

In passing along the street no one unacquainted with the fact would dream that he was in the vicinity of so lovely a spot, or one so thorough adapted for such a purpose. On one hand is to be seen an extensive range of hot-houses teeming with the productions of a sunnier clime, and on the other, parterres of the fairest flowers, delighting the eye and wafting their fragrance on the breeze of morning; here are whole hedges of geranea of the brightest scarlet, and there, miniature fountains bedew the sward as they throw up their glittering waters amid the scorching rays of a summer's sun.

Crossing the street once more, we pass the White Horse Inn, founded, Mr Beesley conjectures, on the site of Trinity chapel,³ which along with many other ecclesiastical endowments was despoiled of its revenues by Henry VIII; and a little higher up on the same side is a lane now called Church Passage, but formerly rejoiced in the euphonious nomenclature of "Tink-a-Tank". Here is a building for the accommodation of the Mechanics Institution, containing a well-furnished library and [commodious] reading room. [It numbers nearly 250 members, and about 5,000 volumes are issued yearly. In every respect, this institution may be regarded as one of a most praiseworthy description, and unlike many others of a kindred character, it is happily in a flourishing condition. For much of its prosperity it is indebted to the exertions of the indefatigable librarian, who in its behalf has laboured worthily and well – 1st ed. only]. Here the meetings of the Board of Health are held; and matters relating to lighting, paving, sewage, and *rating*, are discussed fortnightly in a most friendly spirit, and no doubt [greatly] to the town's advantage. Banbury was formerly renowned for its dirt – there being cart-ruts along the principal thoroughfares, from six inches to a foot deep; and even within the last 70 or 80 years, stepping stones were laid from side to side of the streets, to enable the pedestrians to keep out of the mud. All this is now changed; and although it cannot be said that we are indebted to this Board for so beneficial an improvement, there can be little doubt that they are endeavouring earnestly to follow out what their predecessors worthily began.

A little further up the lane there is a well-conducted Infant School, where about 160 children receive the first elements of youthful instruction, and the capabilities of infant minds, under the skilful direction of efficient teachers, find ample scope for enquiry and development. A congregation of religionists, styling themselves "Disciples", use the school-room on

3 See page 34.