

i

THE WORKING CLASS AND EDUCATION

IN PRESTON 1830 - 1870

A Study of Social Relations

ALISON ANDREW

THESIS

Submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

University of Leicester

1987

## C O N T E N T S

	Page
Author's Acknowledgements	
Abbreviations	
1 INTRODUCTION	1
2 PRESTON: SOCIAL STRUCTURE AND ECONOMIC BASE	19
1 Occupational Structure	19
2 The Workers	25
I Origins of Preston's Industrial Workforce	25
II Age and Sex Structure of the Labour Force	29
III Wages	34
IV Conditions of Life of the Working Class	38
3 The Employers	43
I Origins and Visibility	43
II Local Government	47
III Parliamentary Politics	49
IV Middle-Class Institutions and Philanthropy	52
3 EDUCATION BY COLLISION	57
1 Trade Union Activity	60
I The 1842 Turn-Out - the 'Plug Plot Riots'	62
II The 1853/4 Strike and Lock-Out in Preston	64

2	Chartism and Other Forms of Agitational Association	73
3	Friendly Societies, Temperance and Teetotalism	84
4	Church and Chapel	89
5	Working-Class Leisure and Recreational Pursuits	94
4	THE PURSUIT OF KNOWLEDGE	113
1	Trade Union and Political Education	113
2	Temperance, Church and Friendly Society Education	125
3	The Institution for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge (Mechanics' Institute)	131
4	Experiments in Library Provision, Factory Education and Working Men's Clubs	150
5	The Chaplain of the Preston House of Correction	160
5	THE DEVELOPMENT OF MASS SCHOOLING: 1. THE PROVIDERS	167
1	Sunday Schooling	169
2	Day Schooling	181
6	THE DEVELOPMENT OF MASS SCHOOLING: 2. THE USERS	200
1	Access and Attendance	200
2	Experience of Schooling	219
3	Impact of Schooling	240

7	CONCLUSION: THE SOCIAL RELATIONS OF EDUCATION	251
1	A Working-Class Tradition in Education?	253
2	Working-Class Educational Activity, Women and the Family	286
3	Conclusion	298
APPENDIX 1	A Campaigning Song	307
APPENDIX 2	Extracts from Evidence to the 1843 Children's Employment Commission	308
BIBLIOGRAPHY		312



## AUTHOR'S ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many people ought to be thanked for their assistance in the production of this thesis. Those who contributed through discussion, encouragement and friendship are too numerous to mention, but some must be singled out here. Bob Burgess gave unstinting support as well as the initial encouragement to undertake research. I have also been helped by my supervisor Dr David Reeder, who has provided invaluable advice and criticism. The research was supported financially for three years by the then Social Science Research Council, and later by Nene College, Northampton, my current place of employment. The thesis would never have been completed without the support of colleagues in the Sociology Division of the college, which extended to undertaking extra duties in order to free me from some other obligations. Dr Michael Sanderson was kind enough to lend me case study material compiled in the course of his own researches, and participants at the Whitelands College workshop on Qualitative Methodology and the Study of Education, 1983, aided in the clarification of some of the ideas presented here. Linda Pain and Jackie Daniels have made sterling efforts with the typing of the finished article. Finally, special thanks and gratitude are due to my parents and to Tim O'Shea for both practical assistance and unfailing support and encouragement.

## ABBREVIATIONS

Apart from conventional abbreviations the following have been used:

CCCS	Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies
LCRO	Lancashire County Record Office
PRO	Public Record Office

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

This thesis is a study of the social relations of education in a nineteenth-century industrial town, with particular reference to the working-class experience of education. The town chosen as the location for the study is Preston, an industrial town in the factory north of England. The starting point for the thesis is a belief that definitions of what education is and should be about, of what it means to be an educated person, and of what counts for knowledge, are best understood as particular social and historical constructions resulting from struggles between competing groups to establish their own meanings and definitions. In this view what is now defined as normal reflects the successes and failures, advances and retreats of different interests in society. The thesis thus explores the extent to which there was an active interest in education amongst Preston's working class and how this was expressed; and the extent to which working-class 'improvers' embraced alternative conceptions of education to those of the middle class providers. Both questions start from the assumption that a broader view than is common of what constitutes an educational experience is helpful to understanding the relationship of the working class to education. It will be argued here that the working class did indeed have a wider view of educational processes than that represented by schooling and that they were also interested and active in the provision of educational facilities of various kinds. They were not simply passive recipients of education but took an important role in its construction, both through their own activities and through the ways in which they responded to others. In all these senses the working

class can be said to have been an educational force of significance, a theme which will be taken up throughout the thesis.

The research which forms the basis for these assertions was initially informed by studies of education already undertaken by both sociologists and historians. In sociology there has in recent years been some insistence on the need to treat as problematical 'what it means to be educated',<sup>1</sup> whilst work on historical sources has shown the tendency of the conventional historical approach to neglect both deep-seated social movements which have profoundly influenced educational change, and popular educational practices. Alternative traditions of education have been 'rescued', both formal and informal, rooted in working-class culture and often linked with practical programmes for social and political emancipation.<sup>2</sup> This thesis owes its existence to such work, particularly to the insight that the relationship of the working class to education cannot be adequately understood without taking a wider view of educational history than is conventional. However, although the thesis seeks to build upon this existing body of research it takes its framework from a particular set of questions, and it is necessary to explain how these were arrived at.

The involvement of the state in education in the nineteenth century, and the more widespread provision of schooling which resulted from it, did not always lead to the results which its sponsors had hoped for and

1. See Michael F D Young's seminal volume Knowledge and Control, 1971.
2. See for example E P Thompson, The Making of the English Working Class, 1968; Brian Simon, The Two Nations and the Educational Structure 1780-1870, 1974; Brian Simon, The Radical Tradition in Education in Britain, 1972; J F C Harrison, Learning and Living 1790-1960, 1961; Harold Silver, English Education and the Radicals 1780-1850, 1975. Some even earlier studies such as A E Dobbs, Education and Social Movements 1700-1850, 1919, are important but remain outside mainstream history of education.



expected. One major problem for them was the perceived failure of the elementary schools to make a major impact on the children of the working class, towards whom they were directed. Almost all of the contemporary analyses of this problem laid some blame at the door of the working-class family. It was uncaring, profligate, and placed no value on education, preferring the wages of child labour to the sacrifice of ensuring regular school attendance. The 'uneducated', 'ignorant' condition of the parents was seen as a crucial aspect of this neglect. Whilst some historians perpetuated this kind of approach, others have been more sympathetic. Poverty and long working hours have been seen as almost insurmountable problems, and the conditions of working-class life as leaving little room for more than the minimum concern for education.<sup>1</sup> 'Revisionist' historians have however presented alternative kinds of explanation. Whilst not failing to recognise, and indeed stressing, the demands of a working life and the constraints of poverty, they have claimed other reasons too for the neglect of the elementary schools by working-class parents and the rejection of forms of adult education provided mainly by the middle classes. In particular, they document a more positive rejection of philanthropical and government education, a rejection based on alternative sets of goals, definitions of knowledge, and ways of changing the world.<sup>2</sup> This view represents provided schooling as an agency of domination and as such an unwelcome imposition to be resisted.

In order to pose such a challenge, these studies have often had, in a sense, to start at the same point as more conventional accounts. Provided schooling on the one hand is contrasted with an alternative

1. See for example John Hurt, Elementary Schooling and the Working Classes 1860-1918, 1979.

2. See Richard Johnson, 'Really Useful Knowledge', in Radical Education, No 7, Winter 1976.

tradition on the other. In the present thesis the aim is rather to attempt to stand if possible outside this framework, to start by asking the kinds of questions whose relevance has been masked or distorted by subsequent educational developments. These questions are, in their simplest form, the following:

1. What kinds of activities were members of the working class involved in during this period as part of their daily lives?
2. What kinds of knowledge and skills did they consider necessary in order both to participate in these activities and to become involved in others?
3. Where would they go or what means would they adopt in order to acquire such knowledge and skills?

It can immediately be seen that answers to questions of this kind can only come from encompassing a much wider field of activity than might be usual in a history of education. The approach adopted here necessitates consideration of work, family, leisure, politics, religion and other aspects of life in a nineteenth-century industrial town.

However, given constraints of time and space as well as availability of source material (to be discussed below) it is not possible to reconstruct here all the life experiences, circumstances and attitudes of Preston's working class, and indeed such an approach would render it impossible to delimit any field of study. The main concern of the thesis is thus with those kinds of activities which came to be defined by those who participated in them as contributing to their education and to that of their children.

The scope of the thesis and the range of activity encompassed by it is nevertheless wide. In view of this it is clearly not intended to provide a comprehensive account of each of the forms of educational activity discussed. The rise of elementary schooling for example is a development which has been extensively discussed elsewhere; its consideration in this study is as one of a range of educational opportunities which were available to the working class, as indeed is the case with other movements which might each in themselves form the central focus of other studies: movements such as temperance, Methodism and Chartism. Their treatment here will inevitably be briefer and will be shaped by the aim to provide an account of the complexity of working-class educational experience in one nineteenth-century town.

The aim of the thesis to develop an account which encompasses a wide range of educational activity necessitated restricting the study in time and place, and thus the focus is on one particular town, Preston, in Lancashire. Previous research on working-class educational activity in the nineteenth century has often scattered its net more widely and has provided a great deal of information about the kinds of educational endeavours in which working people were involved. It is now possible to build on that work and to explore the extent to which any or all of these endeavours was of significance in one particular town. Since nineteenth-century life was more local in character than today it seems important not only to have an idea of a broader patchwork of events and practices which can be seen more clearly from a distance but also to develop an understanding of the range of possibilities as they appeared to those most affected by them. A central concern of the thesis then is



to extend existing knowledge by building up a more detailed picture of the relationship of the working class to education (broadly defined) at a local level.

The choice of Preston as the location for the study was made for a variety of reasons. Previous research has shown that working-class traditions of 'self help' and 'mutual improvement' were thriving in Lancashire and the rest of the industrial north during the nineteenth century, so in that sense the area seemed fertile ground for study. The new industrial capitalism based on factory production was clearly exemplified by the cotton manufacturing towns of Lancashire, which by 1851 contained about a quarter of the adult male industrial employees of Great Britain.<sup>1</sup> In these towns can be seen both the characteristic social problems related to the rapid growth of industrial employment and a range of responses to them, including the impetus to organise educational activities of various kinds. Personal biography also played a part in the choice; a family background partly rooted in the cotton towns and with past involvement in the labour movement added to the desire to discover more about the history of Lancashire's working class. The location of the Lancashire County Record Office in Preston provided a natural starting point for the research, and Preston was to some extent typical of the larger towns of the area, its occupational structure for example being similar to that of the urban areas of Lancashire as a whole (a point which is developed further in chapter 2). It must be said, however, that like all other towns it was also in some ways unique, there being great variety in the

1. Michael Anderson, Family Structure in Nineteenth Century Lancashire, 1971.



nature of urban experience in the nineteenth century.<sup>1</sup> Indeed a similar point can be made about the Lancashire cotton districts as a whole: although Lancashire did provide the pattern of industrialisation, its early industrialisation gave it a combination of elements never precisely reproduced elsewhere.<sup>2</sup> This is, furthermore, a study of the urban working class, and it is recognised that in the early nineteenth century only a minority of people lived and worked in the factory towns; it may well be that the rural experience of education was different again. The thesis is therefore concerned with a collection of experiences which may not have been identical elsewhere, but it is set in the context of regional and national developments.

There are also time limits to the thesis, these being broadly defined as the years between 1830 and 1870. During these years the growth of both factory production and urban population was rapid, giving rise to characteristic social problems and placing strain on the facilities and resources of the town. A growing sense of identity among workers was expressed in a range of collective action which included education. At the same time the middle classes were active in the provision of schools and other educational institutions aimed at the working class. Education was something of a battleground, the outcome of which was still uncertain, and study of this period thus enables insight into educational forms and meanings which are not so readily apparent once a universal, compulsory, state system of education achieves dominance. The cut-off points at either end of the period must however to some extent be arbitrary. The traditions, ideologies and experiences of earlier years inevitably contributed to later developments, whilst working-class involvement in

1. See e g John Foster, Class Struggle and the Industrial Revolution, 1974.

2. Patrick Joyce, Work, Society and Politics, 1980, pp 226-7.

educational activities and debates clearly did not come to a halt in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The years following the 1870 Education Act however saw the consolidation of developments which were already instrumental in the construction of 'official' definitions and institutions of education, and one era of alternatives was coming to an end.

\* \* \*

The approach to the study of education which has been outlined above, based on the three questions initially posed, leads to consideration of a variety of activities and movements, including trade unionism, political agitation, temperance, religion and leisure pursuits, as well as specifically educational clubs, societies and institutions. Attention is not directed towards the national leadership of such movements so much as the role of these movements within the local community. This involves some attempt to construct a view of the local world as seen through the eyes of local working-class people, although there are particular difficulties attendant on this kind of endeavour. The study is not based on structural analysis but on meanings as seen by social actors; this does not mean that structural factors are ignored but that their detailed analysis must be undertaken elsewhere. An important emphasis in the research is on what people say and a central problem here arises from what has been called a 'selective tradition' in the transmission of culture.<sup>1</sup> Much of what we know about the past has been selected for us by others on the basis of their judgements of what is important, a process which is compounded by continual re-selection and interpretation, and which is influenced by the relationships of different

1. Raymond Williams, The Long Revolution, 1965.



interests in society including class interests.<sup>1</sup> This latter consideration is particularly important in the case of research which focuses on any subordinate group in society like the working class. Attempts to reconstruct the history of such groups are influenced by the interpretations and judgements both of the dominant contemporary values and of those which succeed them. It is therefore especially difficult to recreate the texture of the past in such a way as to gain insight into the lives and beliefs, hopes and opinions of ordinary working-class people. Working-class people in the nineteenth century were less likely than their middle-class contemporaries to set down written records of their activities, and such documents as they did produce had less chance of preservation and survival. Nor did they enjoy freedom of expression. Almost every week for many years the letters column of the Preston Chronicle included a statement of its reasons for refusing to print letters which had been submitted for publication. This in effect took the form of an exclusion of anything which was considered 'subversive' or 'undesirable' in its influence.

Another limitation on documentation of working-class activity arises from the fact that membership of organisations such as trade unions or radical associations often entailed no small degree of risk. It is recorded with regard to the Preston Spinners and Minders Institute for example that the local authorities were very suspicious of their gatherings and that they were always closely watched by the police particularly during the 1841 proceedings.

1. See Williams, ibid, for this point and further discussion.

"At the meetings of the society, in that year, policemen put in an appearance regularly to note the way in which matters were going - whether they were in the direction of conspiracy and revolt, of Chartism, machinery-breaking etc or were simply on the side of friendly aid and pacific association."<sup>1</sup>

A constant complaint of working people was the lack of venues in which to carry out their collective activities, and the fact that they were rarely granted access to the 'public' buildings of the town. Between 1823 and 1859 named meeting places of the Spinners and Minders Institute included the 'Green Man', 'Hen and Chickens', 'Grey Horse' or 'Seven Stars', 'Black Bull', 'Black-a-Moors Head', 'Farmers Arms' and the 'Albion' singing room.<sup>2</sup> In these circumstances it is not surprising that only fragmentary evidence of their activities remains.

A further difficulty in any investigation of working-class life in the nineteenth century is the importance of an oral tradition which by its very nature goes largely unrecorded. Cultural traditions, lifestyles and political affiliations were transmitted through families and other forms of close association.<sup>3</sup> Public meetings and oratory passed on not only information but attitudes and collective responses to the exigencies of daily life. Handbills and pamphlets of the period which survive were themselves often written in a style conducive to reading aloud, designed to make an impact orally. Folklore, songs and music were also important. The aims and attitudes of the Preston workers involved in

1. Anthony Hewitson, History of Preston, 1883.

2. Ibid.

3. See for example David Vincent, Testaments of Radicalism, 1977.



strike action are to some extent summarised in the songs which formed a part of their response,<sup>1</sup> and the same is true of other movements such as Chartism.<sup>2</sup>

The general difficulties of investigation into working-class activities and experiences are compounded in a local study by the even greater paucity of source material. Studies of national movements are able to bring together widely scattered pieces of the jigsaw so that eventually a coherent picture emerges. The researcher looking at one town or area only must rather intensify the depth of the investigation, so that some fairly detailed 'detective work' is required, utilising a range of sources which might at first sight seem unlikely or peripheral. It may also necessitate recognising the potential rather than the limitations of particular sources. School log books, for example, only began to be kept regularly during the 1860s, and many of their entries relate to the closing decades of the nineteenth century, so that their relevance seems to be limited to the tail end of the period under consideration. Yet there is evidence from inspectors' reports and other sources that the problems, concerns and occurrences documented in the log books were often very much the same as those of the earlier period. The advantage of the log book entries lies in their greater detail and the almost unique feel which they give of the daily lives of the public elementary schools and of those connected with them - children, parents, teachers and so on.

1. See L C R O , DDP<sup>r</sup> 138/87 a & b, Ashworth Cuttings; and Appendix 1 of this volume. Dickens, writing of the sale of 'Ten Per Cent Songs', claimed that these varied constantly to meet the exigencies of events and that they awakened much enthusiasm among the crowds which thronged to hear them. (Household Words, December 10th, 1853).
2. The Northern Star, October 10th, 1840, reports on a Preston meeting at which a Mr Rawcliff sang 'Hoist Your Banners in the Air' and Mr Murphy 'I'm a Radical Reformer'.

They are therefore referred to throughout the sections on schooling and have made a useful contribution to the study as a whole.

Documents which enable a view of the world through the eyes of working people do exist, though relatively scarce and elusive, but the difficulties involved in gathering working-class accounts raise questions about the representativeness of what is available, such as the extent to which surviving statements are typical of the class as a whole; the extent to which they constitute the testimony only of exceptional people; and the degree to which leaders or 'pioneers' represent movements as a whole. There are several points to be considered further here. A qualitative study of this nature must to some extent rely on written accounts, and such records do tend to be kept by those who are most committed to particular activities. Nevertheless, they often give indications of the success or otherwise of their movements in attracting support, although inevitably this will often though not always yield impressionistic rather than solid statistical data. In addition to this it should be remembered that even movements which seem numerically small can have enormous influence and are often tacitly supported by many people who have neither the time nor the resources to be among the most vocal. The kinds of activities which are explored in the following chapters are often 'representative' in the sense that they were important and persistent in Preston and nationally, as shown by both contemporary reaction and responses to them, and by more recent historical research. It is, though, especially difficult to gain insight into the everyday lives, experiences, beliefs and motivations of the great mass of 'ordinary people'. Some superficiality is unavoidable, since in-depth statements and analyses depend to a large extent on those who for whatever reasons, are prepared to speak on behalf of others. The fact



that such records are by their very nature in some ways exceptional need not be a barrier to wider understanding however, and can itself provide important insights. Silences can also be informative; what is not recorded might be as significant as what is. Those who come to our attention because of their extra determination and endeavour enable us to realise the lengths to which they had to go to obtain, for example, the rudiments of an education, and to realise at the same time how out of reach even such modest attainments may have been for those whose voices go unheard.<sup>1</sup> Autobiographical sources like diaries and memoirs thus provide useful material but in order to avoid over-concentration on the exceptional they have been used as only one contribution to a range of sources.

The problem of availability of evidence means that working-class activities and attitudes are sometimes more accessible through comments from middle-class reports, speeches and publications. The use of such sources has both advantages and problems attached to it however. Newspapers, for example, have been an important source of information in this study and have been particularly useful in constructing a picture of local events and activities as they revealed themselves step by step to people at the time.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless they cannot be thought of as either complete in the data they yield or necessarily totally accurate. In addition to the problem of suppression of information which is mentioned above, there is a possibility of other kinds of distortion.

1. See David Vincent, Bread, Knowledge and Freedom, 1981.

2. Maureen Greenwood, Education and Politics in Leicester 1828-1850, MEd Thesis, University of Leicester, 1973, points to this particular advantage of newspapers as a source.

The Preston Chronicle, for example, though devoting many column inches to Chartism and its dangers, and insisting that something must be done legally to prevent rioting and subversion, repeatedly stressed that the movement was so weak and so unsupported as to be of no danger at all. There seems to have been a deliberate policy of playing down the extent and impact of the movement, which was however contradicted not only by alternative accounts but within the pages of the paper itself. Middle-class commentators had particular perspectives on working-class activities and culture which invariably influenced their analysis and recording of them.<sup>1</sup> An awareness of this can however minimise its worst effects, and the sources themselves may also provide checks of various kinds, since it is rare to find only one kind of account. Whilst using different kinds of sources in conjunction with one another can be illuminating it can also in turn pose problems, the central one being that of conflicting evidence and how to deal with it. Several points can be made here. First, some solutions may be provided by the material itself. For example, when Chartism was an active force in the Northern textile districts the local press carried regular reports of Chartist meetings and events, as did organs of the radical press such as the Northern Star. These reports often conflicted in their accounts of numbers attending and the fervour and quality of the support. The Preston Chronicle, as we have seen, wanted to play down the strength of the Chartist movement, whilst Chartist leaders obviously wanted to stress the widespread nature of their support. An interesting point however is that the

1. See some extensive and useful discussion of this problem in Richard Johnson, The Blue Books and Education, 1816-1896, The Critical Reading of Official Sources, CCCS Occasional Paper, Birmingham, n d.



local press always stressed the numbers of 'mere youths' present at such gatherings, implying and often stating that theirs was not a serious contribution. Yet other evidence shows clearly that these 'mere youths' were neither like the teenagers of today nor like middle class youth in the nineteenth century. There was no prolonged childhood through full-time education and often work commenced at an early age. Young people had similar experiences to older people of labour/capital relations and these were important in their lives. They even to some extent had families to support since all contributions to the family economy were essential. Working-class autobiographies show that even very young people felt this responsibility keenly.<sup>1</sup> They did belong to trade unions, and working-class collective activity often involved all age groups and both sexes.<sup>2</sup> Contradictory accounts then can to some extent be reconciled by reference to the sources themselves.

Another response to the 'problem' of conflicting evidence is to recognise that far from concealing 'reality' it may be an important reflection of it. Conflicting evidence provides valuable insight into the different perceptions and interests of different groups in society. No monolithic account is therefore likely to be adequate. This thesis suggests that it is precisely the different approaches to and definitions of education which were held by different groups in the nineteenth century which are essential to an understanding of the working class as itself constituting a significant educational force.

1. Some examples are given on the following pages; see also Vincent, op cit, 1981.

2. This point will be further discussed in the following chapters.

A third point, however, is that apparently conflicting accounts often also embody internal contradictions which mean that they cannot be understood in any straightforward way as simply having a relationship of opposition. Working-class and middle-class activities influenced and shaped one another in a process of interaction; neither their institutions nor their underlying assumptions and ideologies could exist independently of one another. This is reflected in the statements of both groups and thus requires the use of both kinds of sources in conjunction with one another. Although ultimately primacy is given here to understanding working-class experiences and attitudes, the working class of nineteenth-century England was composed of different people with different relationships between themselves and other social groups which changed over time. Class "is not this or that part of the machine, but the way the machine works once it is set in motion - not this interest or that interest, but the friction of interests ...."<sup>1</sup> and this has implications for the methodology employed; the mutual improvement society and the church elementary school are both given consideration here.

One final point which needs to be addressed concerns another aspect of social relationships which has been neglected by both historians and sociologists until relatively recently: gender divisions in society. Many aspects of working-class experience were - and still are - gender specific, and the relationship of working-class girls and women to education in the nineteenth century was not the same as that of boys and men. The problems of studying subordinate groups are however,

1. E P Thompson, 'The Peculiarities of the English' in R Miliband and J Saville (eds) The Socialist Register, 1965, p 357.



compounded when looking at those who were both working class and female, for their history is doubly hidden. It is for this reason that detailed work on women's history is probably most successfully carried out when female experience is placed at the centre of the stage, something which was not possible within the existing framework of this particular study. Nevertheless an attempt has been made to give women a voice wherever possible and gender-specific elements of various educational experiences are noted and discussed throughout the following account.

\* \* \*

The organisation and structure of the thesis reflects its aims and methodological approach. Since it suggests that the relationship of the working class to education in the nineteenth century can only be understood in the context of the other activities of everyday life, chapter 2 sets out aspects of Preston's social and economic structure and the conditions of life of its working-class inhabitants. Chapter 3 begins to examine the kinds of activities in which working people were involved which might be seen as educational, many of which are not usually considered under the heading 'education'. Some of these activities did lead however to a more deliberate pursuit of knowledge by working people as well as contributing to the growth in middle-class attempts to provide what they saw as desirable forms of education for the working class. Some of the resulting educational initiatives are discussed in chapter 4. Two separate chapters are reserved for consideration of one aspect of working-class education which subsequently came to dominate all others: a system of mass schooling which was eventually to be encountered by all working-class children prior to the world of work. In order to understand working-class experience of

provided schooling it has been considered necessary to examine first the course of its development in Preston with particular emphasis on the aims and motivations of the providers; this is the subject matter of chapter 5. It is then possible in chapter 6 to explore the ways in which provided schooling was experienced by those on the receiving end, and their responses to it. Chapter 7, the conclusion, draws together the various elements of the research and returns to the question of how far it is possible to depict an explicitly working-class view of education. It also examines the representativeness of an 'improving' tradition amongst Preston's working class and goes on to consider the extent to which gender divisions were an important element in the social relations of education. Finally, it presents some suggestions for ways in which the thesis might be extended by future research.

## CHAPTER TWO

## PRESTON: SOCIAL STRUCTURE AND ECONOMIC BASE

This thesis takes a broader view of education than is conventional, and argues that the relationship of the working class to education can only be adequately understood in the overall context of everyday life. Its particular aim is to recreate in one town a picture of working-class educational activity which goes beyond the more formal kinds of schooling to encompass a wide range of educational experiences and institutions, including for example the trade union and the temperance society. Material conditions affected all forms of learning, whether as a stimulus or a constraint, and the present chapter therefore sets out aspects of Preston's social and economic structure and the conditions of life of its working-class inhabitants, in order to establish the framework within which working-class educational activity took place.

\* \* \*

### 1. Occupational Structure

Preston, as a corporate town with monopoly rights for burgesses, represented an older stage of town economy than the newer marketing centres like Manchester or Bolton. Its proximity to the agriculture of the Fylde and the improvements made to communications networks in the eighteenth century established it as a trading, marketing and legal centre, and there was a history of linen manufacture in the district.<sup>1</sup> After 1770 there was a rapid increase in the population

1. A P Wadsworth and J De Lacy Mann, The Cotton Trade and Industrial Lancashire 1600-1780, 1931.

See also Victoria County History for Lancashire, and C Hardwick, History of the Borough of Preston and its Environs, 1856.



of the town and a parallel growth and expansion of the cotton trade. The first cotton mill in Preston was erected in 1777 in Moor Lane, and in 1792 John Horrocks opened the famous 'Yellow Factory', his first in the town. This was said to have given the chief impetus which, in a little more than half a century, converted the "quiet aristocratic town of about 6-7,000 inhabitants" into "a busy hive of industry, with a population augmented more than ten-fold".<sup>1</sup> A population estimated at 11,887 in 1801 had grown to 45,540 by 1838 and 69,450 by 1851, after which date the rate of increase slowed, so by the second half of the century Preston was a large stable town.<sup>2</sup>

As the century progressed cotton became the staple industry in the town.<sup>3</sup> One local historian claimed that the reason Preston suffered so badly in the Lancashire cotton famine was that except for three flax mills and two or three ironworks the town was entirely dependent on the cotton trade.<sup>4</sup> More detailed data has recently been compiled which confirms that the textile industry was indeed dominant in the town after the first quarter of the century. Although use of sources such as census material, local directories and factory inspectors' reports often gives varying results, some useful estimates have been made and are outlined below.<sup>5</sup>

1. Hardwick, op cit, p 366; see also Victoria County History and Anthony Hewitson, History of Preston, 1883.
2. Hewitson, op cit; see also Edward Baines, The History of the County Palatine and Duchy of Lancaster, Vol 5, 1893.
3. Victoria County History, Vol 7, p 92.
4. H W Clemesha, A History of Preston in Amounderness, 1912, p 227.
5. For the source of these see K M Spencer, A Social and Economic Geography of Preston 1800-1865, MA Thesis, Liverpool University, 1968.

The total textile labour force of 1841 can be estimated from the census figures of that year and comes to 10,716. If this is fairly accurate then approximately 48% of Preston's labour force was engaged in textile activities at that time. The next largest groups of workers were in the retail trade (11%), the building industry (5.5%) and engineering (1.5%). The 1850s figures show a rapid expansion of employment and the town's growing dependence on cotton manufacture. Although the figures are not totally reliable, particularly for the earlier period, they can provide a useful indication of the range of industrial activity. Cotton's dominance was apparent even in the earlier years, followed by the metallurgical industries (closely connected with textile machinery), brickmaking and constructing firms, and the retail trade. The latter was connected with Preston's importance as a regional market centre. The port also provided employment; improved navigation of the River Ribble led to a considerable coasting trade. Steamers plied regularly between Liverpool and Preston, mainly carrying grain, but also iron, china-clay and coal.<sup>1</sup> The 1851 census recorded 106 seamen in Preston, whilst the total employed as carriers on canals, sea and river, including the seamen, equalled 169 males. These workers formed only 0.77% of the male workers of the town, but the port also provided some work for others, including dock workers, ships' repairers, warehousemen and porters, so it was a source of income and a contribution to diversity.<sup>2</sup>

Preston's occupational structure was broadly similar to that of the urban areas of the county as a whole, with cotton the dominant feature.<sup>3</sup>

1. See Hewitson, op cit.

2. Spencer, op cit., p 53.

3. See Michael Anderson, Family Structure in Nineteenth-Century Lancashire, 1971.



Although compared with towns such as Oldham, Blackburn and Burnley there was a somewhat greater representation of the workforce in occupations other than cotton,<sup>1</sup> many of these occupations relied in some way on the cotton trade and many offered low wages and irregular employment. The prosperity of all was affected when depressions hit the cotton industry. People moved in and out of cotton occupations, and most of the population in working class communities at some time depended on it.<sup>2</sup> 53% of all women in employment were engaged in cotton manufacturing, the largest single occupation for women who did not work in factories being domestic service.<sup>3</sup>

In the cotton industry the factory system as a mode of production co-existed in the earlier part of the century with older forms of manufacture. Preston weavers told the 1834 Select Committee on Hand-Loom Weavers that they estimated the number of hand-loom weavers in the borough and vicinity at about 3,000.<sup>4</sup> A writer born in the town in 1840 claims that in this decade "there was considerable hand-loom weaving in Preston, the looms being fitted up in the houses and cellars."<sup>5</sup> The 1841 census figures however record only 146 people (0.66% of the labour force) as hand-loom weavers, but also include a category of weavers, unspecified, numbering 464. These could be either

1. See Spencer, op cit.

2. See Anderson, op cit, for further discussion and figures in support of this point.

3. Ibid.

4. PP 1834 (556) Vol X, Report from Select Committee on Hand-Loom Weavers' Petitions, p 467 and p 483.

5. William Pilkington, Then and Now, 1911, p 4.



power or hand-loom weavers.<sup>1</sup> No comparative figures are available from the 1851 census. Nevertheless, though numerically strong in the early years of the century, the hand-loom weavers were clearly a declining force, as the following figures for the whole of Lancashire show.

