**ST. ANNE’S COMMUNITY COLLEGE KILLALOE.**

**2R2 HISTORY. MR. B. O’ BRIEN.**

**CHECKPOINT QUESTIONS P.221**

**Q.1 TO Q.6.**

1. The British government was so slow to act in response to the blight in Ireland because British farmers did not depend on the potato for food and had alternatives and the government thought the situation in Ireland was the same.
2. Laissez faire (‘let it be’) as it relates to government policy at this time means that the British believed that a government should not interfere in the economy as it would correct itself eventually. As a result, help for those affected by the Famine was slow to arrive.
3. The government tried to help with maize when in November 1845 the British Prime Minister Sir Robert Peel sent aid in the form of maize. There was enough to feed one million people for one month. It was offered at cost price but many could still not afford it. Others sold all they had to but the maize. The maize was known as ‘Peel’s Brimstone’ as it was gritty and hard to digest.

The government tried to help with public work schemes by employing people for 1 shilling a day to build roads, walls or bridges. The work was hard and physical for people who were weak with hunger. Often these roads and bridges were of little use as they were built in out of the way places and served little purpose except to give the people a wage to try to purchase food but prices had increased dye to shortages.

1. A workhouse was a large building where people worked in return for basic accommodation and food.

The advantages of entering a workhouse were it was a refuge of sorts for those with nowhere else to go and whole families could enter together.

The disadvantages of entering a workhouse were that life was harsh, people were not encouraged to stay, they were overflowing with people, disease was widespread in them, families were split up and never met again and it was seen as a last resort to enter them as many people died in them.

1. Soup kitchens were set up to give hot soup to starving people who were not in workhouses.
2. The Quakers (Religious Society of Friends) , Queen Victoria, the Ottoman Sultan, Pope Pius IX and the Choctaw Nation are some of the people and groups that donated money for famine relief.