

CHAPTER VI

LEEDS : IRON, STEEL AND ENGINEERING

THE industries of the district centred in Leeds and carried on by Joint Stock Companies comprise (1) iron and steel-making, with a capital of £4,665,000, employing at present 7,300 hands; (2) light locomotive building, with a capital of £1,924,000, employing at present 5,650 hands; (3) machine tools, with a capital of £1,646,000, employing at present 4,550 hands; (4) textile engineering, with a capital of £2,696,000, employing at present 12,600 hands; (5) general machinery, with a capital of £6,861,000, employing at present 22,260 hands. Owing to the recent depression in trade, much short time has been worked, and 33 per cent. may be added to the number of hands actually employed to bring the figure up to the normal conditions of employment in good times. As it is difficult to obtain very accurate figures as to capital engaged by private firms, 33 per cent. may be added to the figures of capitalisation given above. This would bring the total of employment up to 69,800 men, and the capital engaged to £23,725,000. The number of firms in the district association of the Engineering Employers' Federation is sixty-seven, and, of course, there are many who are not connected with that body.

The origin of the Leeds iron industry, which has for many generations produced the finest quality of malleable iron known to the mechanical engineer, is much the same as that of the Durham and the Sheffield districts. The local ores were worked by the Romans by the aid of the