TABLE 1    Handloom and Powerloom Weavers of Lancashire<sup>2</sup>

	<u>Handloom Weavers</u>	<u>Powerloom Weavers</u>
1806	184,000	A few
1813	212,000	3,000
1815	200,000	7,000
1817	228,000	10,000
1819-21	240,000	10,000
1829-31	225,000	50,000
1832	225,000	75,000
1844	60,000	150,000
1859-61	5,000	203,000

Though the accuracy of some of these occupational figures may be disputed, it is clear that factory operatives were gaining in importance and that in the mid-century cotton industry the factory operative was more typical than the hand-loom weaver.

Within the cotton industry combined weaving and spinning firms were predominant in Preston at the beginning of the century with specialisation becoming more important from the 1850s. The leading

1. Spencer, op cit, p 71.

2. Reproduced from Edwin Hopwood, A History of the Lancashire Cotton Industry and the Amalgamated Weavers Association, 1969.

firm, Horrockses, erected both factories and hand-loom sheds.<sup>1</sup> In the western cotton districts specialisation in products seems to have been more intense than specialisation in processes.<sup>2</sup> Bolton concentrated on the finest muslins and fancy goods, Preston the coarser jaconet muslins and lighter calicoes, a type of product midway between Blackburn's common calicoes and Bolton's fine goods.<sup>3</sup> The available statistics suggest that it was not until later in the century that spinning moved south and weaving north. Up to mid-century the directories for Preston show a majority of combined firms, a fairly large number of firms engaged in spinning only and a very few engaged in weaving only.<sup>4</sup> The trend towards combined firms seems to have reached its peak in the late '30s and early '40s; the 1841 Inspectors' Report on new mills and additions to mills shows the bulk of newly created capacity to be in combined spinning and weaving mills.<sup>5</sup> After 1850 the combined firm remained the most important for at least a decade, but with a slight reduction in its relative importance.<sup>6</sup> In 1841 the majority of Preston's cotton workers were employed in factories of over one hundred workers,

1. See for example Various Writers, Fortunes Made in Business, 1887; Sir Charles Brown, Origin and Progress of Horrockses, Crewdson & Co, 1925; and PP 1834 (167) XX, Factories, Employment of Children, Supplementary Report of Commissioners.
2. A J Taylor, Concentration and Localisation of the British Cotton Industry 1825-1850, MA Thesis, Manchester University, 1947, p 157.
3. Ibid, p 158.
4. See for example Slater's Directory, 1848; P & H Whittle, The Commercial Directory of Preston and its Environs, 1841.
5. Spencer, op cit, p 64.  
(The various reports and directories unfortunately give no indication of the emphasis of production in the combined mills; some may have been biased towards either spinning or weaving, others more evenly divided).
6. Even then, Preston of all the northern towns was one of those with the least emphasis on weaving. See Spencer, op cit, p 67; also H B Rodgers, 'The Lancashire Cotton Industry in 1840', in Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers, 28, 1960, pp 135-153.



and some of the combined mills were very large, employing over one thousand workers.<sup>1</sup> The cotton industry dominated the life of Preston as it has dominated this account, and the following section goes on to examine the background and experiences of those who formed the industrial labour force of the town.

## 2. The Workers

### I. Origins of Preston's Industrial Workforce

Up to mid-century at least, immigration seems to have been the crucial factor in the growth of Preston's population. A large proportion of migrants into Lancashire during the first half of the nineteenth century came from the surrounding counties or from Ireland. Many were agricultural labourers.<sup>2</sup> A closer study of Preston reveals similar tendencies. The 1861 census showed that in almost all the large towns in the cotton districts there were more immigrants born outside than people born in the towns. In Stockport, Bolton and Manchester half of the adult population was born outside the town boundaries; the figure for Preston was 70% (53% of the population as a whole).<sup>3</sup> Most of the movement was short-distance. A sample of the 1851 census figures shows that over 40% of the town's population had come less than ten miles and only 30% more than thirty miles. Of those (about a quarter

1. See Spencer op cit, pp 80-82; also Assessment of Cotton Mills, c 1844, Harris Library, Preston, P 677.2; and Preston Guardian, May 8th, 1847 for a summary which shows that three-quarters of the operatives were employed in sixteen mills where on average over 500 workers were employed.

2. Arthur Redford, Labour Migration in England, 1800-1850, 1926, pp 55-6.

3. Anderson, op cit, p 34.

at most) who had come so far that even occasional contact with their birthplaces would have been difficult, many came from Ireland. Only about 2% of the sample had been born more than one hundred miles from Preston but within England, Wales or Scotland.<sup>1</sup> Immigration from Ireland increased during the first half of the century; 3.3% of Preston's population was Irish-born in 1841, rising to 7.4% in 1851.<sup>2</sup> Lancashire as a whole had a greater influx of Irish settlers than any other county, about one quarter of the total number in Great Britain and about a third of the total in England, with a large increase during the '40s as a result of the famine.<sup>3</sup>

There are some indications of the stage of life at which immigration occurred. It seems to have been particularly frequent in single men and women in their late teens and early twenties, and among married couples with small families. The former was an English tradition, with boys and girls often leaving home to go into service or to try their luck in the towns.<sup>4</sup> The Irish, too, often came over as single men and married in England, although during the '40s they came increasingly as families so that the number of women among them grew.<sup>5</sup> These tendencies can be partly explained by the fact that those from the country would find employment more difficult as they got older, and with more children

1. Ibid, p 37.

2. Ibid, p 39.

3. Redford, op cit, pp 134-5.

4. Anderson, op cit, pp 39-40.

5. Redford, op cit, p 136.

in work there would be at least some money coming in and less urgent necessity to move. Many of those who emigrated later in life seem to have done so because they had to, particularly the Irish, hand-loom weavers and widows, and because their children could possibly get employment in the mills.<sup>1</sup> In summary then, Preston's population, like that of many other towns, had a large number of immigrants, many of whom were young and many staying only a few years before moving on again,<sup>2</sup> at least until the middle of the century. After that there was no more large-scale immigration.

In terms of the kinds of work done by these immigrants, ex-agricultural labourers and farm servants, and particularly their children, seem to have been significant among recruits to factory occupations.<sup>3</sup> Immigrants from Ireland did not usually take jobs in the textile trade but were heavily represented on the railways and as domestic servants.<sup>4</sup> When they were employed in the cotton industry they were rarely spinners but worked in the blowing rooms and card rooms.<sup>5</sup> Quite a few of the children of Irish-born immigrants did go into textiles however, since they could afford to begin at the bottom rung until the trade was learnt.<sup>6</sup> The main Irish influx to cotton and other textile trades was as hand-loom

1. Anderson, op cit, pp 40-41.

2. Ibid, p 41.

3. See Michael Anderson, 'Sociological history and the working-class family: Smelser revisited', in Social History, October 3rd, 1976, pp 326-7.

4. Spencer, op cit, pp 203-4.

5. Redford, op cit, p 131.

6. Spencer, op cit, p 204.



weavers.<sup>1</sup> The numbers of Irish hand-loom weavers may have been exaggerated by contemporaries<sup>2</sup> but it seems that in Preston in 1851 only 2.7% of the English were hand-loom weavers as against 14.4% of the Irish. The Irish formed only 9.1% of the population but 36.1% of hand-loom weavers, so that although they were not the majority of hand-loom weavers in Preston, nevertheless they formed a disproportionately large part of the hand-loom weaving population.<sup>3</sup>

Few adult urban dwellers, it seems, moved into factory occupations. It was difficult for them to become skilful enough and the work was often found irksome.<sup>4</sup> The spinners' restrictions on entry to the trade also kept them out<sup>5</sup> and rates in power-loom weaving were often not high enough to attract men due to the competition in manufacturers' profits from low wages in hand-loom weaving.<sup>6</sup> In particular, recruits to factory production were not drawn to any large extent from among the ranks of the hand-loom weavers<sup>7</sup> and many contemporaries stressed this point. Thus Robert Gardner, manufacturer, commented in 1835 that the scarcity of factory hands in Manchester, Bolton and Preston (especially Preston) was

1. Redford, op cit, p 131.

2. For discussion of this see Duncan Bythell, The Handloom Weavers: a study in the English Cotton Industry During the Industrial Revolution, 1969.

3. A Granath, The Irish in Mid-Nineteenth Century Lancashire 1830-71, MA Thesis, Lancaster University, 1975, pp 29-31.

4. Anderson, op cit, 1971, p 28.

5. Ibid, p 28.

6. Ivy Pinchbeck, Women Workers and the Industrial Revolution 1750-1850, 1930, p 187.

7. See for example Anderson, op cit, 1971; N J Smelser, Social Change and the Industrial Revolution, 1959.

not helped by the weavers who "do not turn themselves about as they might or bring up their children to turn to other businesses."<sup>1</sup> Gardner thought the hours of labour to be one principal objection to factory employment, whilst another witness, John Lennon, Preston weaver and secretary of the weavers' society, stated that the hand-loom weavers were not qualified to work in the factories.<sup>2</sup>

Not only was there a new system of production then, which was making a massive impact on town life, many of the recruits to it were also new to urban living, with its conflicts and opportunities. Their desire to make sense of it, along with the older traditions and cultural forms which they brought with them, were to constitute a vital and important educational force.

## II. Age and Sex Structure of the Labour Force

In the earlier part of the nineteenth century there were many children employed in the textile industry but following the 1830s legislation the numbers decreased considerably and by 1850 only 5% of the Lancashire cotton labour force was under thirteen.<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, the numbers of women and young people working in the trade were high, and men of eighteen and over formed only 31% of the cotton labour force of the county at this date.<sup>4</sup> Some details of the age and sex structure

1. PP 1835 (341) (492) Vol XIII, Report of the Select Committee on Hand-Loom Weavers' Petitions, p 139.
2. Report of Select Committee on Hand-Loom Weavers' Petitions, 1834, pp 492-3.
3. Anderson, op cit, 1971, p 23.
4. Ibid.

of Preston's labour force are given in the following table.

TABLE II

Preston, 1841-1851, Structure of the Labour Force<sup>1</sup>

	<u>1841</u>	<u>1851</u>	<u>%ge Difference</u>
1. Population of Preston	50,131	69,542	+ 38.5
2. Employed Population	22,223	37,688	+ 69.5
3. Labour Force as % of total population	44.3	54.2	-
4. Employed males as % of labour force	62.2	58.5	- 3.7
5. Employed females as % of labour force	37.8	41.5	+ 3.7
6. Employed males aged 20 and over as % of employed males	77.8	75.6	- 2.2
7. Employed males aged under 20 as % of employed males	22.2	24.4	+ 2.2
8. Employed females aged 20 and over as % of employed females	61.9	61.6	- 0.3
9. Employed females aged under 20 as % of employed females	38.1	38.4	+ 0.3

Just over 28% of the 1841 labour force was aged under twenty years, and there is evidence available of the kinds of occupations in which these young workers were engaged, as shown in table III below.

1. Reproduced from Spencer, op cit, p 96, see also 1841 and 1851 Census of England and Wales.



TABLE III

Preston, occupations in which the largest proportions of workers under 20 years of age were found in 1841.<sup>1</sup>

<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Persons Employed Under 20 Yrs Old</u>	<u>% of total Occ'nal lab-force</u>	<u>% Males</u>
Linen manufacture	192	61.0	24.6
Flax       "	156	48.6	51.8
Power loom Weaver	240	48.4	12.4
Cotton manufacture	3,518	43.6	46.3
Factory worker (unspecified)	59	42.7	61.0
Domestic Servants	516	29.5	7.5
Dressmaker & Milliner	111	29.4	6.3
Painter, Plumber and Glazier	57	29.0	100
Carpenter and Joiner	92	23.6	97.8
Mason and Stonecutter	39	21.5	100
Clerk	29	17.5	100
Blacksmith	37	17.2	100

Table III shows that by far the largest numbers of young workers were to be found in the textile industries. It also illustrates the fairly limited range of employment available to young female workers, who were found largely within textiles, particularly power-loom weaving, and in the traditionally female occupations of domestic servant and dressmaker. The 1851 figures show the same patterns but with one major new source of potential employment for younger workers. This was the worsted industry,

1. Ibid, p 99; see also 1841 Census of England and Wales.

where 63% of workers were under twenty years of age.<sup>1</sup> Although after the 1833 Factories Act children could not be employed in the cotton industry until they were nine years of age, and then only subject to certain restrictions, children of very young ages were still employed in other industries, and evasion of the Act within the cotton industry itself was not uncommon.

Involvement in the cotton industry was rarely a life-long process. A high proportion of children and young people went into textile occupations but left within a few years. Wage rates for the young were relatively high in factory occupations but as workers got older without promotion other occupations were more attractive.<sup>2</sup> Many left the industry after the work had taken its toll on them, particularly when they had started at an early age. Unexpected events could also push people in the direction of change, as William Pilkington's story shows. Pilkington, a Preston man born in 1842, began work as a half-time creeler at the age of eight. He writes:

"I was never out of work until John Hawkin's mill was totally destroyed by fire on February 7, 1861. At that time I was a piecer, my wage was eight shillings a week, and I was twenty years of age. Being burnt out, I commenced life afresh as a newsagent, without money or friends."<sup>3</sup>

It seems to have been above all the children of skilled factory workers who stayed in the mill after about twenty years of age, and more of them who after this age were employed in the better-paid occupations.<sup>4</sup>

1. Ibid, p 101.

2. Anderson, op cit, 1971, pp 27-8.

3. Pilkington, op cit, p 14.

4. Anderson, op cit, 1971.

In addition to the range of occupations already discussed young children were employed in a wide variety of casual jobs and in the home in a variety of tasks. Where domestic employment was an important part of the family economy even the smallest children would be allotted some job to perform, and girls in particular were engaged in childminding and various other household duties. The implications of all types of child labour for the involvement of this age group in educational activities will be discussed in the following chapters.

Adult women played an important part in the town economy as well as in the working-class family economy, particularly following the decrease in child employment after the 1833 Act, and many of these women were married. Although these were often younger wives and those with few or no children, many women with children did do other kinds of work. The traditional work of women in England was agricultural and domestic, and this was still common by 1850, with many women employed in non-factory occupations.<sup>1</sup> In 1841 the Factory Inspectors' estimate showed females as forming about 51% of cotton workers and about 60% of flax workers. Figures for 1851 indicate similar percentages.<sup>2</sup> Female workers within the textile industry were largely concentrated in the less skilled and unskilled branches of the trade. As jennies became larger and mules more concentrated a small skilled aristocracy of mule spinners dominated this side of the industry. Hand-loom weavers before the development of factory production were mainly men but the nineteenth-century breakdown of apprenticeship regulations and the reluctance of male textile workers to enter factories enabled many women to enter the trade which required less strength than spinning. The early power-loom weavers

1. See Anderson, op cit, 1971, pp 71-2 for further details.

2. Spencer, op cit, p 71.



were nearly all women and boys. Skilled women weavers were well paid, but most were employed on lighter, less well paid work, or purely mechanical work where wages were affected by competition from children. The evidence suggests that only a small proportion of these women were skilled workers with a knowledge of all the processes of the trade; most of them were dependent on the superintendence and assistance of skilled workers. Other factory occupations for women were mostly in subsidiary processes; they were 'tenters' of machines and frames connected with preliminary work in the carding room and in the spinning and weaving departments. Throstle spinners were mainly women and girls.<sup>1</sup> Almost all of these women shared one thing in common: their dual role. Women's role within the family and the workforce had implications for the educational opportunities of all working-class females.

### III. Wages

Wage rates are difficult to estimate accurately but some idea of the range and fluctuation of wages can be obtained from the Factory Inspectors' Reports. In 1842 average weekly earnings at a cotton mill in Preston engaged in spinning and power-loom weaving and employing about 650 hands were given as 19s 3d for spinners, 6s 6d for card-room hands and 6s 6d for piecers above thirteen years of age. The wages of the spinners had fallen from £1 1s 3d in 1837 immediately after a turn-out and from £1 15s in 1804 shortly after the mill was erected "and when wheels of the above description were considered gigantic". The wages of the other classes of operatives had remained pretty stationary.

1. Most of the information in this paragraph is taken from Pinchbeck, op cit, passim.

The proprietor himself added that "from the tenor of these observations it will be obvious that they apply in a great measure to the peculiar circumstances of our own mills only, and that they cannot be fairly taken as an index of the rate of wages paid generally throughout the trade." Nevertheless, returns from another combined mill of similar size showed roughly similar average rates and gave average weekly earnings of power-loom weavers as 8s 10d.<sup>1</sup>

Some indication of earnings can also be obtained from statistics given by the Reverend John Clay, Chaplain of the Preston House of Correction, for ninety-six men committed for participating in the 'Plug Plot' riots of 1842, who had previously resided in various parts of the Preston division of the county. The men were divided occupationally as follows: eighteen employed in factories; fourteen labourers; eleven hand-loom weavers; ten railway labourers; eleven calico printers; six power-loom weavers; five spinners; five dyers; two mechanics, colliers and shoemakers; one sadler, turner, ragdealer, carpenter, plumber, cooper, stonemason, bleacher, canal boatman, and flagger. The weekly wages received at the time of the outbreak are recorded in table IV below.

1. PP 1842 (31) Vol XXII, Factory Inspectors Reports for the Half-Year Ending 31st December 1841.



TABLE IV

Weekly wages of 96 men committed for participating in the 1842 riots.<sup>1</sup>

Under 5 shillings	5
5 - 8s	21
9 - 11s	10
12 - 15s	18
16 - 20s	13
21 - 25s	6
26 - 30s	1
Unemployed	22

Though this information does not enable us to pair wages to jobs it does show a clear difference in material living standards between those at the bottom of the income hierarchy and those at the top. This should not, however, be over-stated; all factory labour was vulnerable. The spinner for example was at the top of one working hierarchy but at the base of another. He was tied for much of his life to one particular mill and highly dependent on his employer for continued security.<sup>2</sup> All workers were exposed to the threat of poverty at various stages of the life-cycle, through ill health as well as economic fluctuation and family size.<sup>3</sup> Records of strikes and depressions throughout the period show the constant struggle against the imposition of wage reductions and the fragile hold on economic well-being even for the 'aristocrats' of labour. This was the situation throughout the working class, not merely amongst the unskilled. A study based on the autobiographies of one hundred and forty-two working men finds that "what comes across .... is

1. LCRO, QGR/2/32, 1842 Report of the Chaplain of the Preston House of Correction.
2. See Patrick Joyce, Work, Society and Politics, 1980.
3. See for example Anderson, op cit, 1971; John Foster, Class Struggle and the Industrial Revolution, 1974; David Vincent, Bread, Knowledge and Freedom, 1981.

that constant financial insecurity was the lot even of those working men who had the good fortune to avoid recruitment into the ranks of the casual labourers or the factory proletariat, and spent their lives in seemingly prosperous and well protected skilled trades."<sup>1</sup> A static snapshot at one particular moment may give the impression of prosperity and security but this is not backed up by a study of a whole lifetime. The best summary of this experience comes from one of the autobiographers' own words:

"the great mass of men and women are like corks on the surface of a mountain river, carried hither and thither as the torrent may lead them."<sup>2</sup>

William Pilkington, the Preston autobiographer who recommenced life as a newsagent, "without money or friends" after the mill where he worked was destroyed by fire in 1861 gave a similar description.

"Since then I have been in many troubled waters, and turned sharp corners, travelled along rough and disagreeable roads, and have fought my way through poverty of childhood and youth to a position of comparative ease in declining years."<sup>3</sup>

Pilkington was in one sense one of the lucky ones: for many working people, poverty of childhood and youth did not give way to comparative ease in later years. Life was often a long struggle against poverty and destitution which only ended with death.<sup>4</sup> 'The tyranny of work over life'

1. Vincent, ibid, p 68.

2. From 'Dundee Factory Boy', p 45, quoted in Vincent, op cit, p 69.

3. Pilkington, op cit, p 14.

4. There is much contemporary material which illustrates this point. See for example the autobiographical extracts in Vincent, op cit.



was the dominant feature of most working-class lives. Only work could keep poverty at bay, yet many forms of employment were themselves badly paid and insecure. Poverty and insecurity were crucial features of working-class life; they affected the conditions in which all aspects of life were carried out and imposed significant constraints on a whole range of activities, of which education was but one.

#### IV Conditions of Life of the Working Class

The poverty and insecurity which pervaded working-class life affected such basics as housing, nutrition, health and leisure possibilities. By 1845 Preston was a large urban community but still relatively small in size due to its high housing density. The main part of the town was still only one and a half miles from west to east and one mile from north to south. From 1851 - 1861 the urban core was declining in population however as commercial development of the market place and surrounding central area increased rent levels and eventually led to its decline as a residential area. At the same time peripheral areas were expanding, particularly in the growing industrial suburbs on the north-west and north-east of town.<sup>1</sup>

Long working hours and lack of transport made proximity to workplace a vital consideration, and employers were not unaware of this.

John Horrocks, for example, was said to have taken such factors into account in building up his establishments. One of his biographers, remarking on how in those days the population was "sparse and scattered", noted that those who had been accustomed to working in their own homes "naturally objected to the inconvenience of walking long distances to

1. P J Dixon, Urban Environment, Socio-Economic Condition and School Attendance in a Lancashire Borough, 1850-1876, MEd Thesis, Liverpool University, 1977.



their daily toil". With a view to lessening this difficulty, Horrocks erected five of his factories in different parts of the town, a considerable distance from one another, "a stroke of policy which helped him greatly in overcoming the objections to the new mode of working."<sup>1</sup> In addition to his factories Horrocks built a number of hand-loom sheds and some cottages on the eastern side of the town in 'New Hall Lane Fields'. These formed the nucleus of a densely populated area known as New Preston.<sup>2</sup> In the 1851 census this district had the highest proportion of textile workers, 78%.<sup>3</sup> This same census showed eighteen enumeration districts where 60% or over of the labour force worked in the textile industries and the distribution of these closely follows the distribution of textile mills, lying largely to the north and north-west and to the east and south-east of the town centre. In general, the more peripheral the district the higher the proportion of textile operatives; the high-class residential and commercial districts were notable for their low proportion of textile operatives<sup>4</sup> and there was a sense of 'separateness' about many of the working-class areas of the town. One local historian in 1857 described the 'New Preston' area as standing "at a little distance from the rest of the town".<sup>5</sup> Irish immigrants to the town also to a large extent formed a kind of 'ghetto' area mainly to the north-west and west of the town. Preston's Irish-born population numbered 7.4% of the total in the 1851 census, but this would be considerably higher in these particular areas.<sup>6</sup>

1. Various Writers, op cit, p 18.

2. Sir Charles Brown, op cit.

3. Spencer, op cit, pp 201-2.

4. Ibid, p 202.

5. Hardwick, op cit, p 430.

6. Spencer, op cit, p 195.

Housing conditions for the workers were almost universally bad. There were a considerable number of cellar-dwellings in the town, originally built as hand-loom weavers' shops but now lived in. Back-to-backs were not very widespread, numbering 361 in 1846-7 but they were considered extremely unhealthy, having no through ventilation. The majority of workers probably lived in small terraced houses in streets which were built inwards, giving confined courtyards and narrow alleys.<sup>1</sup> Some idea of the state of such housing comes from the Reverend John Clay's Report on the State of Preston to the 1844 Health of Towns Commission. Preston, with its high mortality rates, was selected for special study. Clay was highly critical of the defective ventilation; cleansing and draining of the streets; the filth and the overcrowding throughout the working-class areas. Many of the streets where the Irish were concentrated were singled out by him as amongst the worst possible. His summary was that

".....notwithstanding the natural advantages of Preston, the condition of the dwellings of the lower classes has been but little attended to, and in consequence of the inefficient sewerage, the scanty supply of water (or rather the scanty application of a very copious supply), the unremoved collections of putrid animal and vegetable matter, and the general absence of the means of ordinary cleanliness, disease is engendered or aggravated, and the mortality materially increased."<sup>2</sup>

The cottages which Horrocks had provided for workers were considered better than the average. Though small, they were neat and clean, the streets paved. A privy "in good order" was attached to each house, the

1. See F A Todd, The Condition of the Working Class in Preston 1790-1855, M Litt Thesis, Lancaster University, 1972, p 114, and 1840s Sanitary Reports.
2. LCRO, Reverend John Clay, 1844 Report on the State of Preston (to the Health of Towns Commission), p 17.



water laid on and a small garden plot railed off in front. They were sewered, but the system of open cesspools was retained. The rent for the houses, which contained four rooms, was 2s 9d a week.<sup>1</sup> It seems, however, that not all factory dwellings were particularly 'desirable residences'. Almost twenty years later, in 1861, an article in The Builder was scathing about conditions in Preston, and it is worth quoting fairly lengthy extracts here for the vivid impression which they give. The article reported that

"Cotton mills and weaving sheds have taken possession of a vast tract, or moor, originally quite out of town ..... and the rows of factory dwellings keep pace with these erections. The latter are all built after the same model, - no drainage, the smallest possible yard, with a privy and ashpit and water-butt not three feet from the backs of the houses, or none at all. Midway on the moor is a deep ravine, over which a road has been thrown and millions of cart-loads of scavengage and rubbish are gradually filling it up. Upon this artificial foundation rows of factory dwellings are now being built, and some of them are furnished with cellars, or, more correctly speaking, pits, sunk in this foundation of scavengage....."2

Such conditions were not only prevalent in working-class homes but pervaded working-class life. New mills were built without roads, and in the New Hall Lane 'New Preston' area for example, there were

"....more mills, and more unhealthy houses for the operatives... More mills, and more mud; a row of houses with a man weaving in a cellar in one of them, a great stagnant swamp, with a brick-yard in it and a square dung heap; an isolated row of houses in Skeffington-road, with pools of drainage spread before them; more mills, more mud, more dwellings propped up while building, with five feet of drainage water in the cellars and a foul ditch at the rear...."3

1. Ibid, pp 13-14.
2. Article from The Builder, December 14th, 1861, reprinted in Preston Chronicle, December 18th, 1861.
3. Ibid.



This was the 'scenery' of daily life. Inside the mills conditions were often no less unhealthy.<sup>1</sup> Hours of labour were unremittingly long, and bad conditions took their toll on health and energies.<sup>2</sup> Low wages and large families meant that many workers and their dependents were poorly fed and under-nourished. Cheap, often unwholesome or adulterated food was frequently all that could be obtained. Pilkington recalls the consequences of the bad harvest of 1846.

"It was meal and water porridge three times a day, and by way of a change a plateful of thick porridge with black treacle in the middle. Some made bran dumplings and bran bread. The food we existed upon was such that the meanest pauper would positively refuse today....."<sup>3</sup>

During periods of distress charity visitors noted lack of clothing and bedding as well as food.<sup>4</sup> Houses were often cold, damp, crowded and uncongenial, and common household tasks were made more difficult and time-consuming through lack of basic facilities. Those without water supplies, for example, had to carry washing long distances or pay for delivery, and some had to resort to the public washing ground, where, it was said, "they brought their clothes .... and made round fireplaces of bricks on which they put their pans, and obtained water from the surrounding pits, drying their clothes on the grass."<sup>5</sup> Such conditions are

1. This is well documented in Factory Inspectors' Reports throughout the period.
2. See Marjorie Cruikshank, Children and Industry, 1981, for some examples of the effects on health of much nineteenth-century labour.
3. Pilkington, op cit, p 27.
4. See eg Todd, op cit, p 90. Many references to these problems can also be found in the Preston newspapers.
5. Pilkington, op cit, p 25.

well documented and it is not necessary to discuss them at greater length here, but any consideration of working-class involvement in activities like 'politics' or 'leisure' or 'education' must be set in the context of these basic facts of existence.

Moving away slightly from such very basic conditions of existence, another problem for those who could find the time, energy and resources for activities outside the workplace or the home was the absence of suitable meeting places in the town. The established coffee houses, newsrooms and theatres, the Reform Club, the Society of Arts and the Literary and Philosophical Institute were all largely middle-class institutions from which the workers were generally kept rigidly apart. This lack of public facilities led to the use of outdoor venues and public houses, the latter being well illustrated by the names of the many different homes of the Spinners and Minders Institute (all in public houses) during the first few years of its existence.<sup>1</sup> The institutions of the working class, being denied more permanent forms, were therefore often ephemeral, and there was a constant struggle for access to the public facilities and for the recognition of the validity of working-class cultural forms.

