mr. John Whitehead, Wakefield, oil merchant.  
Mr. Wm. Yardley, Emley, farmer.  
Mr. Peter Ward, Wakefield, druggist.

The CHAIRMAN briefly addressed the grand jury. He remarked that it would appear at first sight to be a very light calendar. There were twenty-five prisoners for trial; but looking at the number of small offences which had been disposed of at petty sessions, under the new Act, he could not congratulate them on any actual diminution of crime. The new Act was not at first clearly understood, but he believed that ultimately it would relieve the Quarter Sessions of two-thirds of the prisoners. There were now twenty-five prisoners, and fifty-one had been disposed of at petty sessions; so that the offences were still large. The grand jury, in performing their duties, were to look at the evidence before them, and if they considered the evidence clear against a prisoner, they must return a true bill. If they experienced any difficulty in deciding a case, the assistance of the Bench would readily be afforded to them. He wished to direct their attention to the Reformatory School established in this county, of which they had no doubt heard a great deal. It was his opinion that those institutions would prove of the utmost value in decreasing crime. The Chairman then alluded to the exertions of Mr. Wheatley, who had established a Reformatory Institution, on a small scale, near Mirfield. Great difficulty was experienced in providing an institution for the purpose on a large scale, and opposition was raised in some quarters because one institution had stopped. But Mr. Wheatley's establishment had been well supported, and a large school on the same principle was proposed to be established. It would be under the control of a committee of management, and he trusted, when the subject should be brought forward, it would meet with the support of all.