### 3. The Employers

#### I. Origins and Visibility

In the Lancashire cotton industry as a whole there were some upwardly mobile employers but as a rule the big employers had long local connections and origins in non-manual, often very wealthy backgrounds. There was a stress on the continuity of the firm as a single-family

1. See Introduction to this thesis.



firm, with other family members running scattered mills or staffing management structures.<sup>1</sup> In Preston there was a substantial industrial Toryism among manufacturers. A prime example of this was Horrockses, the leading firm in the town. John Horrocks had been Tory MP for the borough, succeeded after his death in 1804 by Samuel, his brother. The Horrocks brothers were in fact sons of a quarry owner of Edgeworth, near Bolton, but John, after his success in the cotton manufacturing industry, moved into another level of society. He founded a family seat, encouraged agriculture and joined the Church of England. He patronised horse-racing (an aristocratic pursuit) and maintained social and political ties with leading families and other respectable members of local society like the Corporation.<sup>2</sup>

Local directories, newspapers and other publications show that like Horrockses many firms were well-established, long-lived enterprises which often commenced business before the period under study and survived well beyond the middle of the century, by which time some of them were very large concerns.<sup>3</sup> Horrockses, as well as being the oldest established concern, was on a much larger scale than any of the other textile firms. It had wide overseas markets and made huge profits. In the 1844 rating valuation all the Horrockses mills together were valued at £61,376 whilst only one other firm, Catteralls, was valued at more than £18,000 and twenty-one were worth under £8,000. Only two mills employed more than 1,000 hands, nine others more than 500, and

1. See Joyce, op cit; also Foster, op cit, on Oldham.

2. S W Urbanski, Parliamentary Politics 1796-1832 in an Industrialising Borough: Preston, Lancashire, PhD Thesis, Emory University, 1976, pp 15-17. For further details of the lives of the Horrockses see for example Hewitson, op cit, p 283; Sir Charles Brown, op cit; Pedrick Gale, The Story of Horrockses, 1950; Dictionary of National Biography; LCRO, DP 376/2, Cuttings, p 50: The Death of John Horrocks.

3. See Section 1 of this chapter: "Occupational Structure".



nineteen less than 150, so it may be accepted that at this date "the mills of Preston were typically small to middling".<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, the larger employers exerted immense influence in the town; by 1857 for example Horrockses, Miller and Company were recorded as having ten mills and employing more than 3,000 hands, and four other firms in addition to Horrockses were said to be "very extensive".<sup>2</sup> The significance of the large employers in the life of the town is well illustrated by the constant recurrence of their names in newspaper reports in connection with a wide range of activities touching most aspects of town life.

Preston was a community where both wealth and social prestige derived from industrial establishments and could be seen to do so by those who laboured in them. This had important implications for the critiques of society which were formulated by working-class radical leaders.<sup>3</sup> The contrasting life-styles of the owners, who were seen as unproductive, and the workers, who laboured long hours for little reward, were frequent themes in speeches and pamphlets from the various protest movements. There may have been cultural diversity and disunity among the middle-class elite but at a basic level their coherence was ensured through marriage, economic interests and residence, all mechanisms by which they preserved their class interests and identity.<sup>4</sup> There was, however, a gulf between employers and employed which was both economic and cultural. This 'separation of the classes' was reflected in housing patterns. The cotton factories, one local historian

1. H N B Morgan, Social and Political Leadership in Preston, 1820-1860, M Litt Thesis, Lancaster University, 1980, and see Assessment of Cotton Mills, c 1844, op cit.

2. Hardwick, op cit, p 425.

3. For further discussion of this point see Geoffrey Crossick, An Artisan Elite in Victorian England, 1978.

4. Joyce, op cit, pp 20-23.

explained, were erected "chiefly to the north and south of the old aristocratic borough, significantly named 'Proud Preston', and do not as yet materially interfere with the more 'fashionable' or picturesque sections of the district".<sup>1</sup> The workers, as already explained, generally lived on the edges of the town, near to the factories, often in working-class 'ghettoes' at a distance from the rest of the town. Pilkington's somewhat colourful description emphasises the 'apartness' of such areas.

".... what St Giles was to London, 'New Preston' was to this town. A terror to respectably dressed people, it was rarely they could walk through without being insulted, robbed or injured. The capacity for bad language was immense, the passion for alcohol was matchless, and the people developed a general supreme contempt for all that was decent and reputable".<sup>2</sup>

This 'beyond the pale' aspect of working-class districts was stressed by many local commentators, particularly those such as clergymen, Sunday School teachers and philanthropists who involved themselves in various 'missionary' activities. However exaggerated and biased these reports may have been, there is no doubt that the actual physical conditions of life in the poorer districts were vastly inferior to those in the more fashionable parts of the town.<sup>3</sup> These contrasts must have been apparent to all who lived and worked in the town, and were the object of much criticism by working-class agitators and campaigners.

The employers then were highly visible as controllers of wealth and labour and as residents in the parts of the town which they made their

1. Hardwick, op cit, p 427.

2. Pilkington, op cit, p 44.

3. See for example the Sanitary Reports as discussed above.



own. The solidity and permanence of their institutions, their pre-eminence in local government and influence in parliamentary politics, as well as the 'good works' in which they became involved all helped to shape class relationships in the town and are examined in the following sections.

## II. Local Government

The Corporation was the main instrument of local government in Preston and was dominated by textile employers, merchants and professional men. The 1835 reform conserved rather than spread power, by creating a real distinction between 'burgesses' and the rest of the inhabitants. The former were occupiers of rateable property in the borough and residing within seven miles of it, who had paid rates for the previous two years. In a town which owed its expansion to immigration a residence qualification was clearly restrictive and moreover the smallest and most numerous rates were collected from landlords rather than tenants, so that the occupiers of many of the smaller properties were not legally ratepayers, at least until this was changed in 1853 and 1858.<sup>1</sup> Boundaries were also drawn up in such a way as to limit opposition, with the population most hostile to the Tories contained in two wards out of six. This combination of factors ensured that "the rules of the game were fairly heavily weighted in favour of the stable, the respectable, the wealthy and the politically safe."<sup>2</sup>

The Corporation had the power of appointing annually the parish vestryman, the Committee for General Purposes, the Commissioner of Police,

1. Morgan, op cit, pp 171-2.

2. Ibid, p 175.



the Watch Committee and the Grammar School Committee. In 1841, to take one example, the Mayor and almost all the aldermen were cotton manufacturers,<sup>1</sup> a not unusual state of affairs. Between 1841 and 1857 nine of the mayors of Preston were directly connected with the cotton trade.<sup>2</sup> An account of the involvement of the members of just one cotton firm, Horrockses, Miller and Company, in the local affairs of the town gives an indication of the influence of these manufacturers.<sup>3</sup>

John and Samuel Horrocks (brothers), in addition to their parliamentary activities which are discussed below, were both members of the Corporation. Samuel was a mayor of the borough and an alderman for thirty years of the old Corporation and for three or four years of the new. Samuel Horrocks junior was a councillor of both old and new Corporations, alderman of the new, and guild mayor of 1842. Of the Miller family, Thomas Miller senior was a councilman for several years and an alderman for fifteen years of the old Corporation. He was one of the first appointed twelve aldermen to the new Corporation, on which he continued until his death. He was the first mayor of the new Corporation and in 1820-21 and 1826-7 also chief magistrate of the borough. One of his sons, Henry Miller, was councillor for some years but was in poor health. His eldest son, Thomas, was elected as a member of the Corporation as soon as legally qualified to serve, was later appointed alderman and continued so until his death. He was a magistrate and deputy lieutenant, and visiting justice to the Preston House of Correction.

1. P and H Whittle, Commercial Directory of Preston and its Environs, 1841.

2. Ibid.

3. This account is based on a report of the death of Thomas Miller, eldest and only surviving son of Thomas Miller, who on his father's death had become the sole proprietor of Horrockses, Miller and Company. See Preston Chronicle, July 1st, 1865.

Cracks in the Corporation oligarchy occurred increasingly however from the 1850s onwards. During the great strike and lock-out of 1853-4 the operatives put forward a unanimous appeal for a stipendiary magistrate free from the interest of the 'cotton lords'<sup>1</sup> and George Cowell, one of the strike leaders, advised the men to oust from the Town Council every 'cotton lord' they could.<sup>2</sup> The 1853 Small Tenements Rating Act had increased the borough electorate by reserving to tenants the rates which were paid to landlords, thus giving them the same municipal privileges as if they themselves were rated, and several cotton masters were outseated.<sup>3</sup> The 1858 Small Tenements Act again increased the total number of burgesses, bringing in many lower-class cottagers, and extending the electorate for municipal elections much wider than that for parliamentary elections. More wards were contested after this, and concern over the monopoly of the 'cotton<sup>o</sup>cracy' grew.<sup>4</sup>

### III. Parliamentary Politics

Preston was for a time directly represented in Parliament by the cotton interest. John Horrocks was the Corporation Tory member of parliament in the early years of the nineteenth century, followed by his brother Samuel Horrocks who retired from parliamentary politics in 1826. The employers were given a wider role in parliamentary politics however by the inclusion of working men in Preston's electorate. As a parliamentary borough Preston had had the privilege of returning two members to the House of Commons since 1295, and in 1661 a resolution of

1. Preston Chronicle, September 24th, 1853.

2. Preston Chronicle, October 8th, 1853.

3. See Hewitson, op cit; also R P Bradshaw, The Preston Lock-Out, MA Thesis, Lancaster University, 1972, p 35.

4. See Morgan, op cit, pp 205-13.



the House declared that all inhabitants of the borough were to have a vote for MPs. This seems not to have been acted on until about a hundred years later, and in practice the right was confined to all male inhabitants above twenty-one years of age who had resided six months in the town and were "untainted with pauperism or crime".<sup>1</sup> Religious tests excluded Roman Catholics. In the early years of the nineteenth century then Preston had an unusually large working-class electorate which the 1832 Reform Act actually restricted. However, even when working men did have a voice in elections employers were clearly able to exercise influence over their employees and indeed in some quarters this was seen as an accepted political convention. The Tory Preston Pilot was "firmly convinced" that in general the men needed no coercion to "follow the direction it may be the pleasure of their employers to indicate", since it was very common, when there was a good understanding between the master and his men, for them on the eve of an election to place their votes at his disposal. This was entirely right, it was felt, since "in this commercial country we all know that wealth will be represented in preference to numbers, and we are amongst those who think that a certain degree of influence may at all times be used amongst departments without the slightest compromise of privilege or principle".<sup>2</sup>

'Influence' could mean outright coercion, it seems. One of Preston's leading radicals, Richard Marsden, said in 1847 of Mr Paley, a wealthy

1. Hardwick, op cit, p 329. See also Hewitson, op cit, and Victoria County History, Vol III.
2. Preston Pilot, August 14th, 1830; see also Morgan, op cit, and Urbanski, op cit, p 21.



manufacturer who was then mayor, that when an election took place those of his hands who had votes were always expected to vote as he did "or to march about their business".<sup>1</sup> Such coercion was not always necessary however. The influence of the employer was far-reaching and in many ways he and his workers might seem to share the same interest. The Horrocks family, for example, as previously shown, provided housing as well as work. Distribution of charity relied on respectable and acceptable behaviour by the recipient; the dispensary, which provided some medical facilities for the poor, required a patron's ticket for admission.<sup>2</sup> Patronage of shops and contracts of repair to artisans might also be dependent upon conformity. None of these levers worked automatically however; canvassing and various forms of corruption were also used. Free drink was a commonly used incentive.<sup>3</sup>

Various means could also be used to prevent working men, potentially radicals, from voting at all. Registration cost one shilling, and persons in receipt of poor relief were not granted suffrage, which obviously worked against groups like the hand-loom weavers.<sup>4</sup> In 1835 at the Court of Revision George Noble, the Reformers' barrister, presented over nine hundred objections because of "an opinion that an undue preference has been given to the conservatives by the overseers in receiving the claims and registering long lists of workmen ..... by master manufacturers and others" but rejecting single names of others "in the humbler walks of life".<sup>5</sup>

1. Northern Star, September 25th, 1847.

2. See LCRO, DDP 138/55, Rules for the Preston Dispensary.

3. See Urbanski, op cit.

4. Ibid.

5. Preston Chronicle, October 17th, 1835.

Organisation and influence were clearly strongest amongst those who had the greatest wealth and status in the community and this made an important impact on local parliamentary politics. Moreover, the domination of parliamentary elections by the major parties may also have been partly due to lack of interest or faith in this kind of politics on the part of working men. There is evidence that the hand-loom weavers for example were dissatisfied with parliament because it would not act to redress their economic grievances.<sup>1</sup> Movements such as the 'Ten Hours' agitation, trade unionism, Chartism and anti-Poor Law protests did however claim the attention of the working class and will be discussed in the following chapters.

#### IV. Middle-class Institutions and Philanthropy

The strength and permanence of Preston's middle-class elite was reflected in the solidity and continuity of their institutions. Their clubs, the Society of Arts, the Literary and Philosophical Institute, their newsrooms and theatres, were all in well appointed buildings easily accessible in the town. They monopolised public buildings such as the Corn Exchange and patronised regular social 'occasions' like the Races. Their wealth, housing, dress, manners and lifestyle set them apart from the working class.

The role of this elite in the running of the town was not confined to the provision of employment and involvement in official organs of government. An important aspect of middle-class life was financial and managerial involvement in many local institutions. On the death of Thomas Miller (the cotton manufacturer), for example, it was claimed

1. Report of Select Committee on Hand-Loom Weavers' Petitions, pp 466-8.



that there was "scarcely a church or school in the town to which he has not been a large contributor" and that his benefactions were not confined to the church of which he was a member; "dissenting and Roman Catholic schools both benefitted from his liberality". Indeed, he felt on all occasions "the force of the aphorism that 'Property has its duties as well as its rights'".<sup>1</sup> The names of other cotton manufacturers also appear along with those of other middle-class men on the lists of subscriptions to churches, Sunday schools and public day schools, and they frequently served on their management committees. Some provided small libraries or reading rooms for their workpeople and evening classes for children and adults. Their money and support also contributed to other forms of public provision such as parks and bathing facilities. They provided 'treats' and excursions for workers and their families, donated funds to charity, and might give food, clothing and bedding to those whom they considered 'deserving'. This role was a widely recognised one; they were sometimes approached by working men for funds or other resources such as books and newspapers (although at other times their patronage could also be resisted) whilst middle-class reformers, particularly the clergy, requested their support for a variety of philanthropic ventures.

Whilst the cotton masters were outstanding for their visibility and influence in the town, 'gentlemen', professionals, merchants and retailers and members of the clergy were other groups who were particularly involved in philanthropic activities of various kinds. One such agent of local philanthropy deserves to be singled out for special mention here: Joseph Livesey, 'the ubiquitous reformer'. Livesey was born just outside

1. Preston Chronicle, July 1st, 1865.



Preston in 1794, the son of a hand-loom weaver with a reasonably thriving small business. His parents died when he was young and Livesey worked for his grandfather until the business failed, then for seven years in a cellar with three looms. He had only a very elementary schooling, learning reading and writing at a dames school and "through his own industry". From the age of about seventeen he became impressed with the importance of religion. He attended various nonconformist chapels, eventually being baptised by the Baptists. Following a split in the society Livesey left and joined the Scotch Baptists. In later years independent of any particular denomination, he to some extent regretted this early connection, since the emphasis of the Scotch Baptists on 'soundness of faith' made them reluctant to hold fellowship with those not of the same belief, and Livesey's ventures were always 'unsectarian'.

On his coming of age Livesey inherited £30. He married a woman who was "respectably connected and accustomed to plenty before marriage". Following the marriage he began buying and selling cheese, built up a flourishing business and became involved in the government of the town. He was a vestryman, member of the Board of Guardians, Commissioner for the Improvement of the Borough and a town councillor. He commenced his own printing business in the late 1820s, and in July 1830 issued a monthly journal, The Moral Reformer which lasted for three years. In the 1840s he started the newspaper The Preston Guardian which was later sold to George Toulmin. He also became involved in a whole range of philanthropic and campaigning activities in the town and claimed that he enjoyed his contact with the poor. He still had the feelings of a poor man, he said, and preferred their company. Furthermore, he had been influenced by his early reading of the New Testament, he said, to be kindly, benevolent, charitable and forgiving. He was particularly anxious

to relieve the discomforts of the poor but always with the idea that they would then go on to help themselves. Drink he always saw as the main evil and he was a prime mover of the Preston temperance and teetotal movements. He printed and distributed a series of tracts and his son William said he could always tell the direction his father had taken by seeing people reading tracts. He organised bedding charities and raised subscriptions for the poor. An annual rail trip to the seaside was arranged by him for the very poorest, and during the cotton famine he worked in connection with the Preston Relief Fund. His other activities included trying to prevent the New Poor Law being enforced in Preston and anti-Corn Law agitation. In connection with the latter he founded a Saturday morning illustrated paper called The Struggle, price 1d, which lasted for over four years. He refused to pay church rates and Easter Dues. He was a Liberal party supporter and in favour of the 1867 Reform Act. Livesey was directly involved throughout his life but particularly in his younger days in educational provision of various kinds. He and his wife established an adult Sunday School, he opened various other classes and reading rooms, was active in the establishment of the Mechanics' Institute and a club for working men. Middle class in occupation and lifestyle he cannot however be fitted easily into any particular group in Preston society, seeming often to offend the Establishment and workers equally; nevertheless no account of educational activity in the town would be complete without reference to his many reforming pursuits, which are further discussed below.<sup>1</sup>

1. For this account and further details of Livesey's life see for example LCRO, DP 376/5, Scrapbook of Newspaper Cuttings, Joseph Livesey's Obituary; Sidney Lee (ed), Dictionary of National Biography, Vol XXXIII, 1893; W E Moss, Joseph Livesey - Friend of the People, 3rd Memorial Lecture at the 101st Conference of the British Temperance League; The Staunch Teetotaler, 1868, for 'The Editor's Autobiography', Nos 1-12; Thomas Walmsley, Reminiscences of the Preston Cockpit and the Old Teetotalers, 1892.



\* \* \*

This outline of Preston's social and occupational structure has necessarily been selective; its aim is not - and could not be - to construct a complete history of Preston in the nineteenth century. Rather it has been argued here that the relationship of the working class to education can only be adequately understood in the overall context of everyday life, a life in which work was a central element. The chapter has thus been primarily concerned with both workers and employers and the relationship between them, and has sought to establish the basic framework within which educational activity took place. It has shown that wealth, power and influence were concentrated particularly in the hands of the employers, whilst the material conditions of working-class life formed both a spur and a barrier to educational endeavour.



## CHAPTER THREE

## EDUCATION BY COLLISION

The growth of factory production and of large urban communities during the nineteenth century brought both unprecedented problems for the labouring populations of the expanding industrial towns and unprecedented opportunities for collective action to solve them. New skills and knowledge were needed for a changing society and a changing way of life, a way of life which brought with it new constraints but new freedoms too. Factory production imposed a new kind of rhythm and routine, a new time and work discipline which had to be constructed and enforced in order to maximise productivity.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, however, the strict traditional authority of church and gentry was declining along with the old established framework of reciprocal duties and obligations.<sup>2</sup> The town labourers were thrown increasingly on their own resources and suffered much hardship as a result, a situation which encouraged the development of a range of institutions designed to cater for their needs and growing directly out of them, whilst at the same time building on traditional forms of popular culture.

Trade unions, Friendly Societies, co-operative societies, mutual improvement classes, Chartism, the temperance movement and other forms of popular activity all aimed at social amelioration, and sometimes emancipation, through some form of collective action. The total impact of a

1. E P Thompson, 'Time, Work-Discipline and Industrial Capitalism', in Past and Present, No 38, 1967, pp 56-97.
2. See John Lovell's Introduction to J L and B Hammond, The Town Labourer, 1978 edn.

rapid proliferation of such activity was enormous and had an educational significance which was not lost on contemporary observers, as the following extract from the 1849 Commission on Public Libraries shows.

"In a large town the influences which educate a man against his will are almost incessant; there are so many public meetings.... That forms the most valuable part of the education which an Englishman receives?

- Yes. It has put us beyond some of the nations of the Continent who have more school instruction.....

Do you hold that this Education by Collision as it may be called, is the best of all?

- It makes them citizens".<sup>1</sup>

This notion of 'education by collision' gives a useful insight into some of the broader educational processes taking place amongst the urban working class in the nineteenth century. Public meetings communicated news and opinion and facilitated the exchange of information and beliefs. Work organised around the factory brought a concern for wages and conditions, threw into relief relationships between employer and employed, and brought together large numbers of workers with both common concerns and diversity of background and formal educational experience. Leisure hours, such as they were, often centred on the public house, where newspapers might be read and political and social questions of the day discussed. Attempts to secure permanent meeting places or access to the public buildings of the town in order to carry out a whole range of collective activity were a necessary feature of working-class recreation and politics which required organisation and application. Active participation in religious movements, particularly outside the Established church gave working people the opportunity to develop skills of organisation and

1. PP 1849 (548) Vol XVII, Commission on Public Libraries, Q 1359-62, quoted in A E Dobbs, Education and Social Movements 1700-1850, 1919, p 206.



oratory and frequently led to a quest for greater literacy and wider knowledge, as did involvement in other evangelising movements such as temperance and teetotalism. Sickness and death, or the possibility of them, required action to minimise their impact on families with no capital resources to fall back on, and political action of all kinds - Ten Hours' agitation, Anti-Poor Law activity, voting, Chartism, Owenism, trade unionism - demanded an informed if not literate working class.

'Collision' with the experiences of life in the expanding industrial centres can therefore be represented as an educational force and experience, but collision alone was not responsible for the acquisition of skills and knowledge relevant to a changing way of life. The poorer sections of the community were often painfully aware of the inadequacy of their preparation for citizenship at the same time as they insisted on their right to its benefits and obligations. Some therefore made more self-conscious and deliberate attempts to acquire skills and information and to disseminate knowledge, knowledge which they stressed would enable working people to take citizenship for themselves if it were not to be conferred. At the same time responses to the new situation were also developing which though directed towards the working class were largely organised by those outside it, and these included a range of more formal institutions aimed at both adults and children. These more deliberate attempts at education by both workers and the middle classes are the subjects of subsequent chapters. The present chapter addresses itself to the broader process of 'education by collision' by focussing on a range of collective activity. Trade union activity and other forms of agitational association are dealt with in sections 1 and 2; section 3 examines the activities of Friendly and Temperance Societies; section 4 church and chapel; and the final section investigates other forms of working-class leisure and recreational pursuits.



## 1. Trade Union Activity

Work (and the lack of it) is obviously a central experience in the lives of all working-class people, and work in nineteenth-century Preston increasingly came to mean employment in some branch of the textile industry which was dominant in the economy of the town after the first quarter of the century.<sup>1</sup> Some of the features of this kind of industry - large factories with many workers gathered together, recurrent depressions, hard working conditions and fluctuating wages - provided fertile ground for the growth of collective means of resistance and support, and trade unionism became increasingly important in Preston as in the textile districts as a whole. In 1829 John Doherty, the Irish cotton spinner, organised the Lancashire Spinners and went on to establish his Grand General Union of Operative Spinners of Great Britain and Ireland, and later a general union with other trades, the National Association for the Protection of Labour, which survived until 1832.<sup>2</sup> By the time Doherty spoke at a public meeting in Preston in May 1830 on his object of forming a national association<sup>3</sup> the spinners there had been organising amongst themselves for some time; record of the Preston Spinners and Minders Institute goes back to at least 1823.<sup>4</sup> As for the weavers, one of their historians claims some form of organisation can be traced back to about 1842<sup>5</sup> though it seems likely that some combination existed earlier but of an ephemeral nature and adversely affected by the

1. See chapter 2, section 1.

2. See Patricia Hollis (ed), Class and Conflict in Nineteenth-Century England, 1973.

3. Preston Chronicle, May 15th, 1830.

4. See Anthony Hewitson, History of Preston, 1883.

5. Edwin Hopwood, A History of the Lancashire Cotton Industry and the Amalgamated Weavers' Association, 1969.

Combination Acts.<sup>1</sup> In Preston, a well-garrisoned administrative centre, there was some risk attached to combination<sup>2</sup> but this did not prevent it taking place. In 1823 a spinner called Ryding was tried for assault on Preston manufacturer and MP Horrocks and in the course of this trial it was revealed that Ryding had deliberately attempted to wound Horrocks in order to be tried before judge and jury and to bring to the world the injustice of the Combination Laws which he and other spinners had suffered under in their attempts to resist wage reductions.<sup>3</sup> Clearly, despite the risks of combination and the practical difficulties attached to it, Preston's workers did form themselves into trade unions which then provided new educative experiences, as will be shown.

Trade unionism relies on collective activity, co-ordination and organisation, and enables working people to exercise some power and control over their own lives and work situation and over a broader framework of social relationships. It requires on the part of some members at least, skills of advocacy, persuasion and oratory, ability to marshall a coherent and forceful argument, to negotiate and bargain, to keep records and collect, account for and administer funds. It also to some extent fosters an understanding of the political, social and economic relationships of society which transcends the narrowly parochial and it encourages perception of common interests. The acquisition of such a set of abilities and understandings must surely be regarded as an educational experience, a point which can be further explored by looking at some specific instances of trade union activity

1. See H A Turner, Trade Union Growth, Structure and Policy, 1962, pp 50-51 and appendix.
2. See John Foster, Class Struggle and the Industrial Revolution, 1977.
3. See J L and B Hammond, op cit, pp 87-88.



which are fairly well documented.

# I. The 1842 Turn-Out - the 'Plug Plot Riots'

The Preston cotton factory operatives were in 1842 involved in a turn-out over wages which was part of a more widespread action throughout the Lancashire textile areas, the 'Plug Plot riots' or 'general strike' of that year.<sup>1</sup> It has been claimed that this action which lasted twice as long as the 1926 General Strike involved at its height up to a half a million workers and covered an area from the Scottish coalfields to South Wales and Cornwall.<sup>2</sup> The causes and aims of the turn-outs have been the subject of some disagreement, the standard version of events being that they were a series of spontaneous outbursts brought about by the distress of this period of recession and mass unemployment, with wage reductions or attempted wage reductions a common occurrence. An alternative argument is that although the immediate cause was the demand for a 25% wage cut by the Ashton-under-Lyne and Stalybridge manufacturers the strikes had even deeper roots and involved not just protest over wages but also political demands like universal suffrage, arising indeed out of distress but also out of the context of both organised trade unionism and Chartism.<sup>3</sup>

There is convincing evidence to support the latter argument. The idea of a 'sacred month' had been given support by the Chartist Convention in 1839 but was postponed as impractical at this time. Strike leaders had firm connections with Chartism and trade unionism. There was much movement and communication between towns and marches

1. See Preston Chronicle for August 1842.

2. See Mick Jenkins, The General Strike of 1842, 1980.

3. Ibid.



from one place to another to extend the turn-out, as well as extensive public discussion of issues and organisation. The aim of disputing wage reductions was frequently extended to a demand for a 'fair day's wage for a fair day's work' and a call for the 'People's Charter' to be made the law of the land, although there was some dispute over whether the strikers should press this latter demand or simply concentrate on the wages question.<sup>1</sup>

Reports from Preston show that the turn-out of hands and the stoppage of the mills was closely connected with Chartism and was carried out in full knowledge of events in the other towns of the cotton region.<sup>2</sup> A mass meeting on August 12th passed a resolution to strike until they had a 'fair day's wage for a fair day's work, 'guaranteeing its continuance with the Charter.'<sup>3</sup> The Chartists of the town did however issue a denial that they were the initial cause of the turn-outs and 'riots' which led to the military firing on the crowd, resulting in several deaths and woundings.

Questions about the exact nature of these strikes and the extent to which a 'revolutionary class-consciousness' was characteristic of them must be answered elsewhere, but it does seem difficult to sustain the notion of spontaneous, separate, unco-ordinated outbursts of discontent. The main point to be made here is that the organisation of this kind of widespread strike action must have been a learning experience for those who took part in it. Reports in the newspapers show the

1. Ibid.

2. See Preston Chronicle, August 13th, 1842.

3. Jenkins, op cit, p 96.

organisation of delegates and committees, issue of work permits to employers to enable certain jobs to be completed, collection and distribution of money and keeping of accounts, and the writing of resolutions, addresses and placards. Furthermore, it has been argued that the turn-outs of 1842 had undergone "a dramatic new experience":

"They had experienced a new form of class action: the blending of the mass trade union movement with Chartism. They had seen what could be done with mass picketing. They had experienced certain elements in the exercise of working-class power such as the issue of work permits by strike committees. They had seen trades conferences in action and becoming authoritative centres of local leadership".<sup>1</sup>

The inference that can be made if the above view is accepted, is that the confidence and consciousness acquired by the workers through these experiences was part of an educational process which is an important strand in the heritage of the modern labour movement. Richard Marsden, Preston's leading Chartist who was active in many other campaigns, himself concluded that this 'general strike' "will have taught the mass a lesson, and from it they will know how to proceed in future..."<sup>2</sup> Even if the ideological content of these experiences is questioned, the practical and intellectual skills which they demanded, and to a certain extent taught, were an important element in a worker's education. Later labour/capital conflict in Preston illustrates this process even more clearly.

## II. The 1853/4 Strike and Lock-out in Preston

The 1853/4 industrial conflict in Preston evidences a still higher

1. Ibid, p 24.

2. Northern Star, September 9th, 1842.



degree of organisation amongst the workpeople of the town and their fellow workers throughout the Lancashire cotton area, possibly itself an indication of the educational value of the earlier experiences.

The conflict began with agitation amongst the Preston weavers for a raise of ten per cent which at first took place without striking. This was partly due to pursuance of a common tactic in this period: the selective strike. Under this system striking workers in one town could be supported by help and subscriptions from those in other towns who were still employed and earning a wage. As George Cowell, one of the strike leaders remarked: "Let them contribute towards Stockport, and as soon as they got the advance then would be the time for Preston to 'nail' it....."<sup>1</sup>. As a result of the agitation however some of the masters gave the ten per cent and those weavers at mills where the raise was refused came out on strike. Several mills closed and a month's notice for a general lock-out was given by the manufacturers. The dispute, which had originally begun with the weavers, later involved spinners as well, so although described by contemporaries as primarily a weavers' strike it seems that all branches were involved, though the weavers attracted most attention through their mass oratory and their need to raise funds to support a large union structure.<sup>2</sup> Placards purporting to come from some of the operatives denounced the strike, and there were reports of some branches of the trade, particularly the overlookers, resolving not to support the ten per cent movement<sup>3</sup> but the protest was widespread, involving a cross-section of the community

1. Preston Chronicle, June 25th, 1853.

2. For this and further discussion see R P Bradshaw, The Preston Lock-Out, MA Thesis, Lancaster University, 1972.

3. See for example Preston Guardian, October 6th, 1853, and LCRO DDP 138/87 a & b, Ashworth Cuttings.



including women and young people.

The strikers employed a variety of tactics, including canvassing for support, exclusive dealing and urging political action. Delegates travelled the country seeking support, and the unions of many other trades were canvassed for subscriptions and other forms of help. This was often forthcoming, even from those far removed from the cotton trade. Articles about the Preston strike appeared in journals such as the Bookbinders' Trade Circular, for example, which defended the operatives and stated that it was "....imperative on the working classes to support the Preston strike to the utmost, and ..... all honest men to wish them success".<sup>1</sup> Many other trade societies contributed to the strike fund including the boot and shoe makers, coach makers, plasterers, and railway workers, and there were even miscellaneous contributions from sources such as the Massachusetts working people.<sup>2</sup> This kind of canvassing for support, which was common in times of distress<sup>3</sup>, required the development of skills of communication and of administration.

Exclusive dealing was another tactic used in this long strike. In October 1853 a placard accused Cowell of "attempting to tyrannise over the shopkeepers of Preston". Alluding to this at an open-air meeting in the town Cowell replied that he only wished the working classes of Preston "to look after their own interests, to support

1. The Bookbinders' Trade Circular, March 1854, p 172. See also Bradshaw, op cit; Ashworth Cuttings, op cit.
2. LCRO, DDP 18/36, Financial Report of the Income and Expenditure of the Amalgamated Committee of Trades and Factory Operatives During the Preston Lock-Out, 1854.
3. See for example the Diary of John Ward, LCRO, DDX/28/299, and DDX/636/2 & 3.

their friends, and to let their enemies do as they wished".<sup>1</sup> An article in the Manchester Examiner described how the Preston operatives had divided the town into districts, appointed canvassers to visit shopkeepers and others to solicit contributions, and adopted a system of exclusive dealing. At their weekly public meetings they announced the names of persons who refused to contribute, who were "represented as enemies to the working people". Almost all the shopkeepers were "under coercion" and the operatives alleged that "they support shopkeepers, and that they are under an obligation to support them in their strikes". Attempts were also said to have been made to bring ministers of the gospel "under the same bondage".<sup>2</sup>

Political action was also urged as an adjunct to the struggle. In November 1853, at a meeting of between ten and twelve thousand operatives, Cowell called on the workers to use their exertions to "reject every cotton lord from the Council Chamber tomorrow", with the exception of Mr Goodair who had not joined the masters' association and kept his hands at work. A resolution was passed to "use all legal means to return to the Town Council tomorrow the friends of the working classes".<sup>3</sup> Cowell emphasised the significance of such a move:

"You may depend on it there is a vast amount of power there you are very little aware of. The council has to do with many important things in the borough that you don't know of. They have to do with selecting the Watch Committee and the Watch

1. Preston Chronicle, October 15th, 1853.
2. From Manchester Examiner, December 17th, 1853, see Ashworth cuttings, op cit; see also Foster, op cit, for his discussion of the use of exclusive dealing in political and industrial protest in Oldham.
3. From Northern Daily Times, November 1st, 1853, see Ashworth cuttings, op cit.



Committee has to do with giving orders to the police. Let us keep out men who are determined to give their votes in opposition to the wishes and the will of the people. You may depend on it that if we like we can keep out the Hawkinses, and the Rodgetts and the Swainsons, and every other man whose hands are stained with cotton .....".<sup>1</sup>

At another meeting the same week Cowell reiterated this appeal saying that no matter whether they were Whig, Radical or Tory, "if they smelt of cotton bags they must be sent home".<sup>2</sup>

It is not clear precisely how influential Cowell was as an individual in the dissemination of these ideas, but he was reported to be a very popular leader and effective orator<sup>3</sup> and the very scale of the proceedings indicates that he did not stand in isolation. Letters to the newspapers stating that the mass of operatives were apathetic and in the hands of agitators are not borne out by the breadth and depth of the protest. The strike was significant for the level of organisation and the involvement of a wide range of representatives of the cotton factory community.

Women formed a majority of the power-loom weavers and Cowell had claimed that the Committee of the Preston association were determined "to raise the people on the subject, especially the women", for he believed that "one woman would do as much good as twenty men".<sup>4</sup> Women did indeed play an active part in the dispute. At one meeting

1. Preston Chronicle, November 5th, 1853.

2. Ibid.

3. See for example Ashworth cuttings, op cit.

4. Preston Chronicle, June 25th, 1853.



"inspiring addresses were delivered by two females"<sup>1</sup> and when Blackburn women sent a delegate "to see how their Preston sisters' pulses beat" all apparently raised their hands for the ten per cent.<sup>2</sup> Two women in particular, possibly those referred to above, seem to have been very vocal and their speeches give fascinating glimpses into the kind of role which they saw as important for women. This was in some cases a conventional one, which stressed the need for a family wage and the place of women in the home, but in the context of the strike the role they were suggesting was anything but merely passive and supportive. At one meeting Mrs Margaret Fletcher lamented that the

"natural order of things was reversed, and women had to go out to work whilst men remained at home, made beds, washed clothes etc. Under these circumstances it behoved her sex to stir themselves. If capital had its right, labour had its right. If capital claimed the right to keep its wife at home and have half a dozen servants to wait upon her, surely the working man had a right to keep his wife at home too. She regarded the ten per cent as only a stepping stone to justice. They must have a fair day's wages for a fair day's work. What did she mean by that? Why, that which would afford a man the means of maintaining himself and family in comfort, of keeping his wife at home to attend to his children so as to make them an ornament to society in place of a nuisance..... It was a disgrace to an Englishman to allow his wife to go out to work. Let the women look after their rights; it was high time they looked to themselves. We have left the men manage our affairs long enough (said she) and a pretty position they have brought us into....."<sup>3</sup>

Another report of a speech by Margaret Fletcher comes from a meeting of Bolton power-loom weavers called to discuss how best to support the Preston lock-out. The speech made three central points. First, women

1. Preston Guardian, October 22nd, 1853.
2. Preston Chronicle, October 29th, 1853.
3. Ashworth cuttings, op cit, undated article.

were just as much a part of an oppressive system as were men, and deserved to have their rights recognised. Secondly, there were two main forces working against the elevation of the working classes, on the one hand the aristocracy who had "robbed them of the land of their forefathers (that raw material which God gave man to work upon)" and who governed them with a "rod of iron", and on the other hand the "grinding capitalists" who also claimed the right to rule them but would turn them into the streets, "to die, to starve, steal, beg or to do what they would". Thirdly, she was not a 'ten per cent' woman. Had they given the the ten per cent at the outset the working people might have taken it, "but having been made to dance to the tune of a ten weeks' lock-out, they would make their masters pay the piper with twenty-five before they had done with it (loud cheering)". What she wanted was a fair day's wage for a fair day's work, but this required a thinning of the labour market particularly by the withdrawal of married women from the factories, and a shortening of the hours of labour."<sup>1</sup>

In the light of these speeches it is interesting to note that a meeting of throstle spinners during the lock-out had discussed the problem that the vast majority of them were females and thus could not be sent out agitating for money. This may well have been seen as a very real problem for many; nevertheless some women were evidently learning to participate actively in this kind of collective action, and to argue a broader cause to great effect. Younger women were also involved. At one of the October meetings George Cowell reported being informed by a factory girl who attended a Sunday School regularly that

1. From Bolton Chronicle, December 10th, 1853, see Ashworth cuttings, op cit.



"the minister's daughter, when the school was over, had called the girls together and wished them to sign their hands that they would pay no more to the trades union".<sup>1</sup>

At this same meeting a proposition regarding donations to the strike fund was apparently seconded "by a girl about sixteen years of age".<sup>2</sup>

During the strike and lock-out then, Preston's workers, both young and older, male and female, had to learn and develop a whole range of skills and acquire understanding and knowledge of various kinds of social processes and relationships. The conduct of the dispute surely constituted a significant educational experience for many of the participants. Efficient management, organisation, public speaking, conduct of meetings, collective support and action, the collection and administration of a strike fund of £98,000<sup>3</sup> and dissemination of news and information were all vital to the continuation of such an extended dispute, and engaged the strikers in important forms of learning. One newspaper report of a meeting of weavers' delegates, for example, claimed that

".... whatever opinion may be entertained of individual leaders of the movement, or of the movement itself, and although all that took place confirmed our previous opinion of the impropriety and impolicy of the agitation, as respects the interests of the working classes themselves, there was strikingly manifest in that large assemblage an earnest sincerity and a consciousness of being engaged in a struggle for right. As respects the mode in which the business was conducted, we must express our surprise. There were evidently in that audience men to whom excitement was a holiday enjoyment, who looked upon turmoil as an agreeable change from the monotony of a working day life:- men who had been agitators when it was not so safe to follow agitation as it is now, who had joined every extreme popular movement for the last twenty years, who had even gloried in insubordination; yet they conducted the business in a style we have seldom seen equalled and never surpassed. Our magistrates in annual session

1. Preston Chronicle, October 29th, 1853.

2. Ibid.

3. See Bradshaw, op cit.



assembled, our corporation, our board of guardians, might each learn something of the way to conduct a meeting from the weavers' delegates; where an assemblage of turbulent spirits transact their business with regularity and precision, where they are kept in good humour by a chairman, an illiterate power-loom weaver from Oldham. In the meeting was an amount of spirit, and energy, and determination which, well directed, would achieve many great social advantages for the working classes".<sup>1</sup>

These observations have the greater importance because it cannot be argued that the men observed were simply an 'aristocracy of labour'; many different branches of the cotton trade were involved in the dispute and indeed the London Committee of Metropolitan Trades Delegates formed to assist the Preston operatives commented that they could not but consider that they were assisting in the battle of a class of operatives "less favoured in many respects than most of ourselves - a class whose condition, when in full employment, must be miserable enough; but when engaged in fighting the great battle of life, against a rich and powerful adversary, is fearful to contemplate".<sup>2</sup>

'Education by collision' was also recognised as such by those involved. At one meeting in which the problem of not having men capable of going out to address public meetings on behalf of the throstle spinners was raised, a W Beever, a delegate from the weavers, said he was sure there were men in the throstle rooms who could speak in public if they would try. "This was a money cause, and its advocates did not require a college education".<sup>3</sup> A placard originating from Manchester further highlighted the educational impact of the conflict, claiming that whatever its immediate effects it could not ultimately fail to be beneficial:

1. Preston Chronicle, February 25th, 1854; see also Charles Dickens, 'Locked Out', in Household Words, December 10th, 1853, for comments on the conduct of the strike.
2. Taken from J B Jefferys, Labour's Formative Years, 1948, pp 62-3.
3. Preston Chronicle, October 29th, 1853.

it would "elicit a more satisfactory definition of what is meant by union and co-operation" and "the various means pointed out for the social elevation of the masses" would be more eagerly sought after and adopted. An impetus had been given to the development of the association principle, it was argued, "which, under ordinary circumstances, could not have been effected in the next twenty years....."<sup>1</sup>

## 2. Chartism and Other Forms of Agitational Association

Trade unionism was of course only one of the forms of agitation which engaged the attention of workers during these often turbulent years. Chartism, aimed at the extension of the suffrage and the reform of Parliament as a means to social change, attracted widespread popular support during the 1830s and 40s, and a considerable section of this support came from the Northern textile areas. Preston was no exception: in 1837 Feargus O'Connor who stood for candidate in the town, created much excitement and won a show of hands,<sup>2</sup> and there was a branch of the Chartists in Preston which was active over several years.<sup>3</sup>

There are many examples from Chartist activities and literature of the importance of the movement in educating workers 'by collision' as well as through more deliberate means. As with trade unionism,

1. Placard to the Hand Mule Spinners, Self-Acting Minders, Twisters and Rovers of Lancashire, Cheshire, Yorkshire and Derbyshire, January 15th 1854, see Ashworth cuttings, op cit.
2. Donald Read and Eric Glasgow, Feargus O'Connor: Irishman and Chartist, 1961.
3. See below. Also Preston Chronicle, eg February 24th, 1838; April 6th, 1839; June 19th 1841; November 14th, 1846; and Northern Star, eg August 17th, 1844; August 9th 1845; April 10th, 1847; December 16th, 1848.



participation in the movement could both require and assist the acquisition of skills of organisation, oratory and debate, and it has been convincingly argued that the Chartist newspaper the Northern Star was itself "the major institution of Chartist education".<sup>1</sup> Its significance came partly from its bringing together of isolated individuals so that they could see themselves as part of a wider movement, but it also formed part of working-class attempts to control their own channels of learning and communication. It was a successful venture: it is claimed that by the end of 1838 more copies of the Northern Star were sold than of the Leeds Mercury or Manchester Guardian. Its true readership was probably much greater than circulation figures would show, however, since it was passed around between followers of the movement and read aloud at meetings; indeed it has been argued that it is obvious from the highly rhetorical style of its lead articles that it was designed to be read aloud.<sup>2</sup> Its influence as a national paper can also be seen from its lists of distributing agents and reports from members of local branches. The channels of communication were two-way; although O'Connor's influence was undoubtedly strong, and some historians have argued that his approach was narrow and undemocratic, Chartist readers were not simply passive recipients of knowledge and news but were news collectors themselves and thus were participating in a wider educational process.<sup>3</sup>

The availability of an independent cultural form and means of dissemination of knowledge was clearly crucial to the struggle, and

1. J A Epstein, 'Feargus O'Connor and the Northern Star', in Int Rev of Social History, Vol XXI, 1976, pp 51-97, see p 72.
2. For this and above discussion see Epstein, ibid.
3. Ibid; see also eg list of agents in Northern Star, February 9th, 1839.



this was something of which Richard Marsden, the Preston Chartist leader, was well aware. Speaking at the 1839 Convention he said he could not understand why the people of Ireland, right or wrong, supported O'Connell, and that one of the plans he had was that "every person should give up his Northern Star for a time, and deluge Ireland with them", an idea which was apparently greeted with approval.<sup>1</sup> The potential influence of such a radical organ of communication was equally recognised by those opposed to the spread of Chartism. A letter from Marsden to the Star on the subject of his "agitating tour" tells how at Lancaster he found some millworkers threatened with expulsion for purchasing the Northern Star,<sup>2</sup> and in Preston there was similar opposition to it on the part of the manufacturers.<sup>3</sup>

The value of newspapers generally as an educational tool is also highlighted by the struggles nationally for the freedom of the press, one aspect of which was a stress on the importance of reading matter for the diffusion of reason and knowledge.<sup>4</sup> Throughout the years of Chartist activity in Preston reference is made to the Chartist newsroom and the Chartist reading room (possibly the same)<sup>5</sup> and there is mention of the kinds of material available there. A letter to the

1. Northern Star, February 23rd, 1839.

2. Northern Star, June 29th, 1839.

3. See chapter 7, section 1; also eg Preston Chronicle, January 15th, 1848.

4. See eg E P Thompson, The Making of the English Working Class, 1968.

5. See eg Preston Chronicle, August 27th, 1842; Northern Star, June 24th, 1848.

Northern Star in 1838 records a 'trial' of the London Dispatch by a jury composed of the working men of Preston. The result was that "it was moved ..... that in the opinion of this meeting the London Dispatch, in consequence of its repeated and unwarrantable denunciations of Messrs O'Connor and Stephens, is no longer worthy of our support, and that we give it up forthwith", to be replaced by "that true Radical Journal" The Operative, edited by Bronterre O'Brien. The letter ends with a plea to others to adopt a similar position and to support only that portion of the press which supported their cause.<sup>1</sup> Clearly then, reading matter was not seen as merely recreational; its role as informer and educator was crucial. Further details of the Preston Chartists' reading rooms have unfortunately not come to light, but evidence of the kinds of reading which may have been seen as important comes from the records of the Chartists of Roy ton, another Lancashire branch. The material in their reading room included Joyce's Scientific Dialogues, Volney's Ruins of Empire, O'Connor's The Labourer, Paine's Rights of Man and Douglas's Narrative of Slavery.<sup>2</sup> These reading rooms had a serious purpose, and at this level 'education by collision' begins to shade into more deliberate attempts to educate and inform, as made clear by one bulletin from the Preston Chartists which noted that

"...we are going on steadily here, distributing tracts, containing political knowledge, which is a grand auxiliary to the cause.....".<sup>3</sup>

1. Northern Star, December 15th, 1838.
2. Neville Kirk, Class and Fragmentation: Some Aspects of Working-Class Life in South-East Lancashire and North-East Cheshire 1850-1870, PhD Thesis, University of Pittsburgh, 1974.
3. Northern Star, October 31st, 1840.



Chartism was of course only one of the agitational movements which attracted the support of the English working class during the period under study; others included Owenism, the Ten Hours movement and the Anti-Poor Law campaign. In relation to the first of these, Owenism, it has been argued that it was generally more important for its ideas than its institutions.<sup>1</sup> The present research did not uncover a great deal of evidence of Owenite organisation in Preston, although there were signs of its presence and these are discussed in chapter 4 below. It is possible that information about Owenite activity was suppressed, since there are indications that it evoked reactions of both fear and disapproval.<sup>2</sup> Local conditions did give a distinct flavour to working-class movements in different towns,<sup>3</sup> however, and in Preston factors such as large numbers of factory workers, a young and shifting population, and relatively low wages may have favoured Chartist and trade union activity rather than serious commitment to the co-operative cause. On the whole Owenism was probably most significant as an influence which led to other things, such as the thrust toward unionism amongst skilled workers, and which formed one element in the thinking of working-class leaders such as Richard Marsden,<sup>4</sup> who became involved in a range of campaigns. These campaigns, often organised around specific issues, provided an education in the advantages of collective action, advocacy

1. J F C Harrison, Learning and Living 1790-1960, 1961, p 110.

2. See eg LCRO, QGR/2/1-42, Reports of the Chaplain to the Preston House of Correction; and Preston Chronicle, April 12th, 1845, report headed 'Socialists'.

3. Harrison, op cit, pp 95-6. Harrison points out for example that in Yorkshire Huddersfield was a strong Owenite centre, whilst Halifax was characterised by very strong Chartist organisation and Bradford by the militant trade unionism of the woolcombers.

4. See eg J E King, Richard Marsden and the Preston Chartists, 1837-1848, 1981, pp 23-4.



and organisation, as well as encouraging the spread of knowledge and ideas.

The Ten Hours agitation is one example of such a campaign. From the 1830s onwards the movement was strong in Preston, and the local papers often carried reports of Ten Hours meetings, commenting that these were composed principally of the working classes,<sup>1</sup> although as elsewhere, support for the agitation was not total amongst working people. One local historian records that two parties were formed amongst the work-people, one in favour, the other against,<sup>2</sup> and in February 1835, for example, a petition was signed by 121 out of 123 spinners and rovers in the employment of Horrocks, Miller and Company to the effect that limiting the hours of children to ten per day would be injurious to them and their parents. A meeting which was held to consider this petition resolved however to continue for the ten hours<sup>3</sup> and Preston's workers were active throughout the agitation.<sup>4</sup> Preston's was one of eight committees which campaigned for Hindley's promised Bill although in the growing industrial depression apparently even the Preston committee closed down.<sup>5</sup> By 1844, however, Preston was again active. In April of that year another meeting in favour of a Ten Hours Bill was 'crowded to excess...composed principally of

1. See eg Preston Chronicle, February 14th, 1835 and April 16th, 1835.

2. William Pilkington, Then and Now, 1911, p 29.

3. See Preston Chronicle, February 21st, 1835.

4. See J T Ward, 'The Factory Movement in Lancashire 1830-1855', in Transactions of the Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society, Vols 75 and 76, 1965-66, pp 186-210.

5. Ibid, p 196.

operatives"<sup>1</sup> and in March of the following year delegates were sent to Bolton for a meeting of operative spinners favourable to the Ten Hours Bill.<sup>2</sup>

In spite of the emphasis given in many of the newspaper reports to the widespread involvement of the working class in the Ten Hours agitation it has been claimed that "Preston's greatest contribution to the Factory Movement was the mobilisation of local parliamentary and religious support".<sup>3</sup> Preston's MP, Sir George Strickland, was a sympathiser; the Vicar, John Owen Parr, the Anglican clergy, and all but three of the dissenting ministers gave the agitation their support. Although radical leaders often disdained identification with the middle classes in what they saw as workers' struggles, this ability to mobilise and capitalise on the support of influential sections of the community and the contact with them which resulted can also be seen as an educational experience, whether what was learnt was the necessity for such support and how to gain it, or that the interests of different parties were ultimately not the same and might have to be pursued separately. It is indeed reasonable to claim that "many rank and file members undoubtedly profited from their committee work"<sup>4</sup> and one example is that of Mortimer Grimshaw, who later emerged to help lead the great strike of 1853-4.

The Ten Hours agitation also had more explicitly educational implications, as illustrated in a speech made by Richard Marsden,

1. Preston Chronicle, April 20th, 1844.

2. Preston Chronicle, March 8th, 1845.

3. Ward, op cit, p 197.

4. Ibid, p 205.

the Chartist, at one public meeting on the issue. Marsden gave various reasons for supporting the agitation, including health, and went on to say that opportunity to "improve" would be another benefit of shorter hours. It was well known, he said, that a love of reading prevailed among the working community, and if the Ten Hours Bill were granted it would be possible to gratify that love in a way impossible at present. "Every one admitted that man was possessed of a large intellect" he argued, "and the poet Gray had said that it required only room to be more fully developed". At the same meeting the secretary of the central short time committee spoke of the lack of time to attend school or mechanics' institute under the present system.<sup>1</sup>

Such arguments formed a key aspect of the Ten Hours agitation throughout the campaign. Although this may have partly reflected a desire to emphasise the respectability and wish for improvement of the workers, and to quieten fears that increased leisure time would be mis-spent, it appeared so often and so strongly that a genuine desire for increased educational opportunity was clearly present on the part of many. There is other evidence too which shows that this was no mere rhetoric: during one short-time experiment the number of children from the mill attending evening school increased from twenty-seven to ninety-six.<sup>2</sup>

Another focus for collective action during the first half of the nineteenth century was the Poor Law, a significant institution in the

1. Preston Chronicle, September 26th, 1846.

2. Preston Chronicle, April 12th, 1845.



lives of workers which sparked particular protest following the Report of the Commissioners in 1834 and attempts to implement the New Poor Law. Resistance to the new laws, in Preston as in other towns, seems to have cut across class boundaries.<sup>1</sup> Joseph Livesey gave his attention to this resistance as one of his many reforming activities and wrote to the Chronicle in February 1837 telling people of all classes to resist.<sup>2</sup> In March of that year a meeting was held at the Temperance Hall to explain to the working classes the nature and principles of the Poor Law Act. The hall was reportedly "crowded to excess, there being numbers who were unable to obtain admission".<sup>3</sup> By May of the following year resistance was still strong. A meeting held at the Cock-Pit was "crowded to suffocation" with many hundreds unable to gain admission. Marsden spoke on this issue too, proposing that the Poor Law Amendment Act was "a cruel and disgraceful attempt on the lives and liberties of the working population of this country", a motion which the meeting unanimously agreed.<sup>4</sup>

The Poor Law Amendment Act was, then, yet another issue on which working people had to become informed, organise, spread information, speak in public and mobilise support, in order to resist what was seen as an attack on their living standards and social and legal rights: it was, in other words, another form of 'education by

1. See Winifred Proctor, 'Poor Law Administration in Preston Union, 1838-1848', in Transactions of the Historical Society of Lancashire and Cheshire, Vol 117, 1965, pp 145-166; also Preston Chronicle - eg March 1st, 1834, January 14th, 1837, May 6th, 1837.
2. Preston Chronicle, February 25th, 1837.
3. Preston Chronicle, March 18th, 1837.
4. Preston Chronicle, May 5th, 1838.

collision'. In order to appreciate the full educational impact of such activities however it is necessary to recognise that they were not discrete areas of social experience. On the contrary, workers might become involved in many or all of these issues and campaigns.

Richard Marsden, for example, though usually referred to as 'the Chartist', can be found in trade union meetings, the Ten Hours movement and the agitation against the New Poor Law. Marsden was admittedly a leading and committed radical, but there is good reason to suppose that such a pattern of activity was not uncommon, and that working-class activists at local level throughout the country joined several movements.<sup>1</sup> Feargus O'Connor, in a visit to Preston in August 1845, made a speech in which he argued that he looked upon the Ten Hours Bill as "one of the essential rudiments of Chartism"<sup>2</sup>. For radical workers the development of this broader view of the interconnections between the different elements of the new industrial society was an important part of their education. Some workers were however involved in forms of collective activity which though political were aimed at countering the disaffection which was common to the more radical forms of protest. In February 1836 a meeting was held to form an Operative Conservative Association, which intended to establish a newsroom and circulating library and to be open every evening from six to ten o'clock. The declared objectives of the Association were "to uphold the necessary connection between the

1. See for example Asa Briggs, 'The Language of Class in Early Nineteenth-Century England', in M W Flinn and T C Smout (eds), Essays in Social History, 1974; and Jenkins, op cit, on the connection between Chartism and the 1842 turn-outs.

2. Northern Star, August 23rd, 1845.



established church and the State - the just prerogatives of the Monarch, - the privileges of the House of Lords as an independent branch of the legislature, - and the deliberative powers of the Commons House of Parliament unfettered and uncontrolled."<sup>1</sup>

This association persisted for several years<sup>2</sup> and was later joined by others of similar aims. During the second half of the century, with the prospect of the extension of the franchise, associations aimed at countering radical tendencies proliferated. One such was St Peter's Ward Working Men's Conservative Association, which also intended to supply a newsroom with newspapers and so on, and that the working classes should go there to discuss the social and political matters of the day.<sup>3</sup> That this was but one example of such activity can be seen in a report of a demonstration by working men connected with the Constitutional Associations in the town, at which it was estimated that from 7-8,000 were present.<sup>4</sup> The Preston Chronicle was sufficiently alarmed by this tendency to issue a warning, in an editorial on the subject, to working men, against the Tories and their efforts to get them on their side, claiming that Toryism was opposed to the interests of the working class.<sup>5</sup>

If 'education by collision' was not always the sole province of the more radical workers, nor was it always connected with political aims

1. Preston Chronicle, February 6th, 1836.

2. See for example Preston Chronicle, September 19th, 1840.

3. Preston Chronicle, July 4th, 1868.

4. Preston Chronicle, October 10th, 1868.

5. Preston Chronicle, July 11th, 1868.



and activities. Other influences such as religion and the temperance movement touched the lives of many working people who were not 'leaders' or 'agitators' but were participating in the normal round of urban industrial life, with its many new experiences and possibilities as well as its legacies from the pre-industrial past.

### 3. Friendly Societies, Temperance and Teetotalism

The Friendly Societies which so rapidly proliferated during the early years of the factory system fulfilled a number of important functions. They were insurance agencies (giving, for example, sickness, burial and widows' benefits), they often ran savings schemes, they operated as social organisations, involving frequent meetings often over a drink and a smoke, and they were to some extent religious bodies too.<sup>1</sup> They sometimes had strong connections with the temperance movement and some owed their existence to political issues. Examples of the latter include the Orangemen, who were quite numerous in Preston, and the United Order of Catholic Brethren, another Preston society; incidents between these two were not uncommon.<sup>2</sup>

Involvement in the organisation and running of such a society was in itself an experience which could lead to the acquisition of new skills and knowledge. This, along with their more explicitly educational activities

1. See eg S H Mayor, The Relations Between Organised Religion and English Working-Class Movements 1850-1914, PhD Thesis, University of Manchester, 1960, p 83, and Christopher Thomson, The Autobiography of an Artisan, 1847.

2. See P H J H Gosden, The Friendly Societies in England 1815-1875, 1961, pp 65-6.

such as mutual improvement classes, led the artisan Thomson to call the Oddfellows Societies "another of the people's schools".<sup>1</sup> In some cases the 'education by collision' obtained in such societies led to an awareness of limitations and a desire for further learning, which led members in the direction of more conventional educational activity. The Odd-Fellows Mutual Improvement Society in Preston was set up as a result of

"the disadvantages under which many of the members of the order have laboured when they have been elected to the offices of the respective lodges, and been from want of education, unable efficiently to discharge the duties....."<sup>2</sup>

Its activities will be further discussed in the following chapter.

Despite the fact that working-class association might, as in the case of many Friendly Societies and trade union/political organisations, be centred on the pub there was also often a stress on respectability, thrift and self-help, and it is therefore not surprising perhaps that many working-class autobiographies deal with the authors' involvement in the temperance movement. This movement was particularly strong in Preston, which was said to have been 'the birthplace' of temperance, the first Temperance Hotel being opened there in the 1830s<sup>3</sup>, although in fact temperance activity seems to have sprung up in many places during this period.

1. Christopher Thomson, op cit.
2. Preston Chronicle, March 2nd, 1844.
3. Hewitson, op cit.

The leading light in the Preston movement was Joseph Livesey, who became a teetotaler in 1831,<sup>1</sup> but many others were also involved. The main emphasis of the movement was on rescuing individuals from depravity and degradation, although a broader approach to social problems also, for some, formed part of the mission.

The Preston Society divided the town into twenty-eight districts, each with a 'captain' who distributed tracts and supervised pledge signers. Visits were made to the poorer quarters of the town, mostly on Sunday mornings. Meetings were held at which the confessions of reformed drunkards had an important part to play, but which often also offered entertainments, partly in order that they could compete with the public house. Tea parties were held, for example at Christmas and Race Week, and 'missionaries' went out across the country to spread the word.<sup>2</sup>

Despite the obvious paternalism of much of this kind of activity, working people were actively involved in the movement even if not amongst its leaders. Some were presumably influenced by the activities of Livesey himself as the 'poor man's friend'; for others the impetus towards 'improvement' necessitated choosing the right kind of recreation - sober and respectable - and temperance activity offered opportunities for experiences which were clearly educational for those from 'humble' backgrounds. The 'missionary' work for example involved travel, and

1. Ibid; see also PP 1834 (559) VIII, Select Committee on Inquiry into Drunkenness, Livesey's evidence.

2. See eg Staunch Teetotaler, No 4, April 1967, pp 49-50; Brian Harrison, Drink and the Victorians 1815-72, 1971; and further references on following pages.



contact with different groups and individuals. It required organisation, skills of oratory and persuasion, and administration of funds.

Reminiscences of the participants testify to educational benefits such as these. Thomas Whittaker wrote that the platform of a temperance meeting was "one of the best schools for training anyone ambitious of public life this country offered, and the bench and the bar, the pulpit and the press, owe much to it".<sup>1</sup> Likewise Thomas Walmsley, referring to the activities which took place at the Temperance Hall or 'Cockpit' in the town claimed that

"Great numbers made their first speeches in this classical old building. Mr Livesey was delighted when he got working men to speak..... It was a new thing for working men to address public meetings either in the open air or the meeting room. The Temperance platform has brought out thousands of clever speakers and writers."<sup>2</sup>

This applied to women too, although their role generally within temperance seems to have been more of a supportive one. A commentator on the Preston movement argued that what temperance owed to women would never be known, "for although they laboured hard behind the scenes, their sacrifices went unrecorded."<sup>3</sup> He does, however, record the activities of one 'Temperance Mary', real name Mary Graham, who was born in Ireland and married a soldier from Darwen who later got work in Preston. She came to Preston in 1816 and earned her own living by dress-making and dyeing silks and ribbons. One of the first people in Preston to sign the pledge, she addressed Cockpit meetings at least once a month and most of the Lancashire societies engaged her frequently.

1. Thomas Whittaker, Life's Battles in Temperance Armour, 1888, p 373.
2. Thomas Walmsley, Reminiscences of the Preston Cockpit and the Old Teetotallers, 1892, p 10.
3. W E Moss, 'Joseph Livesey - Friend of the People', 3rd Memorial Lecture at the 101st Conference of the British Temperance League, 1935, p 20.

In addition to its significance in providing this kind of experience, the temperance movement did not always have such a narrow focus as its name suggests and involvement in it could also lead to participation in a wide range of activities. This possibility was increased in Preston by the influence of Livesey, 'the ubiquitous reformer'. The teetotallers' journal, The Moral Reformer, which was published by Livesey, dealt with, among other things, the advantages of education, the rights of men and women, the 'scandal' of the Poor Law, voting by ballot, Free Trade, and the Corn Laws.<sup>1</sup> Involvement in the movement could thus be seen as a way of advancing other causes. Henry Anderton, another of the leading temperance reformers of the town, believed that the future welfare of the country was "closely identified with the political and social advancement of the people",<sup>2</sup> In his early manhood he associated himself with "that rugged band of reformers who were trying to get wrongs redressed and to propagate the principle of National Reform" and was struggling with them to keep drink out of their meeting rooms, most of which were connected with public houses.<sup>3</sup> Feeling also that atheism had to some extent crept in, he also preached sermons in the public-house rooms on the Sunday evenings. However, "the matter of these discourses was, of course, largely tinged by politics".<sup>4</sup> Connections between Chartism and temperance are illustrated by the very title of one newspaper, the English Chartist Circular and Temperance Record. Chartist lectures

1. Ibid.

2. William Pilkington, The Makers of Wesleyan Methodism in Preston, 1890, pp 182-3.

3. Thomas Walmsley, op cit, p 17.

4. Ibid, p 17.

were often held at the Temperance Hall and Temperance Hotel in Preston,<sup>1</sup> partly due to the difficulty of obtaining suitable premises for radical clubs and meetings, but indicating too that collective activity of various kinds was not pursued in isolation.

Not all temperance activity took a serious form. The 1835 rules of the Temperance Vocal and Instrumental Musical Society<sup>2</sup> show that entertainment was another aspect of it. The reformers were anxious to show that entertainment could be enjoyed without drink. Around 1850 a small committee was formed called the Cheap Concert and Lecture Committee the object of which was "to elevate the taste of the people above the low singing rooms in the town ...."<sup>3</sup> With a similar object in mind half a dozen reading rooms were started, supplied with newspapers and periodicals, as counter attractions to the "fascinations" of the public house.<sup>4</sup> Despite this provision of entertainment and recreation however the intent behind such moves was serious and began to develop in the direction of more deliberately educational endeavour, such as the establishment of mutual improvement societies like The Academy (see below, chapter 4).

#### 4. Church and Chapel

The nineteenth-century working class are not usually seen as being the most religious of people, but for many of them, including those without

1. See for example Northern Star, August 9th, 1845 and many other dates.

2. LCRO, DDPr 37/57, Rules of the Temperance Vocal and Instrumental Musical Society.

3. Thomas Walmsley, op cit, p 5.

4. Ibid.



particularly deep religious commitment or belief, the church undoubtedly had some impact on their daily lives. Temperance and teetotalism for example often had a link with religious activities and involvement of various kinds, particularly in common with the nonconformist churches, and many social activities were initiated by the church. In the case of the large Irish community in Preston it has been argued that there were intimate ties with the church, which went beyond simply the relations between a reverend people and a religious institution, indeed that the overwhelming bulk of the Irish people only knew the Catholic church on a local, even personal level, through the agency of the parish priest.<sup>1</sup> The Catholic church in England, as a result of the large numbers of Irish immigrants, could not be aloof from the working class, and it offered a cultural heritage with which to identify.<sup>2</sup> All denominations had their adherents however, although the Anglican church was traditionally more 'establishment', and 'space' for working people might be found more easily within the dissenting churches. Methodism in particular attracted many workers, with groups such as the Primitive Methodists and the New Connexion seeming to be generally more 'democratic' and working class, although the Wesleyan Methodists were especially strong in urban industrial England.<sup>3</sup> At Methodist class meetings the practice developed of recruiting preachers from the less educated class of labourers or mechanics, and these circles were said to be essentially different from middle-class gatherings of churchmen and dissenters.<sup>4</sup>

Involvement in organised religion provided not only spiritual, recreational and sometimes economic reward, but also an 'education through

1. W J Lowe, The Irish in Lancashire 1846-71, A Social History, PhD Thesis, University of Dublin, 1974, p 247.

2. Ibid, p 251.

3. See for example Geoffrey Best, Mid-Victorian Britain 1851-1875, 1971.

4. See Dobbs, op cit, p119.

collision', as shown in the autobiography of William Pilkington, born in Preston in 1840, who went on to become an active member of the Methodist church and the temperance movement. Pilkington began life as a mill worker, occupied initially as a half-timer in John Goodier's factory at a wage of 1s 3d per week. His only formal education at that time was half-time at St Thomas's school in the Lancaster Road about which he was not altogether enthusiastic, claiming that although he appreciated the value of learning he did not get much of it.<sup>1</sup> By the age of nineteen however Pilkington (now working as a piecer in the factory) had become a church member, paying 1d a week class contribution and a shilling for quarterly tickets. It was thus, he claimed, "and not in college classes nor university lecture rooms" that he learned to talk to ten, twenty and thirty people.<sup>2</sup> Pilkington relates how in the 1850s and 60s there were sixteen cottages in different parts of the town in which meetings were held at least once a week, the young men paying for lighting and finding books for the services. Six young men were appointed to conduct the service in each house and it was impossible, according to Pilkington, "to measure the magnitude of the influence exerted upon the work and workers by the singing, praying and talking in these homely meetings".<sup>3</sup> Later Pilkington became a preacher and "held all the offices which a layman can hold in Methodism except the circuit stewardship".<sup>4</sup>

The less paternalistic and more welcoming approach of several of the Methodist groups towards the working class gave cause for concern to

1. See William Pilkington, op cit, 1911, pp 13-14; and chapter 6, section 3 below.

2. Ibid, pp 14-15.

3. Ibid, p 15.

4. Ibid, p 21.

some observers. Tremenheere, one of the early HMIs, was apparently alarmed to find a Primitive Methodist preacher reading the Northern Star weekly at a miners' meeting in the north of England,<sup>1</sup> and it does seem that in Preston the Primitive Methodists were to some degree in sympathy with working-class radicalism, allowing political meetings to be held in their premises for example.<sup>2</sup> Despite variations however, it has been argued that on the whole the churches tended to patronise workers and to treat them as a mission field,<sup>3</sup> and their messages were often conservative, urging acceptance of social conditions and relationships. In this sense, if religion can be considered another of the 'schools' of Preston's working class, the nature of the lessons can be questioned. The Catholic Bishop Goss, for example, congratulated a Preston congregation that "being of the poor or the working class they escaped the denunciations of our Lord against the rich." He exhorted them "to take full advantage of their condition so favourable to salvation, to be submissive to the divine will, to be cheerful and resigned under their poverty.....".<sup>4</sup>

Radical workers attacked the Anglican church for what they saw as a similar stance, the Chartists in particular mounting protests and demonstrations. Chartism and religion were not necessarily inimical; although embracing constitutionalists and secularists there was also a body of radical Christian beliefs within the movement, with the aim of

1. See R K Webb, The British Working-Class Reader, 1790-1848, 1955, p 34.

2. See for example Preston Chronicle, November 11th, 1837.

3. See Mayor, op cit.

4. LCRO, RCLv, Bishop Goss's Diary, Fourth Visitation, 1866.



rescuing Christianity from corruption.<sup>1</sup> This often took the form of demonstrations, focussed usually on the parish church, which was seen as part of a corrupt political order, and its religion as preaching a doctrine of submission. Anglican-style church-going was also seen as designed to keep the workers out through requirements of dress, church segregation, pews as private property, and other displays of social hierarchy.<sup>2</sup> Demonstrations were designed to draw attention to and counter all this and one such protest took place in Preston in August 1839. The Chartists marched in a body to fill the church and the Vicar was asked to preach a Chartist chosen text.<sup>3</sup> By 1840 Christian Chartism was growing, although attitudes towards it from within Chartism varied. Feargus O'Connor attacked it as divisive, but Hill, editor of the Northern Star, insisted that most Christian Chartists were consistent advocates of the National Charter Association.<sup>4</sup>

The Baptists, although having many working-class representatives in their churches in Lancashire, were not encouraging of radical agitation, mainly due to time-consuming religious duties on top of long working hours; a strong apolitical tradition within the denomination; and the paternalistic nature of the churches, predominantly influenced by the wealthy who held a general suspicion of working-class movements. Their emphasis was on conversion as a solution to social problems on the

1. See Eileen Yeo, 'Christianity in Chartist Struggle, 1838-1842', in Past and Present, No 91, May 1981, pp 109-139.

2. Ibid.

3. Preston Chronicle, August 10th, 1839.

4. Yeo, op cit, p 139.

one hand and charity on the other. In Preston, for example, Fishergate Church supported the local dispensary and infirmary.<sup>1</sup>

Yet perhaps of even more concern here is the charge that Methodism itself, the 'school' in which many of the working class received a part of their education, was on the whole a force which acted to contain social protest.<sup>2</sup> It has been pointed out however that in one sense all nonconformity represented a challenge to the orthodoxy, and that furthermore ministerial authority did not have surveillance or control over all the chapel communities. Working-class members may have found themselves at odds with the dominant norms, and what was preached could be subject to different interpretations.<sup>3</sup> Whatever the verdict, these religious movements did through their organisation enable the growth, development and education of working people who went on to represent their class in wider social and political contexts.

## 5. Working-Class Leisure and Recreational Pursuits

The churches, 'schools' for many working-class representatives, made their impact on working-class activity in another way too, through their role in the struggle for control of working-class leisure time. Concern for the proper observance of the Sabbath was a recurring theme during the nineteenth century. At a meeting on the subject held in Preston in 1836 for example, speakers deprecated the opening of shops and newsrooms on

1. J Lea, 'Baptists and the Working Classes in Mid-Victorian Lancashire', in S P Bell, (ed), Victorian Lancashire, 1974.

2. See for example E P Thompson, 1968, op cit.

3. See J F C Harrison, op cit, and Alan D Gilbert, 'Methodism, Dissent and Political Stability in Early Industrial England', in Journal of Religious History, Vol 10, No 4, December 1979, pp 381-399.

Sundays as "indicating amongst the people an attention to the ordinary affairs of this life, rather than a care of their souls and a preparation for eternity."<sup>1</sup> This approach often clashed with working-class activities and traditions, partly because for many people Sunday was the only real substantial period of free time they had, and many demands were placed upon it. It has been claimed indeed that organisations such as the Lord's Day Observation Society, the RSPCA and the temperance movement confirmed secularist working men's prejudice against religion because they seemed to ignore modern recreational and educational needs.<sup>2</sup> Conflict over whether writing should be allowed on the Sabbath for example affected the working class more than others because they were so much more dependent on Sunday Schools for educational opportunities,<sup>3</sup> as did struggles between claims that on Sundays only the Bible or other "truly religious" books should be read and the freedom to read more widely.<sup>4</sup> A letter to the Preston Chronicle in 1842, protesting against Sunday newspapers, claimed that these were "cheap trash" and "agents of hell" and betrayed the writer's fear of what could be learnt from them.

"I do not hesitate to say that half of the prevailing juvenile delinquency, and all the infidelity among the lower classes, spring from this source. ....Infidelity is stamped on every page. The works of Paine and Voltaire are constantly advertised; their doctrines enforced and advocated; whilst the vulgar are taught to admire them as the religion of nature. ....Did they stop here ..... there would be less cause for protest ..... Contempt for those 'who are placed in authority over us' is

1. Preston Chronicle, April 16th, 1836.
2. Brian Harrison, 'Religion and Recreation in Nineteenth-Century England', in Past and Present, No 38, December 1967, pp 98-125.
3. T W Laqueur, Religion and Respectability: Sunday Schools and Working Class Culture, 1780-1850, 1976.
4. David Vincent, Bread, Knowledge and Freedom, 1981, pp 178-9.



another feature in these abominable publications. Those whose station, at least, command (sic) deference and respect, are lowered in the estimation of those who read them by the contemptible manner in which they are spoken of ..... The evil increases, the danger is imminent".<sup>1</sup>

Such clashes can be seen as part of a more general struggle for control over working-class leisure time. Factory discipline was apparently not restricted to the factory. Horrocks employed a man for many years "to see that the children do not loiter about the streets on Sundays".<sup>2</sup> Many aspects of working-class leisure worried the more 'respectable' classes during the nineteenth century. Trade union and political activities were one form of association which inspired fear and opposition, but there was often too an objection to more light-hearted pursuits, and a feeling that because something was entertaining it was trivial and therefore undesirable.

The age and sex mix of many activities also disturbed 'respectable' observers. The public houses were often a focus for such anxiety, as were the singing rooms which began to proliferate in the middle years of the century. In 1851 James Hudson reported from Preston that the singing rooms were "numerous, prosperous and constantly well-attended".<sup>3</sup> The phenomenon had been noted earlier and not always welcomed. In 1841 a letter to the Chronicle drew attention to singing galleries as ".... those haunts of vice and pollution" and asked: "What signify all our schools for educating the poor classes, what our Sunday schools for religious precept and example if such dens as these are allowed to infest

1. Preston Chronicle, July 23rd, 1842.

2. Sidney Pollard, 'Factory Discipline in the Industrial Revolution', in Economic History Review, 2nd Series, Vol 16, 1963-4, pp 254-271.

3. J W Hudson, The History of Adult Education, 1851, p 30.

the town?" If "a poor creature be dragged into any of them", the labour of months in moral and religious instruction was destroyed, it concluded.<sup>1</sup> The same year another correspondent protested about the penny theatre in Chadwick's Orchard, with its "debasing and indecent scenes".<sup>2</sup>

Attempts were made to provide alternative forms of 'rational' recreation for the working classes, such as parks and walks. In 1844 the council decided to purchase the Avenham lands in Preston to preserve them for a public walk. Given that the population of the borough was increasing rapidly they felt that the preservation of existing walks and the foundation of others would contribute greatly to the "health, rational enjoyment, kindly intercourse and good morals of all classes of the people".<sup>3</sup>

The emphasis on 'rational' recreation meant that not all members of the church were opposed to secular activities on a Sunday. John Clay, chaplain at the prison, had been anxious that recreation should mingle with religion, and had made this clear in his evidence to the Committee on Public Houses of 1853. He had no serious objection to cricket or visiting museums, though he was aware that others had, since these things would come into competition with the public houses and thus he would do all he could to encourage them "or anything to create wholesome, innocent recreation."<sup>4</sup>

1. Preston Chronicle, April 3rd, 1841.

2. Preston Chronicle, November 20th, 1841.

3. Minutes of Council Proceedings, 6th June, 1844, quoted in Anne Lynn Gallagher The Social Control of Working-Class Leisure in Preston, c 1850-1875, MA dissertation, Lancaster University, 1975.

4. Rev Walter Lowe Clay, The Prison Chaplain: A Memoir of the Rev John Clay, BD, 1861.

As part of this approach new societies such as the Rechabites and Bands of Hope were formed, the first Band of Hope in Preston being established in connection with the Orchard Methodist Free Church in the school room under the chapel about 1850.<sup>1</sup> These were aimed primarily at children and had attached to them savings banks, libraries, and trips but through the children it was hoped that influence might also be exerted over the parents.<sup>2</sup>

In middle-class references to desirable working-class recreations the words 'rational', 'useful' and 'innocent' came up time and time again, as in Joseph Livesey's prescription in his journal The Staunch Teetotalter .

"The first and best for health and innocence are those out of doors.... For long evenings or wet weather, there are the Mechanics Institute, Newsroom, Library, Working Men's Club, Gymnasium, Lectures, Penny Readings, Temperance, and Band of Hope Meetings, Concerts and Tea Parties. You never need to be at a loss to fill your leisure time pleasantly and profitably, if you only cultivate a taste for what is rational and useful...."<sup>3</sup>

The 'penny readings' mentioned by Livesey proliferated during the 1860s and were mentioned weekly in the columns of the Preston Chronicle. They were a form of entertainment which included readings of poetry and prose, musical songs and pieces, and they were often held in church or chapel schoolrooms in the evenings.

Although the middle-class emphasis on 'rational' recreation stemmed partly from a misunderstanding of the conditions and traditions of

1. See William Pilkington, op cit, 1890.

2. See for example Livesey's Staunch Teetotalter, No 11, November 1867, p 164.

3. Staunch Teetotalter, No 4, April 1867, pp49-50.



working-class life, there were working-class activities which seem far removed from the label 'educational'. Drinking, 'bawdy' entertainments and fighting seem to have been fairly common recreations. An eye-witness account of 1863 gives an example of what was called a 'Lancashire Fight', for a prize of half a crown. This took place in a field and attracted a crowd of between 100 and 150 people. Two men were "stripped naked with the exception of each of them having their stockings and a pair of clogs on". They shook hands "and then the one called 'Blackun' (a nickname) took a kick at the other and then they seized one another and got down ..... Forshaw commenced butting with his head against Ainsworth's and striking him with his hands" and so the fight went on for fifteen to twenty minutes until one of them gave up.<sup>1</sup>

Obviously, then, it would be a distortion to argue that Preston's workers were constantly engaged in 'improving', 'rational' or 'educational' activities, and indeed Richard Marsden particularly advocated that each should be free to gratify his own tastes in his own way. As he explained,

"Many might prefer a ramble in the evening after the labours of the day, and would be perhaps as wise in so doing as those who would sit at home endeavouring to augment their little store of knowledge."<sup>2</sup>

Nevertheless, it would be a mistake to assume that what seemed purely entertaining was always devoid of serious content. It has been suggested, for example, that a different picture of working-class leisure may emerge from a closer look at the actual content of recreational forms

1. LCRO, QJD/1/264, Riot Deposition, 1863.

2. Preston Chronicle, September 26th, 1846.

such as songs and routines.<sup>1</sup> Though this is somewhat beyond the scope of the present study, the existence of 'Ten Per Cent' songs<sup>2</sup> and other campaigning verses illustrates that songs and music need not be 'trivial' entertainment. They provide information, awareness of a common cause, feelings of collective strength and belief. Such forms of entertainment could also raise serious issues in a more accessible form. John Clay, complaining in 1839 about the musical entertainments that were "added to the allurements of the public-house" claimed that he had seen on one advertising bill an announcement that 'a fight for the week's brass' was to be represented. "A contest between a starving mother and a brutal father" he exclaimed, "vulgarly dramatised and made 'the song of the drunkards'!"<sup>3</sup> Presentations of such dramas may well have varied in emphasis, as would responses to them, but it is not impossible to imagine that such 'entertainment' may have made a deeper impression on occasion than the sermons and tracts of the more pious reformers.

The leisure pursuits discussed so far have been mainly of a relatively public nature; 'private' leisure occupations are by their very nature difficult to penetrate. Autobiographies and other records have left some clues, however, and often show reading to have been a common source of both information and pleasure. Estimates of literacy in the nineteenth century vary; One survey claims that between 1754 and 1815 literacy levels actually deteriorated in towns like Preston, Blackburn, Burnley,

1. See John R Gillis, Review of Peter Bailey, *Leisure and Class in Victorian England*, 1978, in Victorian Studies, Vol 23, No 1, Autumn 1979, pp 109-110.
2. See Appendix 1 for an example; there are parallels here with modern entertainment - for example Billy Bragg's socialist, popular songs.
3. LCRO, QGR/2/29, 1839 Report of the Chaplain of the House of Correction.

Bolton and others in the textile area.<sup>1</sup> The same author claims that in 1840 the national illiteracy rate was 42%, whilst Lancashire, the West Riding of Yorkshire and the West Midlands had over 50% illiteracy rates, possibly due to the impact of industrialisation and increase in population swamping facilities, as well as the demand for child labour.<sup>2</sup> Clearly this might make reading a proscribed activity for many, although it should be noted that literacy is measured by ability to write, a skill which was often neglected when reading was taught, and even according to these figures we are still left with a large body of people who would have had the ability to make use of the printed word. Certainly opportunities and encouragement to read were ever-present in the towns. Handbills, tracts and leaflets were circulated and advertising, due to heavy duties, moved from the newspapers to the streets; as one writer has claimed, "walls, vehicles, shop-windows, newspaper offices and book-stalls made the streets a sort of poor man's library". (My emphasis).<sup>3</sup> This is a clear example of the process of 'education by collision'. In itself, though, it was not enough, and availability and cost of written materials was another problem for the working-class reader. Attempts to circumvent this were common, such as lending and borrowing networks, the use of public newsrooms and reading rooms, and the establishment of lending libraries (to be discussed more fully in the following chapter).

Books were however becoming more widely available during the nineteenth century with the printing of cheap works. In 1839 a licensed

1. W B Stephens, 'Illiteracy and Schooling in the Provincial Towns, 1640-1870: A Comparative Approach', in David Reeder (ed), Urban Education in the Nineteenth Century, 1977.
2. W B Stephens, Regional Variations in Education During the Industrial Revolution 1780-1870, 1973. For further discussion see also Michael Sanderson, 'Literacy and Social Mobility in the Industrial Revolution in England' in Past and Present, No 56, August 1972, pp 75-104; and the 'Debate' between Sanderson and Laqueur in Past and Present, No 64, August 1974, pp 96-112.
3. R K Webb, op cit, p 24.



hawker who visited Preston advertised the sale of three thousand volumes of cheap books, and was apparently so successful in selling them in the market place that his stock was exhausted a day sooner than anticipated, and he promised to return with more.<sup>1</sup> These hawkers and backstreet booksellers seem to have been successful in selling books to the working class, their almanacs being very popular, particularly the unstamped which were often used to propagandise some particular cause, like the Corn Law struggle. They also sold chap-books, which were often leaflets containing tales or histories, but also broadsides and slips with ballads, scandals, last dying speeches and so on.<sup>2</sup>

Further indications of the kinds of material which enjoyed high sales in Preston come from a letter sent by John Clay to Lord Stanley in 1854, accompanying "select specimens" of the works read by "too many of our (chiefly young) factory hands, and others of the same rank". The letter contains the following table comparing their weekly sales with those of other publications "of a less questionable character", in shops in Preston and Rochdale.

1. C Aspin, Lancashire, The First Industrial Society, 1969.

2. See Webb, op cit, esp pp 26-30.

	<u>Preston, at one</u>	<u>Rochdale, at one</u>
	<u>shop</u>	<u>shop</u>
<u>Mysteries of the Court</u>	144	120
<u>Claude Duval</u>	72	24
<u>Paul Clifford</u>	72	24
<u>The Reasoner</u>	48	72
<u>The Leisure Hour</u> )		
)		
<u>Household Words</u> )	each 12	each 12
)		
<u>Chamber's Journal</u> )		

Dick Turpin and Jack Sheppard were also described as having a very great sale, and 72 copies of two "more obscene" kinds of work, Peeping Tom and The Town had been sold weekly but had later been "suppressed". The Preston shop also sold about twenty-two different penny serials, with titles such as The Brigand and Murder by the Broadside Inn, referred to by Clay as "debasing trash", each of which sold about forty-eight copies weekly. These figures, Clay pointed out, referred only to business transacted with itinerant book vendors for sales to the surrounding district. During the fifteen minutes which he actually spent in the Preston depot however, "three persons were fully occupied in attending to retail customers, most of whom were purchasing trashy works". The shop, despite dealing "largely in this pernicious stuff" also had a very large sale of works which Clay referred to as "more or less harmless" and some which were "positively useful". These included the London Journal, Family Herald and Reynolds Miscellany. Other shops sold far more of the latter type of publication. One "young and very intelligent"

Preston bookseller who dealt mainly in the "better kind of cheap serials" gave him the following figures for the previous week's sales.

68 dozen	<u>London Journal</u>	
29 "	<u>Family Herald</u>	
46 "	<u>Cassell's Family Paper</u>	
26 "	<u>Reynold's Miscellany</u>	
6 "	<u>Home Companion</u>	
4½ "	<u>Cassell's Popular Educator</u>	
4 "	<u>Leisure Hour</u>	
4 "	<u>Chamber's Journal</u>	
1 "	<u>Household Words</u>	
3 "	<u>Joseph Wilmot</u>	)
		) "Bad".
1½ "	<u>Mysteries of London</u>	)

Clay noted the success of such publications and claimed that "if such works as The Leisure Hour were only made as large, and consequently as cheap as the others, they would ultimately put the more trashy aside". He certainly believed that Preston's workers had a taste for reading, claiming that during the long 1853/4 strike the sale of the penny publications hardly diminished, although the demand for higher priced works did.<sup>1</sup>

The habit of reading was clearly becoming more widespread during the middle years of the nineteenth century, and it does seem that many working people, when not distracted by long working hours or prevented by severe financial difficulties, were interested in reading as a source

1. Letter from John Clay to Lord Stanley, 25th January, 1854, reprinted in Rev Walter Lowe Clay, op cit, pp 545-7.



of amusement and information. However, the price of cheap editions of standard works which were coming out between 1830 and 1860 was still too dear for many.<sup>1</sup> Reading habits clearly varied, too, from the purely recreational to works of a more serious or 'improving' nature, and it is quite possible that many did no reading at all.

The middle classes, as already indicated, showed a keen interest in working-class reading material, and some of them attempted to adapt the publications of the religious press to popular taste and to distribute tracts; such endeavours were apparently not always successful and the poor seem to have resisted buying such works.<sup>2</sup> More serious working-class readers however were themselves often scathing about some of the popular literature. The Penny Magazine for example was mocked by the Poor Man's Guardian for its 'useful' knowledge - notes on the lost comet, woodcuts of the bear, the swallow, etcetera - and the latter journal posed a choice between knowledge "calculated to make you free ..... or namby-pamby stuff published expressly to stultify the minds of the working people and make them the spiritless and unresisting victims of a system of plunder and oppression".<sup>3</sup> Working-class autobiographies also refer to the difficulties of obtaining suitable reading material.<sup>4</sup> Clearly both middle-class and working-class readers had objections to "cheap trash", but their definitions of this may often have differed in significant ways.

1. See J F C Harrison, op cit.

2. Webb, op cit., p 26.

3. Ibid, p 80.

4. Vincent, op cit., eg p 118.

In addition to the search for suitable material there were other difficulties attached to the pursuit of reading. Serious reading as a solitary endeavour could mean withdrawal from family and friends, and much sacrifice of free time. Feelings of loneliness and isolation seem to have been common, and autobiographies show that meeting with another worker similarly involved in 'self-improvement' is a central recurring event, which brought with it some relief from loneliness, as well as the practical benefits of sharing books and pooling knowledge.<sup>1</sup> The extent to which reading did exclude families, and in particular the women of the family is extremely difficult to gauge, however, partly due to its private nature and partly as a consequence of the fact that women's own voices are so seldom heard. Evidence from marriage registers does show that the incidence of female literacy was lower than that of men,<sup>2</sup> and in 1849 Samuel Smiles felt that female artisans were less interested in reading than men "because, generally speaking, they are the worst educated". In the manufacturing districts more women were unable to read and write than men, he explained, and indeed in the West Riding institutions had been formed for the express purpose of educating young women.<sup>3</sup> Women had less opportunity than men to acquire even a limited education, but they were not necessarily less interested in such pursuits. Another witness to the Select Committee on Public Libraries claimed that lectures at the Manchester Athenaeum were attended more by women than men, and that these did much to "extend a taste for reading amongst them".<sup>4</sup> There is evidence too that

1. Ibid, pp 126-7.

2. See eg Barbara Taylor, Eve and the New Jerusalem, 1983, p 77. Since girls in school were often taught reading but not writing however, some of these women may have been able to read.

3. PP 1849 (548) Vol XVII, Select Committee on Public Libraries, p 129.

4. Ibid, p 155.

intellectual activity need not involve withdrawal from family.

Thomas Whittaker, having learned to read in Sabbath School, later commenced the "formidable undertaking" of learning to write. He bought pens, ink, and paper, and "commenced operations by my fireside, in the presence of my wife and child".<sup>1</sup> Joseph Crabtree, a Chartist and linen weaver by profession, who for twelve months was Barnsley correspondent for the Northern Star, was taught to read and write by his wife.<sup>2</sup>

The pursuit of 'self-improvement' could distance a man from fellow workers, even those with the same occupational background,<sup>3</sup> and there were some tensions between readers and non-readers within the working class. 'Moral improvement' could imply a degree of superiority over others, and could involve attacks on 'non-rational' aspects of traditional labouring culture such as superstitions or drinking. Since drinking was also tied up with recreation the reader might become separated from traditional leisure pursuits as well as being subject to sanctions and hostility at work. Those who worked alone had some advantages as they had more privacy and often some control over their labour. Joseph Livesey recalls how during his youth as a weaver, the cellar was his college, the 'breast-beam' his desk, and that he was his own tutor, reading and weaving at the same time for hours on end.<sup>4</sup> The atmosphere in such cases would also be quieter than in the more industrialised trades and the work

1. Thomas Whittaker, op cit, p 62.

2. PRO, HO 20/10, Confidential Reports on Political Prisoners, 1841.

3. On this and the following discussion see Vincent, op cit.

4. Joseph Livesey's autobiographical notes, in The Staunch Teetotaler, 1868, pp 197-8.



probably less heavy, although as Livesey also notes the isolation could be considerable. Collective workplaces on the other hand brought opportunities for conversation, new ideas and collective organisation, which were not always destroyed by tensions and conflict.<sup>1</sup>

There were other problems facing the working-class reader: much reading inevitably had to take place in far from ideal conditions before or after work, and this could be very hard. Thomas Whittaker describes how in his childhood years he had to rise very early in the morning, not later than five o'clock, and walk a mile to the mill. He then worked "with very little intermission for meals" all through the day, arriving home at eight o'clock. When he did get home, and sat down, he would often drop asleep at once, "from weariness and fatigue".<sup>2</sup> Despite such obstacles, however, the pursuit of knowledge was often remarkably persistent. John Clay, the prison chaplain, wrote in 1844 that the "pursuit of mere knowledge under difficulties" had seldom been illustrated more singularly than in the case of "HH", a prisoner who had been sentenced to two months at the last sessions, and in conversation with whom Clay had "been struck with a most uncouth appearance, dialect and manner, combined with information quite unusual in one of his station". The prisoner gave Clay the following account of himself.

"I am 44 years old. I worked at the print works, at A- for 11s a week. I have a wife and 7 children. I went first to a Baptist and then to a Swedenborgian Sunday School until I was 16. I learned to read and write. I married when I was 21. I was always fond of reading. I read all of Swedenborg's works before I married. Afterwards I read Goldsmith, Hume and Smollett. For 13 or 14 years I earned from 20s to 30s a week, and I spent all I could spare in books, although I

1. See Vincent, op cit, pp 123-4.

2. Thomas Whittaker, op cit, pp 57-8.

drank a little occasionally. My books altogether cost me between £50 and £60. In botany alone I spent more than £10. After I read Hume and Smollett I tried to master Guthrie's Geography; then I read Goldsmith's Greece and Rome; then Rollin's Ancient History; then I bought Goldsmith's Natural History edited by Brown. I joined a chemical society at A-, and bought Murray's Elementary Chemistry and Ure's Chemical Dictionaries. I took 20s' worth of Dr Adam Clarke's New Testament. When I took to botany the Swedenborgian minister said a little Greek would assist me, and he made me a present of a Greek Testament; after that I got one of Bagster's editions, Greek and English; and I also bought 2 Greek lexicons. The Swedenborgian minister lent me Frey's Hebrew lexicon, and I made some way in it, so that when reading theology I could make out any Hebrew words. I made most labour of botany, and got so far as to understand the cryptogamous plants. I only studied the system of Linnaeus; though Smith's Grammar contained both his system and Jussieu's..."<sup>1</sup>

This kind of education by its nature leaves few records behind, autobiographies and comments of this kind being the main sources, so its extent is impossible to measure. There are however enough available examples of self-educated working men to indicate that it was by no means uncommon. Records of the Chartist prisoners, for example, show a number of them as self-taught or engaged in 'improving' activities,<sup>2</sup> and the existence of a working-class reading public worth worrying about is shown by the middle-class activity of distributing tracts, and the attempts by those engaged in such activity to mimic popular literature.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, there was also a 'hearing' public in existence, which greatly increased the numbers of those having access to the printed page. In this sense reading in this period cannot be thought of as a totally private pursuit; it was in some ways a very public one.

1. LCRO, QGR/2/39, 1844 Report of the Chaplain of the Preston House of Correction.

2. PRO, HO20/10, Confidential Reports on Political Prisoners.

3. See Webb, op cit.

Reading out loud was often an important aspect of pub life and at other social gatherings. As one Preston writer points out this was a period when politics and drink went hand in hand; newspapers were read in pubs and political groups met there.<sup>1</sup> Another of Preston's historians reinforces this point:

"It was in those days, when books and newspapers were beyond the means of working people. ....They flocked to the public house on a Sunday evening as regularly as if it had been a place of worship, not for the set purpose of getting drunk, but to hear the newspaper read. The success of the landlord depended, not on the strength of his beer altogether, but on having a good reader for his paper".<sup>2</sup>

Such reading went further than newspapers too, according to Henry Anderton, one of the leading temperance reformers, who was concerned that "soon infidel publications took the place of the newspaper".<sup>3</sup> Illiteracy, then, did not prevent political discourse,<sup>4</sup> nor did it mean total lack of access to the printed word. 'Education by collision' in many of its forms was not entirely dependent on ability to read and write.

\* \* \*

1. James Ellison, Dawn of Teetotalism, 1932.
2. William Pilkington, op cit, 1890, p 193.
3. Ibid.
4. E P Thompson, op cit, 1968.



As Preston expanded during the nineteenth century the new circumstances and problems encountered by many of its working-class inhabitants in the context of rapid industrialisation gave rise to a whole host of influences which provided an "education by collision". This process encompassed a range of activities and experiences, from trade unionism, to temperance reform, to more solitary pursuits. It involved large numbers of workers; indeed the urban dweller would have difficulty in avoiding all those influences which could 'educate him against his will'<sup>1</sup>, as is shown in the following account of the Preston Cockpit, one of the venues for public meetings in Preston.

"....All manner of subjects were thrashed out in this forum of the borough. The Chartists propagated those vigorous political views which seemed to startle mild, steady-going men, but which found cheerful acceptance among the rugged, earnest men who led the Radical politics of Preston half a century ago. Social subjects, too, were dealt with, and I remember Robert Owen disseminated socialistic doctrines under the name of 'Home Colonisation' .....But the great purpose to which the Old Cockpit was in my early days consecrated was the work of Temperance reform .... Of course the place was not merely the rendezvous of Temperance workers. The Cockpit could be obtained at a very reasonable charge - I think it was 5s - and all kinds of movements were propagated there .... But we had some of the best thinkers of the day with us at times, and I have known the pit often enough full of men and women who had many of them hurried from their work ..... And the people, too, were all attention, drinking in every word that was uttered by men who dealt with the great problems of political or social life .... We had John Reyner Stephens (sic), beloved by every factory worker, for was he not a stalwart champion of their rights?... We had lectures to the working class by Lomas and others ..... Then we had that rugged exponent of Free Thought, Jacob Holyoake. There was some rebellion against Holyoake being permitted to occupy the place, but all this passed over. There was many a public discussion in the hall on all manner of subjects .... We, too, had entertaining concerts occasionally on a Saturday evening. These, in addition to the meetings I referred to previously were outside the Temperance movement".<sup>2</sup>

1. See beginning of this chapter, extract from 1849 Commission on Public Libraries.

2. Thomas Walmsley, op cit, pp 2-4.

Influences such as these and the whole range of experiences of life in a rapidly expanding industrial town could make a significant impact on the lives of ordinary workers. This view was given voice by a Preston Chartist, George Halton, who argued in 1841 that "a very great portion of the people of this country had been taught wisdom by experience".<sup>1</sup> For many workers, however, this by itself was not enough; indeed it could lead to feelings of intellectual inadequacy and the pursuit of remedies in the form of more deliberate educational activity. These workers have a dual role in the history of working-class education. Not only did some of them initiate and develop their own forms of educational provision, they were also the objects of attention of middle-class reformers who directed educational provision towards them. These two strands of educational activity will be examined in the following chapters.

1. Northern Star, August 7th, 1841.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE PURSUIT OF KNOWLEDGE

This chapter takes as its theme the deliberate pursuit of knowledge through a range of avowedly educational provision and responses. Opportunities for working-class education in Preston varied from those which were self-generated and often linked with other aspects of working-class culture, such as trade union or Friendly Society membership, to those which involved participation in largely middle-class initiatives like the mechanics' institute. The chapter explores a variety of educational activities of both kinds, pointing to some of the differences as well as some of the connections between them. Finally, an account is given of some of the opinions and educational activities of the chaplain to the Preston House of Correction. This account supports the suggestion that the working class constituted an educational force both in respect of their own endeavours to spread and acquire knowledge and through the responses which these provoked in other circles.

\* \* \*

#### 1. Trade Union and Political Education

Engagement in trade union and political activities led to important educational experiences for many members of Preston's working class which were often of a rather contingent or unselfconscious nature: education by collision. It also involved, however, more deliberate attempts to educate or be educated. Through agitation of various kinds many workers became aware of the role of knowledge in enabling working-class people



to achieve social change and to take citizenship for themselves, as well as in equipping them to participate in its benefits and obligations. There were moreover older traditions to draw on, such as those of workers like the weavers, who had evolved channels of association and 'improvement' which were to continue throughout the century.

During periods of industrial or political dispute as well as during more peaceful intervals the trade unions in Preston set up and developed activities of explicit educational intent, including the establishment of reading rooms, libraries and mutual improvement classes. These were seen as an important element in the struggle to defend collective rights and improve wages and conditions. The involvement of the Spinners' Union in educational activities for example can be traced over many years and was often an important part of their approach to the social problems of the day. At a meeting held during the 1836 spinners' turn-out the Preston Chronicle reported that a Mr Grubb "expatiated upon the benefits of education", which he said had hitherto been virtually denied to the operative, as "opening the eyes of those who had the benefit of acquiring it, to a proper consciousness of their own importance and influence in society".<sup>1</sup> A few months later, in 1837, this sentiment was reiterated by a speaker at another meeting of operatives, who announced that the piecers who remained in the Union would be paid their full wages and sent to school, "in order to learn what were their rights".<sup>2</sup> In the same year the quarterly report of the Preston Operative Radical Association stated that a reading room had been established, a series of lectures delivered, and other information circulated. The committee felt

1. Preston Chronicle, November 26th, 1836.

2. Preston Chronicle, January 28th, 1837.

certain that if the members would only co-operate with them in obtaining "a real reformation of the mind", there would be no barrier, though it may retard them, which could effectually oppose them in obtaining "those rights and liberties which have so long and unjustly been kept from us".<sup>1</sup>

This kind of activity continued. Some years later, in 1841, a letter to the Chronicle claimed that some working men had taken a room in Avenham Street in which they held meetings "professing to have for their object the enlightenment of their fellow workmen in political knowledge".<sup>2</sup> In this case the correspondent was expressing grave concern about the 'real' object of such activity, which he felt was the revival of Chartism in the town. This concern over the content of working-class educational activities was a recurring and significant theme throughout the period under study. Clearly, for the operatives involved, education was seen not as a neutral instrument, but as being significantly and instrumentally connected with the aims of trade unionism and radical political movements, an aspect of it which was rarely welcomed by those who did not share their interests and concerns. Inevitably, perhaps, in the face of opposition and innumerable practical difficulties, particular endeavours of this kind were often ephemeral, but the educational tradition within radical movements endured. By 1860, for example, the cotton spinners were still active in the educational field, and had established their own 'institute for mutual improvement'. A circular to the 'Cotton Manufacturers and Friends of Preston' outlined its scope:

1. Preston Chronicle, November 11th, 1837.

2. Preston Chronicle, February 20th, 1841.

"....We have taken a large room, capable of accommodating 1,000 persons at least. Already we have expended a large sum of money in re-fittings, and giving the room that attractive appearance calculated to engage the attention of those who attend. We propose, during the winter evenings, to open our rooms as a school, for the especial benefit of our members, and for that purpose we have to purchase a large quantity of school books, copy books, arithmetics, slates etc, but still a higher class of books are necessary for the study of more elevated and better cultivated minds. Our object is to give factory operatives an opportunity to avail themselves of the time now afforded by the present Factory Act. We are compelled to acknowledge an undoubted truth - that a great amount of ignorance exists, not only amongst our body, but amongst the working classes generally. We believe, if our intentions can be carried out, it will be the means of elevating both the moral and social position of our members, and will tend towards making them better and more useful members of society; for it is admitted on all hands that the more a person's mind is stored with useful and judicious knowledge, the more rational he becomes, and more sceptical to reason....."<sup>1</sup>

Several points of significance are raised by the contents of this circular. Clearly this was an ambitious project, undertaken seriously, and seen as worthy of the expenditure of the funds of the association. Secondly, there was a recognition by the operatives of the need for both elementary instruction and advanced learning; and thirdly, the fact that there is an appeal for donations illustrates the difficulties attendant upon this kind of educational endeavour, and gives some indication of why many such experiments were piecemeal and short-lived. In this instance however it was later reported that the movement had been "signally successful", with between 1,000 and 1,100 operatives as members and "every reason to believe that this number will be, in the course of time, greatly augmented".<sup>2</sup> After three years had passed the Institute was apparently still flourishing, and Thomas Banks, secretary to the Operative Spinners and Minders, wrote to the guardians requesting the granting of a sum of money in order to employ teachers at the Institute. However, the Labour Committee of the guardians resolved "that the matter could not be

1. Preston Chronicle, October 20th, 1860.

2. Preston Chronicle, December 22nd, 1860.



entertained by them".<sup>1</sup> This was not the first representation made by the spinners to the guardians on the subject of education. During the cotton famine Banks also recommended to them that they "improve the present occasion by opening schools, in order to qualify the operatives, who can now do nothing else, for the elective franchise...."<sup>2</sup>

Similar activities were engaged in by the Chartists in the town, although seemingly not on quite so impressive a scale as the Spinners and Minders eventually achieved. Opposition to the Chartists was probably even greater, and much of their activity was of necessity fairly clandestine. However, in addition to the educational significance of their regular meetings, their organisation and their newspaper, the Northern Star, the Chartists did see the establishment of newsrooms, libraries, lectures and classes as an important aspect of the 'enlightenment' of working-class people. Such activities were an element of Chartist organisation throughout Lancashire and indeed the country as a whole.<sup>3</sup> The 'outlaw' nature of the Chartist movement however makes such activities difficult to document and certainly made them difficult to organise at the time. In 1841 for example the Preston Chartists informed the Northern Star that they had "at last succeeded in obtaining a place of meeting for twelve months" and were thus now able to "defy all the base attempts of the persecuting middle-class men" who were "very desirous of putting them down".<sup>4</sup>

1. Preston Chronicle, May 23rd, 1863.

2. Preston Chronicle, August 27th, 1862.

3. See for example Trygve Tholfsen, Working-Class Radicalism in Mid-Victorian England, 1976; Tholfsen claims that the Bolton Chartists, with their evening schools, discussion classes and reading rooms, illustrate the pattern of educational activity within the movement. See also Mark Hovell, The Chartist Movement, 1918, reprinted 1950, p 192.

4. Northern Star, March 27th, 1841.

In addition to legal and political obstacles and the usual problems of time and resources it has also been argued that there were splits within the movement as to the value of education to the working class. These are well documented in terms of the distinction between 'physical' and 'moral' force Chartism, the former concentrating on the political struggle for the franchise, the latter emphasising knowledge as a means to emancipation.<sup>1</sup> It is however possible to exaggerate the nature of this split; the two approaches were not necessarily mutually exclusive and some writers have argued that the distinction was largely false.<sup>2</sup> One of the Chartist's own historians has claimed that although the moral and physical force divisions did weaken the power of one another they were a waste of time, since the two kinds of force were inextricably linked.<sup>3</sup> It is surely true that material conditions were what formed the background to education in this period. Education could be used as a weapon in the fight against them, but at the same time their grimness set a limit on what could be achieved by education; it was thus impossible to have a purely educational approach.<sup>4</sup>

The emphasis placed on particular forms of collective action and tactics to be pursued did nevertheless differ amongst adherents of the Chartist cause and it is thus relevant to ask where the Preston Chartists stood in relation to this issue. Some light is shed on the question by

1. See for example Brian Simon, The Two Nations and the Educational Structure 1780-1870, 1974.
2. See for example Hovell, op cit, 1918; and R C Gammage, History of The Chartist Movement, 1894 edn. Brian Simon himself notes that it was the political section which did most to further the cause of educational reform.
3. Gammage, op cit.
4. J F C Harrison, Learning and Living 1790-1960, 1961.

their response to Lovett's advocacy of education as a means of securing the Charter, his much discussed 'new move'. Chartists throughout the country resisted what they saw as Lovett's attempt to make education the main element in the struggle, as did the Northern Star, which saw his approach as a betrayal, implying that the people without 'improvement' were not fit to have greater control over the society in which they lived. He was also indicted for attempting to form a separate, breakaway movement which would hamper the power of Chartism as a whole. The newspaper claimed to have received hundreds of letters from different places reporting on meetings to discuss the 'new move'. It printed "the most important" of these, one of which came from Preston. This communication announced that the Chartists there had "denounced the 'new move' gentry in 'good set terms'" and declared their confidence in O'Connor and the 'old list' and their thanks to O'Brien and Mr Hill.<sup>1</sup>

The statement from Preston does not mean, however, that a significant section of Preston's radical working class, the Chartists, had no interest in education. Preston's Chartists were engaged in the business of 'enlightenment' and the dissemination of knowledge. They were, as already shown,<sup>2</sup> distributing tracts containing 'political knowledge' and in 1837 Richard Marsden, a leader of Chartist campaigns in the town, had addressed the first quarterly meeting of the Preston Operative Radical Association. Under the umbrella of this institution a reading room had been established, a series of lectures delivered and

1. Northern Star, May 8th, 1842.

2. See previous chapter.



other information made available.<sup>1</sup> Such activity persisted for several years.<sup>2</sup> In 1839 Marsden as Preston delegate to the Chartist Convention put forward a motion that in order to show the great necessity for the attainment of equal political rights the Convention should have "the whole of the facts, descriptive of the privations and tyranny endured by the Working Community..... printed in a cheap form and sold in the Metropolis at one half the cost of Publication". In addition to these facts there would be printed along with them "a brief summary of the state of Trade shewing (sic) the rapidity of its decline for a number of years last past; the constant redundancy of hands in every kind of labour; and the base, brutal and bloody conspiracy entered into by a body of men who can no longer after the formation of such conspiracy be viewed in any other light than as a horde of Murderers, to destroy the surplus population by means of their atrocious Poor Law Amendment Act".<sup>3</sup> In a further motion he wished the assembly "to consider by what means a more full report of the proceedings in Convention could be laid before the Public...."<sup>4</sup> . .

This emphasis on the provision of information which would lead to change was an emphasis on the need for education in a broad sense, a need which the Convention as a whole appreciated. A decision was taken by the delegates to appoint "missionaries" to areas where they were most needed, their brief being "to explain the People's Charter - to obtain signatures to the National Petition for Universal Suffrage - to collect subscriptions

1. Preston Chronicle, November 11th, 1837.

2. See eg Preston Chronicle, August 27th, 1842; Northern Star, June 24th, 1848.

3. British Museum, Francis Place Collections, Add Mss 34, 245, A & B, Correspondence and Papers of the General Convention of the Industrious Classes.

4. Ibid.

of Rent, and by every legal and constitutional means, to extend political information among the people...."<sup>1</sup> Educational 'missionary' work of this kind was undertaken at both a national and a local level, with Chartist branches across the country engaging in it, including the Metropolitan Charter Union, the Northern Political Union of Newcastle, the Leeds Radical Association and the Glasgow Chartists.<sup>2</sup> The philosophy of such endeavour is well illustrated by a resolution to a Glasgow meeting stating the intention to form "a complete body of sound political information ... so as to induce the people, by imbuing their minds with this knowledge, to concentrate their energies on the acquisition of their liberties".<sup>3</sup> Projects such as these seem to have involved women as well as men. In Preston, a local newspaper report refers to "the Chartist lecturers, both male and female"<sup>4</sup> and Marsden's report of his 1839 'agitating tour' of Lancashire mentions considerable numbers of females present at both Burnley and Padiham meetings, "who seemed to take a lively interest in our proceedings".<sup>5</sup> In Manchester there were regular women's Chartist meetings and the Chartist lecturer James Cartledge told the menfolk to stay at home on Tuesday nights to let the women attend female meetings.<sup>6</sup>

The educational impulse seems to have touched many adherents to the Chartist cause. The case of Marsden is particularly interesting, given his obvious concern to inform and educate, because he was seen by

1. See Northern Star, March 2nd, 1839.

2. See Hovell, op cit.

3. Ibid, p 192.

4. Preston Chronicle, November 5th, 1842.

5. Northern Star, June 29th, 1839.

6. D S Gadian, A Comparative Study of Popular Movements in North West. Industrial Towns 1830-1850, PhD Thesis, Lancaster University, 1976, pp 342-3.

contemporaries as firmly located within the 'physical force' tradition of the Chartist movement. Gammage for example reports that at the 1839 Convention Marsden was associated with "the extreme school of Harney and Rider" and "seemed ready to adopt the most forcible measures in order to affect the object of his wishes".<sup>1</sup> In the same year the Preston Chronicle reports that Marsden's address to a Chartist meeting of about two thousand was "chiefly directed to the advocacy of physical force, and the legitimacy of using compulsory means to obtain the end sought for by the Chartists".<sup>2</sup> At the same time, however, we have seen his involvement in reading rooms, his desire to distribute tracts, his belief in the educational role of the Northern Star,<sup>3</sup> and his 'agitating tours' of the Northern district. In 1841 he was appointed as a salaried lecturer by the North Lancashire Chartists, after O'Connor, in the Northern Star, had asked why "one of the most honest Chartists in the world and the man who drew tears from the flinty eyes of the Birmingham patriots and the London reporters" was allowed to work fifteen hours a day for seven shillings a week while there was such a demand for Chartist Lecturers. "Marsden is a modest man" he continued "but why not drag him from his loom into the field".<sup>4</sup> This advice being followed, the North Lancashire delegate in September 1841 enlisted Marsden as a lecturer for six weeks initially. He was reappointed in October and retired in September.

Owenite Socialism was a movement in which education always occupied a central place ideologically at least, but the present study has not found a great deal of evidence of Owenite activity in Preston,<sup>5</sup> although

1. Gammage, op cit, p 65.

2. Preston Chronicle, April 6th, 1839.

3. See also previous chapter.

4. Northern Star, June 19th, 1841.

5. See previous chapter for further discussion of this point.



it was certainly not absent from the town. The Albert Street Co-operative Society for example was instituted at Christmas 1834 to attain "an equal enjoyment of the necessaries and conveniences of life, which are to be obtained by moral rectitude", and to secure the same for their children, "by conforming their minds to the principles of co-operation, and adopting the best system of education for that purpose".<sup>1</sup> Nor does it seem likely that this was the only such society; a Hall of Science in Upper Walker Street was closed by order of the mayor in 1844, and a summons taken out against those who had the management of it.<sup>2</sup> No further details of the educational activities of these co-operators and secularists have come to light, but they were clearly seen as important, as was the case within the Owenite movement as a whole, with its insistence on 'Knowledge is Power' as a guide for action.<sup>3</sup> A member of the original 'Rochdale twenty-eight' co-operative pioneers describes how a percentage of their money was set aside for educational purposes, by which they meant not reading, writing and arithmetic, but "education for the social life of youth and manhood". His detailed account provides an indication of the form such education might take.

"We have, you see, a library of about 7,000 volumes of good and useful books, adapted to all classes and ages of readers. The pioneers are of no party in literature; we seek good everywhere. Moreover we have a very useful institution called a reference library, always open, in which there are 150 volumes of first-class works, well adapted for giving immediate information on subjects which concern all classes of the community. There are large globes, maps, atlases and a telescope in every reading room for the use of members. We know down in Rochdale all about the march of our army in Abyssinia. We have eleven newsrooms, all airy, cheerful apartments, well warmed and lighted, with comfortable seats and reading desks. The newsrooms are situated

1. LCRO, DDPr 37/54, Rules of the Albert Street Co-operative Society.
2. Preston Chronicle, October 5th, 1844.
3. See A E Musson, 'The Ideology of Early Co-operation in Lancashire and Cheshire', in Transactions of the Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society, Vol LXVIII, 1958, pp 117-139; and J F C Harrison, Utopianism and Education: Robert Owen and the Owenites, 1968.

in those parts of Rochdale where the working men chiefly live. They have not to walk far from home to the pleasant reading room, where they will find laid out for them daily and weekly newspapers, periodicals, monthly magazines and quarterly reviews, representing all shades of politics religion and social systems. I had almost forgotten to tell you, that if a working man wishes to borrow a microscope to examine fine work, or insects or flowers gathered in his walks afield, or an opera glass to scan the features of some distinguished lecturer or speaker, or a stereoscope to amuse or instruct the children, he can obtain the loan of them for a trifling fee. We sell the old newspapers and periodicals every three months, and then a mechanic can procure a set of a valuable periodicals for a sum almost nominal...."<sup>1</sup>

It has been argued however that the example of the Rochdale Pioneers was little followed, many members being more concerned with the dividend than with education,<sup>2</sup> and this may help to explain why no such record is available for Preston. But as the same writer points out, and as has been argued in this thesis in regard to other movements, participation was in itself seen as an educational experience, and there was certainly a tradition of public lectures and debates. That the Socialists did attempt to 'spread the word' within the town is evident from the writings of John Clay, the chaplain of the House of Correction, whose own educational activities were aimed particularly at countering the influence of the Owenites and the "political fanatics" whom he was convinced were recruited from among "the ignorant or indifferent".<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, there was, in general, considerable support from trade unionists and Chartists for the principles of co-operation; indeed one historian argues that among working-class leaders of the period these were all facets of the same movement. This had important implications

1. LCRO, DP 376/3, Scrapbook of Newspaper Cuttings, February, 1868.

2. Harrison, op cit, 1961.

3. LCRO, QGR/2/31, Report of the Chaplain of the Preston House of Correction, 1840.

for working-class educational initiatives, since that movement was "inspired by Owen's belief in the infinite power of education to protect the character of man and his moral and material well being".<sup>1</sup>

## 2. Temperance, Church and Friendly Society Education

Whilst radical movements in Preston and elsewhere did offer educational opportunities to the working class, not all 'improving' activity took place under their umbrella. Church and chapel, temperance and teetotalism and Friendly Society membership were other pursuits which often engendered an interest in acquiring new knowledge and skills. 'Unattached' reading circles and 'mutual improvement' groups also grew up out of a desire to develop or extend literacy and other fundamental skills, and to understand the issues of the day and the works of well-known thinkers and writers. The reminiscences of the Preston temperance reformers provide interesting examples of how 'education by collision' could lead to more deliberate attempts at instruction, as in the detailed account of one of their number, Thomas Walmsley, who tells us that

"....over the Cockpit was a spacious room in which was held a Young Men's Temperance Academy. There are some men still living who were members of that academy, and who derived great benefit from the instructions they received there. Each member had a key and was at liberty to enter the room at any reasonable hour. On a table in the centre of the room we had a number of newspapers, periodicals and books of reference. One night a week John Broadbelt .... taught a grammar class and instructed us in composition .... On certain nights we had a sort of mutual improvement class and held discussions on various questions...."2

1. Thomas Kelly, A History of Adult Education in Great Britain, 1962, p 138.
2. Thomas Walmsley, Reminiscences of the Preston Cockpit and the Old Teetotallers, 1892, p 8.



Joseph Livesey, the leading temperance and teetotal pioneer, was persistent in his concern for the education of adults, mainly as a result of his somewhat paternalistic belief that working people could educate their own children and would be glad to do so, were it not for the intemperance and vice which made their education as important as that of their offspring.<sup>1</sup> This view ensured his support for the activities of the Academy and led to his major involvement in the establishment of a 'mechanics institute' in the town. It was common for temperance reformers to stress the value of education. Henry Bradley, for example, a member of the first Preston Temperance Society was also one of the founders of the Adult School Society in 1832.<sup>2</sup> Henry Anderton, another temperance reformer and a leading Methodist formed an association of working men and their wives to begin a regular course of reading. This led to the establishment of many small libraries and reading rooms in which working men were appointed readers.<sup>3</sup>

Notwithstanding the particularly close relationship between Methodism and the temperance movement, other denominations often also had the encouragement of temperance as one of their aims and sometimes a similar interest in education. In 1852, for example, the Vicar of St Mary's church founded the first temperance society in Preston connected with the Church of England. The society organised lectures and entertainments and like the Methodist temperance reformers organised a

1. Ibid.

2. James Ellison, Dawn of Teetotalism, 1932.

3. William Pilkington, The Makers of Wesleyan Methodism in Preston, 1890.

large staff of visitors who went to see members in their homes.<sup>1</sup>

John Clay, chaplain to the Preston House of Correction, appears in Thomas Walmsley's memoirs included in the list of temperance workers. Walmsley claimed that "his reports and speeches were of great importance to the early Temperance pioneers" and that he was "in deep sympathy with the temperance movement". He took a large part in the formation of the Mechanics Institution, was anxious to establish a free library in Preston and was "a warm advocate of education", states Walmsley, claiming that "the Reverend John Clay's history should be written from a temperance standpoint".<sup>2</sup>

The link between temperance and church activity was by no means total however. Thomas Whittaker, a millworker and later temperance lecturer who is mentioned in a history of Preston teetotalism<sup>3</sup> claimed that the Established Church treated the reformers with "silent contempt" and that in the early days only the Quakers and the Primitive Methodists were welcoming to advocates of the temperance cause. The Wesleyans, he claimed, "in very many cases stepped out of the way to hit us, and as is well-known treated our petitions and memorials to Conference with scant courtesy indeed; and so far as conference power went the doors of their chapels, and even schoolrooms, were closed against us....."<sup>4</sup> The phrase "so far as conference power went" is probably a key one here and it does seem to be the case in Preston at any rate that some educational activities had their roots in both temperance reform and

1. See Henry Cartmell, The Preston Churches and Sunday Schools, 1892.

2. Thomas Walmsley, op cit, 1892, pp 52-53.

3. William Pilkington, Then and Now, 1911, p 70.

4. Thomas Whittaker, Life's Battles in Temperance Armour, 1884, p 89.

the church.

With or without a temperance connection, organised religion was at the centre of much educational provision in the town. The most extensive contribution of the churches was the development of a system of formal schooling aimed at working-class children and young people, but this did not mark the limits of their involvement. In 1852, for example, the Reverend S F Page of the Parish of St Paul established a Mutual Improvement Society which held classes and arranged lectures "on subjects of the most varied interest".<sup>1</sup> There seem to have been several similar endeavours, their establishment and progress sometimes reported in the local papers - such as the Christ Church Mutual Improvement Society, which held fortnightly lectures and had a library as well as a room for recreational pursuits like drafts and chess.<sup>2</sup> Women did participate in societies of this kind, although the fact that this aroused comment may indicate that men were more likely members. The Chairman of Grimshaw Street Chapel Mutual Improvement Society had often been pleased, he said, to see so many young women as well as young men at the weekly discussions, and he was glad that "the ladies took an interest in subjects political, scientific and theological...".<sup>3</sup> It may be that such societies had a certain narrowness of outlook, concentrating on the Bible to the exclusion of other material,<sup>4</sup> and it is certainly the case that they were often intended to counteract the effects

1. Ernest Hudson, Sketches of the History of the Parish of St Paul, Preston, 1826-1926, 1927, p 23.

2. Preston Chronicle, November 14th, 1863; see also Harrison, op cit, 1961, for further discussion of this sort of provision by churches and chapels in the nineteenth century.

3. Preston Chronicle, May 9th, 1868.

4. Harrison, op cit, 1961.



of activities carried out within the more radical movements,<sup>1</sup> nevertheless, the churches and chapels, in Preston as elsewhere, provided opportunities for learning which might otherwise have been hard to find, and which, once gained, could not necessarily be contained within intended limits.

Friendly Societies also offered a range of opportunities for learning, in addition to their social and financial benefits. According to Christopher Thomson, an artisan member of the Oddfellows Society, the educational provision of that organisation included libraries, lectures and weekly classes for both members and non-members and their children. Subjects taught were reading, writing, arithmetic and drawing, and there were 'conversation classes' for the discussion of various subjects such as history, 'social progress' and natural history.<sup>2</sup> Certainly the Preston Oddfellows were interested in educational activity, precisely because their 'education by collision' - their new experiences as officers in the society - had made them aware of their need to develop skills and knowledge which would fit them to discharge their duties more adequately.<sup>3</sup> They formed a Mutual Improvement Society, with a membership cost of 1s 7½d per quarter or 6s 6d per year, for which sum the advantages of a library, lectures and classes would be available, and the movement was said to be promoted principally by working men.<sup>4</sup> Although it may be said that such societies represented only a 'respectable' minority of the working

1. See further discussion in this chapter, and below, ch 7.

2. Christopher Thomson, The Autobiography of an Artisan, 1847.

3. Preston Chronicle, March 2nd, 1844.

4. Ibid. It is unclear whether women also participated; this may have varied from one society to another. Thomson claimed that his particular organisation planned to admit families to the benefits of the Association and to encourage them to take part (Thomson, op cit, p 378).

class,<sup>1</sup> it has also been argued that they spent much of their time defending their independence and rebuffing middle-class advances, with education an important tool in this struggle. This approach is illustrated by the contention in the Oddfellows Magazine that

"They (the workers) won't submit to be either drilled, patted or coaxed, or bullied into the realisation of the pet theories of self-styled philanthropists or professors of 'social sciences' of every description. They think themselves capable of managing their own affairs, and consequently dislike such intrusive patronage, however kindly meant."<sup>2</sup>

Friendly Societies were an obvious locus for such 'improving' activity, but it seems likely that other mutual instruction groups came together on the basis of workplace, neighbourhood and so on. These are more difficult to document since they were probably ephemeral, and being informal and 'unattached' forms of association did not always arouse comment. The Preston Chronicle noted however that "many of the working men of the town are making a spontaneous effort to establish such a society as the Odd-Fellows are now doing"<sup>3</sup> and perusal of local newspapers can bring to light particular examples. One evening in 1847, for example, a group of factory operatives met at Mr Hool's Temperance Hotel "to devise plans for improving the time obtained by the passing of the Ten Hours Bill". It was finally agreed to open a school for mutual instruction, in reading, writing, arithmetic, and the English grammar, and if possible to have a newsroom and lectures.<sup>4</sup> The 1849 Report of the Select Committee on Public Libraries

1. See eg Harrison, op cit, 1961.

2. Quoted in Neville Kirk, Class and Fragmentation: Some Aspects of Working-class life in South-East Lancashire and North-East Cheshire 1850-1870, PhD Thesis, University of Pittsburgh, 1974, p 160.

3. Preston Chronicle, March 2nd, 1844.

4. Preston Chronicle, July 10th, 1847.

suggests too that such moves were common throughout the country.<sup>1</sup>

They existed alongside more permanent educational facilities such as the mechanics' institutes, one of which, known as the 'Institution for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge', was set up in Preston in 1828.

### 3. The Institution for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge (Mechanics' Institute)

During the nineteenth century mechanics' institutes were being founded in many towns and cities, partly as a natural outgrowth of middle-class intellectual activity and partly as a response to the activities of the working class. The growth of middle-class institutions such as coffee houses and clubs, circulating and subscription societies, book clubs, Literary and Antiquarian societies, Musical societies, Art societies, Public Debating Societies and Political and Religious Reform societies particularly since the years of the French Revolution has been well documented, as has the growing interest in science and the influence of the dissenting academies.<sup>2</sup> Some of these were also attempting to mobilise working-class opinion, and although the history of mechanics' institutes is often written in terms of their being founded by liberal industrialists, it is often the case that they were set up where indigenous institutions were already developing. In this sense it has been argued that the founding of such educational institutions was not merely the outgrowth of an intellectual community but was also a response to working-class educational activities, related to middle-class fears about the threat

1. PP 1849 (548) Vol XVIII, Report of the Select Committee on Public Libraries.

2. See eg Kelly, op cit, and Simon, op cit.



that they might hold.<sup>1</sup>

The motives of middle-class founders and supporters undoubtedly varied. Some wanted better education, particularly scientific and technological education for the workers, others wanted more industrious workers, or to establish respect, obedience and subordination. Some, like Birkbeck, saw them primarily as providing cultural education for its own sake.<sup>2</sup> Considerable differences in approach could be found within the committee of any one mechanics' institute, and even within the views of one individual there might be a complex mix of motivations, including both a genuine concern for the welfare of the working class and a recognition of education as a means of 'steading' them and preventing seditious activities.

One of the leading lights in the founding of the Preston Institution for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge was Joseph Livesey, "the ubiquitous reformer" whose interest in adult education has already been documented here. A letter sent by Livesey to the Preston Chronicle, urging support for the venture, gives some indication of his approach. He thought that "a liberal institution" of this kind would succeed, and confer "a permanent blessing upon the town, and especially upon the working classes, whose opportunities of acquiring knowledge are so few". Whilst he thought the support of the wealthier classes should be "anxiously obtained" he wanted to fix the membership charge as low as possible. For want of this, he argued, "many of these institutions have fallen almost immediately into those hands for which they were not

1. Ibid.

2. Kelly, op cit.

immediately intended". He suggested a charge of not less than 1s 1d per quarter, leaving it open so that others may give a larger sum according to their circumstances.<sup>1</sup> Livesey was not simply concerned with providing educational opportunities however; his zeal for 'rescue missions' was never far from the surface, and after the establishment of the Institution he claimed that it "afforded amusement to many who would otherwise spend their time in reading politics in public houses".<sup>2</sup>

Others were similarly concerned for the behaviour and morals of the working class. The Committee at the 1834 annual meeting of the institute wished to observe that though the specific object to which it limited itself was the diffusion of knowledge, it was "not the least of its recommendations to its warmest and steadiest supporters that the influences which it sends forth cannot but come powerfully in aid of religion and morals, those two great principles on which all that enters into the highest well-being of men has so great a dependence".<sup>3</sup> A year later in 1835 another speaker anxious to promote the work of the Institution enquired how the operatives would spend the long winter nights if they could not read. If they had no mental resources, he asked, "was it not possible that they would be allured to the baneful associations of the tavern or the street, - or, at best,

1. Preston Chronicle, August 23rd, 1828.

2. Preston Chronicle, October 9th, 1830.

3. Preston Chronicle, October 11th, 1834.

sit gloomily at their houses, the mind rendered petulant and peevish by brooding on its own barrenness". This was applauded, and the speaker continued that for his own part "he could conceive no more delightful picture than that of the youth, seated in the family circle on a winter's evening, exploring the rich mines of science and learning; or dwelling with harmless intensity on the development of some moral or pathetic narrative".<sup>1</sup> These kinds of sentiments were being expressed by many of the founders and supporters of similar institutions across the country.<sup>2</sup>

Although members of the clergy were involved in supporting this endeavour, attitudes towards such institutions could include hostility on religious grounds. In Preston the Institution had to defend itself against charges of Sunday opening - which it said it did not do - and also came under attack because its books were not religious and it did not teach religion. However, the Reverend Kenny argued that the books were not irreligious or infidel, and that the members were many of them supporters of religion. The Institution could not therefore be said to be hostile to religion, he believed, since it did not issue any books that were prejudicial to it.<sup>3</sup> The Reverend Moore, another supporter, was a friend to education he said, and trusted that it would spread through all ranks of the community "until the British throne should need no other prop than that furnished by reason and religion".<sup>4</sup>

1. Preston Chronicle, October 10th, 1835.

2. See for example Harrison, op cit; Kelly, op cit; Simon, op cit.

3. Preston Chronicle, October 9th, 1830.

4. Ibid.



He recognised that education made the working classes dissatisfied with their situation if they were suffering from injustice and oppression, but he did not think there was any harm in their wanting to improve their circumstances. Others however were more equivocal, and stressed the potential dangers of working-class association. The Reverend J Owen Parr, for example, gave a lecture at the Institution on 'The Use and Application of Knowledge', which was based on the statement that knowledge could be either good or evil. The infidel was a bad reasoner, he claimed. "The practical philosopher ought not to be an infidel, but a searcher after truth, with a mind open to receive, revere, admire and adore the first cause". He said that the value of the Institution would be more sensibly felt "when its operations as a counteracting influence were considered". He was glad to find that the library contained only a very small portion of books of imagination or fiction, and he also considered that the greatest care was necessary in the selection of suitable lecturers.<sup>1</sup> In fact, members of the clergy were "frequently announced as lecturers"<sup>2</sup> and raised their voices in support of the work of the Institution on many occasions. Notwithstanding variations in approach, the Institution for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge was from the beginning guided and influenced by its middle-class supporters, and this directed the course of its future development.

During the first year a large number of people enrolled at the Institution and by the end of the year there were about 800 members. A museum and library had been established and the Institution was in

1. Preston Chronicle, October 29th, 1842.

2. T R Jolly, 'The Harris Institute Preston: The Origin and Work of the Institute', in LCRO, Harris Institute Annual Report, 1917.

possession of about 1,500 volumes of standard works, mostly scientific; indeed, during the first nine years novels, romances and dramatic literature "including even the works of Shakespeare" were rigidly excluded from the Institution.<sup>1</sup> The Rules and Regulations drawn up at the 1829 meeting had explicitly stated that the library should consist of "useful books on arts and sciences, philosophy, history, voyages, travels and general literature, but no novels or plays, nor any deistical nor atheistical works, nor any on party politics, or polemical Divinity, shall be admitted".<sup>2</sup> Periodicals supplied to the library at this date were Preston Pilot, Kaleidoscope, Library of Useful Knowledge, Magazine of Useful History, Mechanics' Magazine, Quarterly Journal of Education, London Journal of Science and Journal of the Royal Institution.<sup>3</sup> In making additions to the library the committee "considered themselves as precluded from admitting any inculcating doubtful or utopian views..... they were compelled to refuse several donations of books which they deemed likely to inflict positive mischief upon readers, or decoy them in pursuit of 'fugitive false good'".<sup>4</sup> This approach to reading material was apparently mirrored in many similar institutions. On the whole they were pre-occupied with scientific education and in the early days there were commonly no newspapers in the reading rooms and no fiction in the libraries.<sup>5</sup> In London Birkbeck had stated that political questions

1. William Pollard, A Handbook and Guide to Preston, n.d., p 146.

2. LCRO, DDPr/37/44, Rules and Regulations of the Preston Institute for the Diffusion of Knowledge, October, 1829.

3. Harris Institute Report, op cit.

4. Preston Chronicle, October 5th, 1839.

5. Kelly, op cit, p 124.

were not to be debated, and that if influence was exercised it was to be in favour of a "wise and well-constructed system of education".<sup>1</sup>

The first three classes to be established in the Institution were in Chemistry, English Grammar and Composition, and Architecture. The following year Botany, Applied Mechanics and Machine Drawing were added to this.<sup>2</sup> Mutual Instruction classes were also set up and included the study of writing, grammar, arithmetic, French and Latin.<sup>3</sup> In urging the establishment of such an institution Livesey had proposed regular lectures which might in general be free. The following list<sup>4</sup> provides examples of some of those given in the early years.

Mr Threlfall - "Elocutionary Art"

Mr Prentice - "On Infant Schools"

Dr Warwick - "On Chemical Action"

Mr Franklin - "Astronomy"

Mr Dewhurst - "Architecture of the Middle Ages"

Mr Harrison - "On Anatomy"

Rev J Owen Parr (Vicar) - "The Imitative Arts as a Means of Instruction"

Mr Edmondson - "Recent Inventions, Improvements, and Discoveries"

Mr Hodgson (of Liverpool) - "Objects and Advantages of Mechanic Institutions"

Mr Moses Holden - "The Telescope"

Rev J Clay - "Sanitary Condition of Preston"

Mr Corless - "Some of the Physical and Moral Effects of the Factory System"

1. Ibid, p 122.

2. Harris Institute Annual Report, op cit.

3. Preston Chronicle, October 29th, 1849.

4. Harris Institute Annual Report, op cit, p 27.



Rev E D Rendell - "On the Influence of the Fine Arts"

Mr J B Hodgkinson - "On Entomology"

Mr Hamilton - "Phrenology Objectionable"

Rev J Edwards - "On the Formation and Development of Character"

Mr Philip Park - "On the Drainage of Towns, and on Irrigation  
connected therewith"

Mr Joseph Kenyon - "On English Coins"

Mr John Eastham - "On Photography"

Mr Chas Hardwick - "On the Frauds of Picture Dealers"

Rev Robert Lamb - "On Natural History"

Mr Chas Hardwick - "On Lord Byron's Childe Harold's Pilgrimage"

Mr John Burton - "An Exposition of the History of Painting, Sculpture,  
and Architecture"

Mr J J Myres - "On Electricity and Galvanism"

Mr Moses Holden - "On the Recent Discovery of an Unknown Planet"

Mr Richard Veevers - "On Agriculture"

Mr J F Higgins - "Historical Notices of English Poets and Poetry"

Mr Jas Crompton - "On Literary Impostures"

Mr J G Cope - "The Study of Modern Languages"

Rev W J Kennedy, MA HMI - "On National Education"

Mr W Dobson - "On Preston in the Olden Time"

The Preston Chronicle regularly reported on the progress of the Institution and covered all its annual meetings. In 1830 it noted that the room was now open from 12.30 - 4.30 and from 5.00 - 9.00 pm every day, with a librarian in attendance to deliver books at these hours. The room was apparently much used as a reading room.<sup>1</sup>

1. Preston Chronicle, October 9th, 1830.

Despite its expansion and development the Institution faced one persistent problem, its difficulties in attracting the support of the working class. It had not been called a mechanics' institute, because it was not intended solely for mechanics or even solely for the working class, although it was mainly for them.<sup>1</sup> This, despite the name, was to some extent true of other, similar institutions; they were designed to have a broad appeal. The Reverend J Booth argued in 1857 that the mechanics' institutes had been of great service by their tendency to bring different classes together, affording "a neutral ground" in politics and religion.<sup>2</sup> The extent to which mechanics' institutes did bring the classes together is debatable. In particular the extent to which they proved successful in attracting manual workers came increasingly to be questioned, and this was true in Preston as elsewhere. Livesey himself explained that although the Institution soon secured the support of the town it did not have the support of the operatives to the extent which had been expected, "much less that class technically called mechanics".<sup>3</sup> Another local historian records that after a few years the Institution was increasingly patronised by other groups and became a literary institute, with a constantly increasing library and lectures by distinguished professors.<sup>4</sup>

Initially, however, the Institution did have some success, especially among 'superior' workers. In 1835, for example, the members' occupations

1. See Preston Chronicle, October 25th, 1828; also August 23rd, 1828 and September 6th, 1828. Kelly, op cit, pp 116-7, points out that at this time the power-driven factory was only very common in the textile areas and 'mechanic' did not mean primarily a machine operative. It meant rather 'craftsman' or 'tradesman', although the meaning was often extended to cover all manual workers.

2. Rev J Booth, 'On the Examinations of the Society of Arts', Trans NASS, 1857.

3. The Staunch Teetotaler, No 8, 1868, p 312.

4. Pollard, op cit, pp 146-7.

were as follows: 44 mechanics, 20 shoemakers, 28 bookkeepers, 40 lawyers and clerks, 20 weavers, 24 tailors, 40 labourers and porters, 12 joiners, 12 printers, 10 schoolboys, 63 tradesmen and others.<sup>1</sup>

The original committee, too, had shown a fairly strong artisan representation. All of its members were men, who were listed as having the following occupations: four mechanics, two joiners, two tailors, two gentlemen, a surgeon, cheesemonger, attorney, plumber, coal dealer, engraver, cotton manufacturer, draper, overlooker, twist maker, gardener and a sedan carrier.<sup>2</sup> The rules of the Institution stated that there should be a committee of twenty-four members of whom fourteen should be operatives<sup>3</sup> but this does not appear to have been adhered to for long. The committee elected in 1838 was composed of two cotton spinners, one hatter, three surgeons, one barrister, one physician, one editor, one stationer and two for whom no occupation was given.<sup>4</sup> At the 1841 meeting it was stated that as operative attendance had dropped off it was necessary to form the committee without them.<sup>5</sup> This state of affairs caused considerable concern. As early as 1834 the annual meeting of the Institution's committee saw them urging the operative classes to avail themselves of the facilities to a much greater extent.<sup>6</sup> A year later

1. Preston Chronicle, October 10th, 1835.

2. Harris Institute Annual Report, op cit.

3. LCRO, DDP/37/44 Rules and Regulations of the Institute for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, October, 1829.

4. Preston Chronicle, October 13th, 1838.

5. Preston Chronicle, October 9th, 1841.

6. Preston Chronicle, October 10th, 1835.



the seventh annual meeting found that "notwithstanding the favourable view which must be taken of the results which flow from efforts directed to intellectual culture, it cannot but be a subject of regret that those individuals for whose particular benefits such efforts were originally made, do not in greater numbers avail themselves of the proffered advantages".<sup>1</sup> By 1837, operatives were said to form one eighth of the total membership;<sup>2</sup> by 1841, the list of members had moved still further away from the earlier intentions and was as follows: 6 ladies, 14 gentlemen, 3 bankers, 96 professional men, 40 manufacturers, 76 tradesmen, 85 clerks and shopmen, 17 mechanics, 34 joiners and other operatives, 6 youths at school, 6 factory hands and 29 miscellaneous.<sup>3</sup>

Another concern during the '40s was the apparent lack of female involvement in the Institution. A report on the 1844 annual meeting stated that although there was a "highly numerous" attendance of members the meeting was "not graced with the company of any of the fair sex".<sup>4</sup> A speaker at an 1846 Soiree of the Institution claimed that there was a deficiency in one respect: "out of 620 or 630 members which we have on our books, we have not above the odd 20 or 30 ladies". He concluded that great as were the advantages of the Institution, "they are as desirable for our fair friends as for ourselves".<sup>5</sup> Despite these remarks, the main concern during the early years of the Institution was undoubtedly

1. Preston Chronicle, October 11th, 1834.

2. Preston Chronicle, October 7th, 1837.

3. Preston Chronicle, October 9th, 1841.

4. Preston Chronicle, October 5th, 1844.

5. Preston Chronicle, November 28th, 1846.

the social class composition of the membership. As the Chronicle's comments on the 1841 membership remarked, it appeared that "the great bulk of our population, who are employed in factories, derive no direct advantage from this valuable institution". Furthermore, it went on, this could not be attributed to means, "as the earnings of many of them are considerable, and the subscription is very small".<sup>1</sup>

This last point, however was disputed. Material factors may have been much more important than the middle classes were willing to acknowledge. At the same meeting an operative member addressed himself to the chair and said that he was sensible of the value of Mr Sturgeon's lectures (on galvanism) "but the times were so bad, so many of the workmen were either out of employment, or working only short time, that they could not afford to pay for the advantage of listening to them".<sup>2</sup> Following the appearance of this report in the Preston Chronicle this letter was sent to the editor.

"Sir, In looking over the columns of your paper, on Saturday week, I perceived the annual report of the Institute. I have always regretted my inability to join the society; and if the person who drew up that report were to visit my cellar, he would not be surprised, as he appears to be, at a hand-loom weaver not subscribing to it. If he were earning only 5s a week, and had a wife and three children to keep, and rent and taxes to pay, all of which I have to do on that sum and a small pittance from the overseers, he would not long, I think, be a member of the Institution. When his physical wants cannot be satisfied, man finds little leisure, or has little inclination to attend to moral requirements".<sup>3</sup>

Finance, or lack of it, clearly was important, but there were other factors too which led to the neglect of the Institution by the working

1. Preston Chronicle, October 9th, 1841.

2. Ibid.

3. Preston Chronicle, October 23rd, 1841.



class. The Odd-Fellows, on establishing their Mutual Improvement Society in 1844, made the following comments on its provision.

"We can scarcely help observing that were the Institution for the Diffusion on (sic) Knowledge possessed of a building capable of accommodating those working men and others anxious to meet in classes, this movement would have been unnecessary. The fact that many of the working men of the town are making spontaneous effort to establish such a society as the Odd-Fellows are now doing, will no doubt induce many to assist the institution to procure a new building, and we are sure it must stimulate its committee to increased exertions in favour of that object."<sup>1</sup>

In 1846 the Institution did move to new, larger premises, which led however to further decline in working-class participation, partly owing to its distance from the centre of the town, "in a direction almost diametrically opposite to that in which the working classes chiefly reside, and in which new factories and streets are in process of construction."<sup>2</sup>

The Institution faced competition too, since it was not the only educational establishment of its kind in the town. There was from 1841 onwards a Catholic Institution for the Diffusion of Knowledge, which also had a library with books, papers and periodicals, chess, draughts and so on.<sup>3</sup> Then there were the many activities organised by the different groups in the town which have already been discussed in this and the previous chapter, as well as other experiments in library provision and factory education

1. Preston Chronicle, March 2nd, 1844.

2. Letter from John Clay to Lord Stanley, October 31st, 1854, reprinted in Rev Walter Lowe Clay, The Prison Chaplain: A Memoir of the Rev John Clay, BD, 1861, p 549; see also Anthony Hewitson, History of Preston, 1883.

3. See Preston Chronicle, October 29th, 1842, report of the Second Annual Meeting of the Catholic Institution for the Diffusion of Knowledge.



(see below). Further competition came when the Literary and Philosophical Society was formed. There were complaints that the aim was deliberately to divide the social classes, with lecturers being taken away from the Institution. It is clear from correspondence to the Chronicle that lectures at the Institution did drop off after this and there were queries as to why classes were no longer being organised.<sup>1</sup>

Many of the factors affecting working-class attendance at the Institution were to be expected, and they were certainly common to such institutions.<sup>2</sup> Whilst mechanics' institutes may have provided skilled instruction, the teachers did not necessarily understand their students' needs and minds in the way their fellow students did, and it may also have been the case that in a large institution it was difficult to secure the same motivation and binding force as that developing among a circle of friends.<sup>3</sup> Social class relationships were invariably central to their success or otherwise. One illustration of this comes from Henry Solly, a Unitarian minister who was later the leading spirit in the Working Men's Club and Institute Movement. Looking back over the earlier period, Solly cites one mechanic's observation that "you must remember we have masters all day long, and we don't want 'em at night".<sup>4</sup> This problem was exacerbated by the frequent tendency for the masters to be the same people in both instances; ie both employers and patrons of the institute. There is evidence of precisely this in Preston. At one annual meeting one speaker, Mr Addison, noted that "Mr Miller, who might be considered

1. See eg Preston Chronicle, April 30th, 1842.

2. See eg Kelly, op cit; R D Altick, The English Common Reader, 1957; Brian Simon, op cit; J Hole, The History and Management of Literary, Scientific and Mechanics' Institutes, 1853; J W Hudson, The History of Adult Education, 1851.

3. A E Dobbs, Education and Social Movements 1700-1850, 1919, pp 176-7.

4. Quoted in Altick, op cit, pp 192-3.

the head of the cotton trade, in Preston, Mr German, who was the head of the flax trade, and Mr Paley (who) was one of the principal merchants, had each considered the society worthy of their patronage".<sup>1</sup> That men such as these were perceived as masters is borne out by a speaker's wish that now Mr Paley was President "he would exercise his paternal influence (for so it might be called) over those who earned their bread through his capital, to avail themselves of the benefits of that Institution."<sup>2</sup>

There was also perhaps a certain condescension on their part towards the working-class members. On the occasion of this particular meeting Mr Addison also took the opportunity to say that "if the Institution had not received the consideration which it merited from the operative class, still there was a pleasure in seeing the room attended by those who were perhaps a more important part of the community."<sup>3</sup> Paternalism and condescension can also be seen in comments like the following from a newspaper report headed "Weekly Lectures to the Labouring Classes".

"These lectures continue to excite much interest and to attract large audiences among the operatives. We need not be surprised at this indication of a wish for knowledge on their part, when we consider the highly pleasing as well as instructive lectures which have been delivered both by professed lecturers, and by some enlightened gentlemen of this town, who hold it as a maxim that the mental energies of the working classes should be cultivated and directed by those better informed and consequently more capable of communicating knowledge".<sup>4</sup>

Despite the success of these lectures in attracting support, however, this does not seem to have extended to membership of the Institution. A further hindrance came from clashes over the content of its educational

1. Preston Chronicle, October 5th, 1839.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

4. Preston Chronicle, January 27th, 1838.

provision. The notion of social usefulness meant that working men were often expected to study at night topics connected with the trade they carried out during the day, and poetry, drama and novels were felt to encourage habits of idleness and 'utopian' fantasies.<sup>1</sup> Both considerations influenced the approach of the Preston Institution but this was not always well received. The early ban on all works of fiction, drama and poetry was not popular and seems to have adversely affected working-class support of the Institution. A report on the laying of the foundation stone for the new building in 1846 claimed that considerable dissatisfaction was often expressed at this exclusion, but it was not until a general meeting of the members held in August 1837 that any considerable alterations to the system were made. Then, the rules were amended, but "still, however, many narrow prejudices lingered among the managers and crippled the utility of the Institution; nor was it until the last year or two that a more liberal policy was adopted."<sup>2</sup> Even in 1856, however, a speaker lamented "the great scarcity" in the library of the more popular class of books, Mary Barton being mentioned by name. He strongly recommended the purchase of three or more copies of such books.<sup>3</sup> Working people, it seems, had often had enough of their labour during the day, and did not want to read about it in the evening. J F Marsh, Town Clerk of Warrington and active in the formation of the public library there, felt that there was no particular demand for books connected with the borrowers' own branches of manufacturer,<sup>4</sup> whilst J B Langley, ex-secretary to the Manchester Athenaeum, similarly argued that it was "a remarkable circumstance that in the manufacturing districts

1. See Altick, op cit, p 194.

2. Preston Chronicle, June 20th, 1846.

3. Preston Chronicle, October 11th, 1856.

4. PP 1849 (548) Vol XVII, Report from Select Committee on Public Libraries, p 110.



works upon the steam-engine and similar works, which would be useful to those constantly attending the library, are comparatively little read."<sup>1</sup>

In addition to the desire to read popular fiction many workers wished to read books which addressed political questions,<sup>2</sup> often, as in Preston, explicitly banned from the institute. In Preston the Radical Addresses scorned the Institution for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge and announced that the intention of the poorer classes was to form a society of their own for the diffusion of useful political knowledge. They complained that the Cannon Street Library had refused to take custody of Hunt's memoirs.<sup>3</sup>

Clearly, then, practical problems were not all that stood in the way of working-class participation in the Institution. Disputes over control and content of education and an awareness of the class relationships involved in this kind of endeavour were also significant. Middle-class paternalism encompassed a concern to oversee the content of education, to control the reading matter which was available, and to ensure that opinions encountered were 'respectable' and non-seditious. Even a debate over where the new building should be situated reflected these concerns. Some felt that the Institution should be nearer the centre of the town and generally accessible to the working class, others disagreed, such as the speaker who felt that by placing it in such a situation as Cross Street (a suggested site further away from the working-class areas) they would "prevent it from degenerating into a place for

1. Ibid, p 158.

2. Ibid, pp 79-89.

3. LCRO, ELE, Addresses from one of the 3730 Electors, January 28th, 1832.

political agitation, or a hotbed of infidelity, which such institutions had in some places become, when they were erected in situations which the more respectable inhabitants would not visit". In Cross Street, he felt, "it would be under the eye of those who were the conservators of the morals of the town, and had the greatest interest in forwarding the moral and intellectual improvement of the working classes".<sup>1</sup>

The Preston Institution had indeed been guided by those who saw themselves as "conservators of the morals of the town", and despite initial opposition from some on the grounds of irreligion in particular, far from becoming a nest of proletarian unrest it led people in the direction of orthodoxy.<sup>2</sup> Many of the workers had turned their backs on this orthodoxy, and indeed the failure of the Institution to command widespread and lasting support from them caused a speaker at the 1841 meeting to proclaim that "the working classes seemed to have turned their backs upon learning".<sup>3</sup> On clear examination however this is an argument which is not easy to sustain. The working class were eagerly seeking learning through a wide range of activities of varying degrees of formality and there were other indications of their interest in it. During 1837 and 1838 a series of lectures on the topic of education itself received large working-class audiences who seemed to feel a "lively interest" in the matter.<sup>4</sup> In May 1838 Mr Simpson visited Preston and gave a series of lectures on "The New Philosophy of Education".

1. Preston Chronicle, July 20th, 1844.

2. This is the verdict on the mechanics' institutes in general which is reached by Harrison, op cit, 1961, see p 179.

3. Preston Chronicle, October 9th, 1841.

4. Preston Chronicle, December 9th, 1837; January 27th, 1838.

These were apparently neglected by the gentry and the "better classes" but numerous attended by the working class.<sup>1</sup> The latter had turned their backs to a large extent on the Institution for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge but not on education itself, as can be seen also by the cotton spinners' attempts to establish an educational institution of their own (see above). Their circular of thanks to those who supported their endeavour sets out some of their responses to the existing provision.

"Two of those who have denied us, and one of our supporters, believe that the Mechanics Institution is sufficient to meet all the requirements of the working classes; granting that it is so - why was it not erected in a situation more convenient for working men, for whose especial benefit, some parties contend, it was established? or why not long since opened branches in various parts of the town at a cheaper rate than what is charged at the present time, 10s per year? It is a well known fact, which requires no explanation, that there is a natural shyness amongst the working classes in mixing with the middle or higher classes. We can accommodate comfortably 1,000 persons in our Institute. We propose to establish a very fair library for the edification of our own class...."<sup>2</sup>

Two main points can therefore be made here. First, rather than simply asking why working people did not support the mechanics' institutes in great numbers, it is important to view them as only one among a whole range of learning opportunities. Despite restrictions of poverty, time and resources, those workers anxious to increase their learning had a

1. Preston Chronicle, May 5th, 1838. Simpson was associated with Combe, an advocate of secular education and phrenology.
2. Preston Chronicle, December 22nd, 1860; In Nottingham, too, (to take one other example) the failure of the Mechanics' Institute to gain support from those for whom it was intended was often attributed to the apathy of the working class towards education. At its annual meeting in 1850 however it was pointed out that there were five operative libraries in the town with seven hundred members and five thousand volumes, all established by the efforts of working men (see David Wardle, Education and Society in Nineteenth-Century Nottingham, 1971, p 178).



choice of activities which was wider than often recognised, and the institutes were only one of the agencies competing for their attention. Secondly, in 'neglecting' the mechanics' institutes, or in the case of Preston the Institution for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, the working class were not rejecting education altogether; rather, in addition to a number of practical obstacles which hindered use of the Institution, they were often rejecting middle-class paternalism and control.

#### 4. Experiments in Library Provision, Factory Education and Working Men's Clubs

In a period when the price of books was a deterrent to many working people the establishment of libraries was an important initiative in the development of educational opportunity. It is significant that in addition to the other forms of competition faced by the Institution for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, one speaker at its 1856 meeting regarded the proliferation of libraries as a reason for its failure to attract mass support. He pointed out that libraries were attached to some of the mills, and there were also libraries attached to the Sunday Schools, several of which contained from 900 to 1,000 volumes. One of these, not a large one, circulated upwards of 100 volumes weekly and had about 150 members, which he said was about an average of those in the town.<sup>1</sup>

Preston was also one of only three provincial towns with public lending libraries before 1850 (the other two being Manchester and Glasgow).<sup>2</sup>

1. Preston Chronicle, October 11th, 1856.

2. Kelly, op cit, p 174.

None of these early public libraries was of great use to working-class people however. The one in Manchester (Chetham's Library) was mainly for scholars, whilst Glasgow's was restricted to people paying substantial subscriptions.<sup>1</sup> Preston's library was bequeathed by a Dr Shepherd to the mayor and aldermen of the borough in 1757, for the use of the inhabitants. There was a fund producing fifty pounds per annum for additions and the interest of two hundred pounds as a salary for a librarian.<sup>2</sup> A catalogue of books contained in the library in 1839 shows works on theology, history, antiquities, voyages and travels, biography and correspondence, literature (the classics), philology, poetry, metaphysics and moral philosophy, natural history and medicine. The catalogue included many foreign titles. The rules contained within the catalogue, dated 1836, stated that the library was open from ten o'clock to four o'clock each day except Saturday and Sunday, and then again from six to quarter to ten in the evening. All applications for leave to visit the library had to be made to the mayor, or one of the aldermen, and no books were allowed out of the library.<sup>3</sup> Although it was exceptional in the period for such a library to be open in the daytime and evening<sup>4</sup> other factors militated against working-class use of its facilities. From 1839 onwards the application to the trustees had to be accompanied by a payment of three shillings for a copy of the printed catalogue<sup>5</sup> and the rule forbidding loan or removal of the books which

1. Ibid, p 174.

2. J W Hudson, op cit, p 155.

3. LCRO, Catalogue of Books Contained in the Library Collected by Richard Shepherd Esq, MB, Preston, 1839.

4. Thomas Kelly, Early Public Libraries, 1966, p 194.

5. Ibid.

was a condition of Dr Shepherd's will<sup>1</sup> meant that it was little used. As one contemporary observed, as a public library it was "no exception to the many proofs of failure to allure or interest the public which these institutions of long standing everywhere present"<sup>2</sup>. Nor, as already shown, was the library of the Institution for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge a satisfactory alternative. In general, as Samuel Smiles pointed out, the success of mechanics institutes' libraries was in relation to a middle-class not a working-class audience<sup>3</sup> and this was true in Preston as elsewhere.

Despite the failure of the permanent library facilities of the town to meet the needs of working-class people there was clearly a demand for such provision and some moves made to meet it, as shown by the competition faced by the Institution. Detailed information about working-class subscription libraries is difficult to find, since they were often small and short-lived, although we know from the activities of the spinners for example that they did exist. The appeals of the spinners for support also illustrate the lack of resources which was a handicap to such endeavours,<sup>4</sup> a problem referred to by Samuel Smiles in his evidence to the Select Committee. Speaking of the growth of Mutual Improvement Societies Smiles claimed that one of the first things the members did was to get a library together, but that they had great difficulty in getting books due to lack of money, and thus had to solicit from those who were willing to give

1. W S Bramwell, Reminiscences of a Public Librarian, 1916.

2. Hudson, op cit, p 155.

3. PP 1849 (548) Vol XVII, Report from the Select Committee on Public Libraries, p 124.

4. It has been noted as significant for example that the first three Scottish working-class libraries - Leadhills, Warlockhead and Westerkirk, were in highly-paid mining communities. See Kelly, op cit, 1966, p 209.



donations.<sup>1</sup> Many of the successful libraries apparently did receive outside assistance,<sup>2</sup> a factor which obviously rendered it difficult for working-class people to exert complete control over their reading matter and meant that choice was often restricted. Libraries which sought widespread support tended also to be more cautious in their choice of books, and were often criticised by more radical workers.<sup>3</sup>

In the mid-nineteenth century steps were being taken in Preston as in other Lancashire towns to establish a new free library. In November 1854 a public meeting was held for the purpose of considering the best means of establishing a public free library and museum, at which 5-6,000 people, male and female, were present "who displayed the greatest enthusiasm in favour of the object contemplated".<sup>4</sup> Further meetings followed, and several of the supporters of the venture claimed again that the mechanics' institute had failed to reach the class for whose welfare it had originally been intended. There were reports of people in cotton mills making collections amongst themselves for the free library: spinners at one mill held a meeting at which they unanimously agreed to give ten shillings each, to be paid in four weekly instalments.<sup>5</sup> More than twenty years passed however before the Corporation took steps to form a library and museum, the start being aided by the purchase of 4,000 volumes from the Literary and Philosophical Society. The lending library and newsroom were opened for public use on

1. PP 1849 (548) XVII, Report from the Select Committee on Public Libraries, pp 126-7.

2. Kelly, op cit, 1966, p 209.

3. Ibid, p 216.

4. Preston Chronicle, November 11th, 1854.

5. Preston Chronicle, December 27th, 1856.

January 1st 1879.<sup>1</sup>

Meanwhile, as well as the interest shown in library provision by factory workers, some factory owners extolled the benefits for working people of library provision and of education in general, and factory libraries became more common towards the mid-nineteenth century.<sup>2</sup>

Paul Catterall, a cotton manufacturer, was one Preston employer who established libraries for his workpeople<sup>3</sup> as part of his fairly extensive philanthropic activities; this kind of provision by employers in connection with their mills formed another of the opportunities which working people had to acquire some sort of learning. In 1847, Catterall and Sons established an evening school on their premises "for the purpose of giving instructions to young persons and adults, both male and female, in the various branches of useful education". They engaged "an efficient schoolmaster" for the general superintendence of the school, and he was assisted by the voluntary services of some of the over-lookers and workpeople. The number who voluntarily attended the school was said to be nearly two hundred, most of whom were apparently unable to read or write when the school commenced. It was claimed that twelve months later all could read and write well, whilst some had got as far as 'vulgar fractions' in arithmetic.<sup>4</sup> The education of the female department was felt by an advocate of the extension of this kind of scheme to be particularly useful. Here, he explained, they had "engaged an experienced and efficient dress

1. W S Bramwell, op cit.

2. In Rochdale, for example, John Bright and Brothers provided a library at one penny a week for their employees, see Kelly, op cit, 1966, p 235; see also G R Humphreys, 'On Workmen's and Factory Libraries' in Monthly Notes of the Library Association, Vol II, 1881.

3. Preston Chronicle, March 9th, 1850.

4. Preston Chronicle, November 25th, 1848.

maker, to superintend and instruct in sewing, knitting, and cutting out of every article of female wearing apparel ..... and they are further encouraged to bring to the school not only their own articles of dress, but also those of the rest of the family (including their father or brothers' shirts), to make or mend - and thus they are not only efficiently instructed, but are practically and usefully employed, in the most useful branch of housewifery, or female economy".<sup>1</sup>

The writer clearly views such an education for women as admirable, but there were many other advantages of this school he felt, which derived particularly from its being connected with the mill where the scholars were employed. One important aspect, he believed, was the shared situation of the workpeople who sought instruction there, which could overcome their preference to remain "in ignorance" rather than be subject to ridicule amongst strangers in public schools. This does seem to have been an accurate assessment of the preference of working people to be educated 'with their own kind'<sup>2</sup> but it was not only the workers who were seen to benefit from such activity, as the writer goes on to make perfectly clear:

"....the millowners themselves desire an advantage fully equivalent (in the estimation of a philanthropic mind) to the pecuniary sacrifice they are required to make; for no sooner do their workpeople feel the benefit they derive from the useful instruction they receive, through the kind liberality of their employers, than they endeavour to evince their gratitude by a respectful and cheerful obedience, and a more careful and efficient discharge of the duties of their employ, and thus a most desirable object is attained, viz,

1. Ibid.

2. See for example Thomas Banks, letter to Preston Chronicle, December 22nd, 1860, and discussion of working men's clubs below.



a reciprocal feeling of confidence and esteem, binding together with an almost indissoluble cord the interest of the employer with the welfare and prosperity of those under his employ....."<sup>1</sup>

This calculation of costs and benefits may well have been a factor in Catterall's continuing philanthropy, which also included the provision of Sunday Schools, hot and cold baths, and many other indications of "a laudable anxiety for the comfort of their hands".<sup>2</sup>

During the 1853/54 conflict middle-class perceptions of the value of such activity were once again highlighted. 'A Preston Manufacturer', unnamed, but possibly Catterall himself, argued in a pamphlet entitled Strikes Prevented that the primary need was to gain the confidence of the workers, in which case even a "less than common" rate of wages could not eradicate the strong attachments which they felt for old established firms in which they and their parents had worked for years. Confidence of this kind could be gained, and conflict defused, through such moves as the establishment of lending libraries containing "a judicious selection of the best journals and periodicals of the day". The selection of books to be purchased should be left to a committee of the men themselves "....the employer reserving to himself the power of advising, and (if need be) of interdicting any manifestly improper work". Discussion meetings should be organised addressing politics, public topics, trade and so on. These would explain grievances and deal with political economy, so that the workers could be led by good leaders.<sup>3</sup>

1. Ibid.

2. Preston Chronicle, March 9th, 1850.

3. 'Strikes Prevented', by 'A Preston Manufacturer', 1854, LCRO, DDP 138/87b, Ashworth Cuttings, Vol 3.

Other observers also emphasised the need for adult education during the 1853/4 conflict, their tone, like that of the above publication, illustrating an approach to education as a counterweight to the dangers of working-class association.<sup>1</sup> It is possible, however, that working people could avail themselves of the opportunities without necessarily accepting messages of this kind. Catterall himself was manifestly unsuccessful in one of his ventures, which was to erect a chapel for members of the Church of England who worked at the mill. The services were apparently well attended, but not by the factory hands, few of whom availed themselves of the opportunity of attending.<sup>2</sup> The working class, it seems, were selective in their patronage of the facilities which were on offer to them.

Another attempt to provide education in a broad sense, particularly following the failure of the mechanics' institutes nationwide to appeal to the mass of the working population, came in the form of the Working Men's Club movement.<sup>3</sup> In 1862 Henry Solly, a Unitarian Minister, founded the Working Men's Club and Institute Union, to create new clubs and develop those already established. One aim was to attract men from the pub and provide rational recreation within what was seen as a more civilised environment. Solly hoped that the clubs would become centres for adult education, and many did emphasise educational activity, but in an attempt to draw working men in they were to be above all social institutions, offering facilities for relaxation and amusement. Those

1. See Ashworth Cuttings, Vol 3, op cit.

2. Preston Chronicle, March 9th, 1850.

3. See Richard N Price, 'The Working Men's Club Movement and Victorian Social Reform Ideology' in Victorian Studies, Vol XV, No 2, December 1971, pp 117-147.

like Solly, and the wealthy middle-classes who initially supported the clubs, hoped that the 'civilised' environment and rational pursuits would themselves be a force for improvement.

Solly himself was present at a meeting held in Preston in 1863 in the Lancaster Road Congregational Chapel schoolroom, on the subject of working men's clubs, with Joseph Livesey in the chair. On the platform were several of the local clergy. The meeting resulted in a committee being formed with the object of promoting such clubs, where working men could have a social life without going to the pub.<sup>1</sup> Following this a circular appeared stating that a 'Central Working Men's Club' was about to be opened in Lord Street, near the market place, and explaining that the object of the institution was to provide "instruction, recreation and amusement for the working men, free from every temptation to drunkenness, and at a rate so low as to come within the means of the bulk of the working classes". The premises were to combine a reading room, a room for games and amusements, another for conversation and singing, one for business purposes, a lavatory, and an eating room, where "the principle of the cheap dining-rooms" was to be carried out as far as convenient. Smoking was to be permitted "under certain restrictions" but intoxicating liquor, betting and gambling were outlawed. The charge was to be 2d per week or 2s per quarter. The club would be "in every respect ..... unsectarian" and all persons would "find themselves on a level".<sup>2</sup>

In November 1863 the Central Working Men's Club opened. There were eleven rooms in the building and a plot of ground had been set aside for gymnastic exercise. Livesey emphasised in his speech at the opening of the

1. Preston Chronicle, October 31st, 1863.

2. Preston Chronicle, November 7th, 1863.



club that the intention was to provide relaxation, amusement and recreation, "not just dry learning", and confessed that in his time he had committed errors in that respect in the various undertakings with which he had been connected.<sup>1</sup> It appears that this was not the only venture of its kind in the town. In the same year there was also mention of St Peter's Working Men's Club, and in 1864 it was reported that this club was now self-supporting and that extensive improvements to it had been carried out. The club had five large rooms. One was a reading room, taking the Times, Standard, Courier, Manchester Guardian, Liverpool Mercury, Illustrated London News, Punch, Fun, Examiner and Times, Public Opinion, all the Preston papers and many others, as well as pamphlets and reviews. This room also contained a library of five hundred volumes. A second room was used for discussion classes, where "subjects political, philosophical, moral and religious" were brought forward, under a chairman whose duty it was "to call over enthusiastic debators to parliamentary rules and forms". The third room was used for educational classes, where members of the club were taught reading, writing, grammar and arithmetic free of charge. These classes were said to be crowded with men of every age. The fourth and fifth rooms were for conversation and games such as dominoes, chess, drafts and bagatelle. All these rooms were said to be well lighted and with a blazing fire to add to their cheerfulness as well as comfort and warmth. They were open every evening from five until ten o'clock, and the weekly charge for membership was one penny.<sup>2</sup>

Nationally, there were tensions within the club movement, particularly between the middle-class founders and working-class members, over both

1. Preston Chronicle, December 19th, 1863.

2. Preston Chronicle, October 22nd, 1864.

specific issues such as whether or not beer should be allowed in the clubs, and the more general issue of control, with some working men raising money for such clubs from their own resources.<sup>1</sup> Nor were these the only problems the clubs faced. In Preston, despite the claims of the Central Working Men's Club Committee that the club would be "in every respect unsectarian" and that "all persons will find themselves on a level", there were apparently those who thought otherwise. The weavers stated that they were establishing a room along similar lines but for themselves, as those at the working men's club were generally warehousemen, shopmen and such like, "and the weavers, as a rule, think they are looked upon as being too low, and don't feel themselves at home in their company".<sup>2</sup> Though there were tensions of this kind within the working class, statements such as these also show that the absence of some groups of workers from particular institutions or activities does not necessarily imply lack of interest on their part. Unfortunately, however, those activities which were more independently set up and more reliant on self-help, would naturally tend to be more fragile and ephemeral, and are therefore easier for historians to neglect or ignore.

#### The Chaplain of the Preston House of Correction

Many of the initiatives which have been considered in this chapter either arose out of working-class association or were a response to its apparent dangers, and the chaplain of the Preston House of Correction, the

1. See Price, op cit.

2. LCRO, DDX/1089/1, Correspondence Book 1860-1868 of the Preston and District Power-Loom Weavers, Winders and Warpers Association, letter to Mr Oddie.

Reverend John Clay, is a key figure in illustration of the latter type of approach. On Clay's first appointment to the prison in the late 1820s there was no school there at all but he persuaded "the better disposed prisoners" into mutual instruction.<sup>1</sup> This venture was apparently successful enough to encourage him to attempt to develop it. During the week healthy convicts were occupied in the weaving shops and on the treadmill, so he established a Sunday School, conducted by the prisoners under his superintendence. Eventually a schoolmaster was appointed and a night school started.<sup>2</sup>

Throughout his years at the House of Correction Clay stressed the evils of drink, the importance of religion, and the moral and intellectual state of the people as a cause of crime; in all these respects, he saw education as a crucial key to change.<sup>3</sup> He also spoke out against aspects of working-class culture such as the concert rooms ("a title which the places themselves utterly disgrace") and "low theatres" which he said were frequented by the workers.<sup>4</sup> These would not be able to exert their influence, he believed, if the people were "soundly educated".<sup>5</sup> Even more important than all this however was his constant emphasis on the power of education to counteract 'infidel' opinions and 'pernicious' arguments,<sup>6</sup> and as previously mentioned he was particularly concerned to

1. Rev Walter Lowe Clay, op cit, p 112.

2. Ibid, p 112.

3. See LCRO, QGR/2/1-42, Annual Reports of the Chaplain of the Preston House of Correction.

4. LCRO, QGR/2/31, 1840 Report of the Chaplain of the House of Correction, p 5.

5. Ibid, p 6.

6. See LCRO, QGR/2/29, 1839 Report of the Chaplain of the House of Correction.



counteract the influence of the Owenites and the "political fanatics" who he was convinced were recruited from the ranks of "the ignorant or indifferent".<sup>1</sup> His emphasis on educational activity has to be understood at least partly as a direct response to the educational activities of these groups themselves. His feelings are clearly illustrated in comments such as the following:

" Certain of these .....awakened by some apostle of Chartism or Socialism to a false idea of their capabilities, hear that 'knowledge is power' - and eventually they so find it; - they begin a course of self-instruction. They learn to read - and read mischievous books and newspapers; they acquire a little readiness in speaking, - and they speak and spread sedition and irreligion. It soon becomes difficult to mark the limits of the power for evil which their ill-digested knowledge gives them the means of exercising upon an ignorant crowd. ... Surely it is by the spread of education that the power and importance of these 'blind leaders of the blind' is to be counteracted."<sup>2</sup>

Clearly Clay had great faith in the power of education to transform working-class culture and to rescue it from what he saw as a wrongly educated and dangerous minority. This is further illustrated by his comments on the ninety-six men committed to his gaol for participating in the 1842 ('Plug Plot') riots. Nearly half of them, he claimed, were in occupations which precluded any personal interest in the wages question; more than three-quarters of them were in employment, some at average and a few at high wages. Most of them were educated at a level similar to that of other prisoners (ie fairly low) and they had somewhat less religious knowledge. Two of them however were "avowed

1. LCRO, QGR/2/31, 1840 Report of the Chaplain of the House of Correction.

2. Ibid.

disbelievers in Christianity" and one of these "furnished the only instance of ability to read and write well". This man was an active and recognised leader in the disturbances, Clay said, and was animated by "a reckless spirit and the deepest hatred against existing institutions". Here, then, according to Clay, was "an epitome of the whole insurrection; a great mass of ignorance, weakness, and folly, excited to mischief by a small portion of cunning and malignity". It was from under such influence and control that the working population must be delivered, if society was to exist, "not merely in order and peace, but at all". This was the great task, as Clay saw it, for the wealthy and instructed: to promote education and religious knowledge among their "inferiors" and to win their confidence and good opinion.<sup>1</sup>

Clay's approach to education for the working class revolved around the accomplishment of two main objects. First, to show how few were educated at all, and secondly, to show "how worthless was the education which a majority of those few received."<sup>2</sup> He was highly critical of much available education, even that provided by the middle classes. Although he stated that secular education was better than none at all, since it could at least aid improvement if the prisoner had ability to read, he felt strongly that the acquisition of mere literacy skills was insufficient. By a "sound education" he meant not just reading and writing, but "exercise of the perceptive faculties, cultivation of the judgement, awakening of religious feelings, instilling of religious principles".<sup>3</sup>

1. LCRO, QGR/2/32, 1842 Report of the Chaplain of the House of Correction.

2. Rev Walter Lowe Clay, op cit, p 496.

3. LCRO, QGR/2/31, 1840 Report of the Chaplain of the House of Correction, p 6.

Clay attempted to put these views into practice, stating in 1852 that instruction in reading and writing continued, and books "from a very extensive library" were supplied to "all persons who can make a proper use of them". More importantly, however, "every opportunity is taken to impress upon the minds we hope to improve, that to possess the ability to read and write is only possessing tools, which are of no value unless they are properly and regularly exercised". The instruction was given under the conviction that "to educate means, in truth, to draw forth a man's good qualities, to render him serviceable here and happy hereafter".<sup>1</sup>

This need for education to encompass more than the 'three Rs' was a recurrent theme in Clay's writings. He opposed the teaching of reading as a "mechanical, parrot-like achievement" and stressed throughout the importance of understanding.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, not only did he believe that even secular education was better than none, he also maintained that the dreary, irksome "parrotings of the Catechism" and the like did more harm than good, by producing an ineradicable distaste for religious instruction and public worship.<sup>3</sup>

Not surprisingly, such views did not always make Clay popular, but he was conscious that education would be the more effective the more truly it won over the working classes. He spoke of the need for well educated and friendly-hearted teachers for Sunday Schools, so that there should be less "dry book-work", less "cramming of the memory with a catechism, seldom

1. LCRO, QGR/2/42, 1852 Report of the Chaplain of the House of Correction.

2. Rev Walter Lowe Clay, op cit, pp 559-60.

3. Ibid, p 496.



explained and soon forgotten"; the scriptures would not be "desecrated into repulsive lesson-books" and a lifelong dislike of them created; and poor children would not be dragged to a church or chapel, to hear what to them was "quite unintelligible".<sup>1</sup> In the same vein he tried to appear as a friend to the prisoners in the House of Correction and claimed that an 'infidel Socialist' who had been in gaol for a Chartist illegality had told him that the prisoners usually listened to him because they thought he was willing to befriend them.<sup>2</sup>

Despite, or even perhaps because of the controversial nature of many of his views, Clay's reports and observations were quite widely used. In 1838, for example, the Central Society on Education circulated a copy of his educational investigations, and during the debates on education in 1839 Lord John Russell quoted the description Clay had given the year before of the ignorance of the prisoners. His biographer claimed that from then on, when education, prison discipline, or any subject connected with crime was under discussion in Parliament or elsewhere, he was almost always quoted as a noteworthy authority. His reports were reproduced in official Blue-books, temperance papers and educational periodicals amongst others, and many people became familiar with his opinions, assertions and arguments.<sup>3</sup>

\* \* \* \*

1. Ibid, pp 557-8.

2. Ibid, p 118.

3. Ibid, pp 126-7.

The 'education by collision' which was experienced by Preston's working class led them to initiate and develop their own forms of more deliberate educational provision. It was also instrumental in the initiation and support of a range of educational activities which were directed towards the workers by the middle classes. A key aspect of many such endeavours was a feeling of alarm about working-class association. The lower classes must be protected from infidels and agitators who were perceived to be not only questioning religious beliefs and moral standards but threatening political stability and indeed the very existence of society. The different forms of provision outlined above should not however be viewed in isolation, but in terms of their relationship to one another. Predominantly middle-class inspired institutions like the Institution for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge required working-class support if they were to achieve their original aims, and though often aimed at least partly at counteracting the dangers of working-class association they could also raise the awareness of working people to the possibilities of education. Predominantly working-class endeavours on the other hand, like those of the spinners, were often forced to solicit support from the wealthy; this interdependence set limits to what each could achieve. It in part explains the less substantial nature of some of the working-class activities, to which also have to be added such handicaps as long working hours and the clandestine nature of certain forms of association. Despite the odds, the working-class men and women of Preston were interested in the pursuit of knowledge and in this they constituted a significant educational force, both in terms of their own educational endeavours and in terms of those middle-class initiatives which were directed towards them.

## CHAPTER FIVE

## THE DEVELOPMENT OF MASS SCHOOLING : 1. THE PROVIDERS

The preceding chapters have given some indication of the kinds of educational activities in which working-class people were involved during the period under study. One form of activity which both affected and was influenced by the working class has however not yet been discussed: that is the construction of a system of mass schooling pertaining to a particular stage of the lifecycle prior to entry to the workforce. This form of education has achieved a permanence and a place within educational history which is unrivalled by other activities and institutions, and was a development of such extent and consequences that it is given separate consideration in this and the following chapter.

Education, for workers of all ages, had to be fitted into whatever time was available for 'leisure', usually a few hours in the evening or very early morning, and on Sundays. From the early nineteenth century, however, largely under the auspices of the rival National and British and Foreign Schools Societies, attempts were also made to provide day schooling for the young. In the sense that these endeavours led eventually to the establishment of an age-specific system of education for the working class, this chapter and the following one may be seen as a move from looking at predominantly adult education to the education of children. As already indicated in the introduction to this thesis however, there are problems involved in the use of labels such as these.



For even the very young, education must be set in the context of the material realities of working-class life. Pilkington, the Preston writer, describes bringing home his first wage at the age of eight, and how proud his mother was of it. "My word Will" she said, "though thy one shilling and threepence is little it is better than nothing." Every penny was vital to this family: Pilkington also describes how he had to resort to "a bit of trickery" to pass full-time before he was twelve (full-time age being thirteen). "Inside my clog heels were filled with cotton to make me stand an inch higher than I really was, and the purpose was accomplished".<sup>1</sup> In circumstances such as these boundaries between childhood and adulthood were blurred, and this was reflected in the various forms of educational activity. Young as well as older workers had the opportunity of participating in the educational activities and experiences of trade unions and other forms of association, whilst adults, although not usually to be found as scholars in the day schools, were present in large numbers at Sunday instruction. Developments in provided schooling could therefore to some extent affect workers across the age range, and for many of them represented only one aspect of a range of potentially educational activity.

The main aim of this chapter is to give an account of the provision of schooling in Preston and to explore the motivations and attitudes of the providers. This establishes a foundation for the investigation in the following chapter of working-class responses to and experiences of provided schooling. There is no attempt to give a full account of the wider developments which led finally to the establishment of

1. William Pilkington, Then and Now, 1911, p 13.

the elementary school system; such accounts are readily available elsewhere. The chapter is organised into two sections, the first concerned with Sunday schooling, the second with day school provision. In practice, however, as the following discussion shows, the two had much in common in terms of both those making the provision and their motivations.

\* \* \*

### 1. Sunday Schooling

At the beginning of the nineteenth century opportunities for Preston's working class to participate in formal schooling were extremely limited. Apart from a number of private schools which catered for the children of the middle classes, the principal established schools in the town were the Blue School and the Grammar School, both of which catered for only a small minority of local children.

The Grammar School was of unknown foundation but was endowed by the will of B Worthington in 1663. The Governors were the Corporation, who had the right of appointing the master. The Charity Commissioners reported in 1843 that the school was open to the sons of freemen without any charge, although it was usual for the parents to make the master a present at Shrovetide, according to their station in life. This varied from half a guinea to two guineas, one guinea being the most usual sum. At the time of the Commissioners' enquiry, 1823, there were thirty-six boys in the school, of whom fifteen were in the upper school under the headmaster. The education of



these boys was "strictly classical" so as to qualify them for the university, but as there were no exhibitions not many followed this path. In conclusion the Commissioners found "the low state of the school" a subject of general complaint and regret amongst the inhabitants of Preston.<sup>1</sup>

The Blue School was founded in 1702 by the will of Roger Sudell, "to the intent that young children of the poorer sort might be early brought up in religion and the fear of God..."<sup>2</sup> The Vicar of Preston was to appoint a sober and religious person for a catechist, to teach "the true fear and worship of God" and to teach English "that they might be better enabled to attain holiness, which was the design of his gift."<sup>3</sup> The early rules of the school laid down that the number of children taken was not to exceed twenty-five and that priority should be given to the poorest children of the town and parish of Preston. All were apparently to be boys; once admitted they were to attend constantly until fit to go to trade or apprenticeship, and no longer. They were to behave civilly and properly, to come to school every Lords-

1. Report of the Charity Commissioners, 1843, Vol 4, taken from the 1903 publication of reports, LCRO, pp 1175-1176.

A Catholic Grammar School was established much later (in 1865) by the clergy of St Wilfreds, to offer boys intending to become priests the opportunity to study and test their vocation without leaving home. At this date Preston Grammar School still provided a classical education but also commercial subjects. Both schools charged high fees, were situated in desirable parts of the town, and drew scholars from a wide distance. See P J Dixon, Urban Environment, Socio-Economic Condition and School Attendance in a Lancashire Borough, 1850-1876, MEd Thesis, Liverpool University, 1977, pp 126-30.

2. Report of the Charity Commissioners, op cit, pp 1175-6.
3. Ibid.



day and other days, as occasion should require, and wait on their masters to church. In the school itself only the Church of England catechism was to be taught; children attending other forms of worship were deemed not proper objects of the foundation.<sup>1</sup>

The Blue School never provided a very extensive education, nor catered for large numbers. In 1779 the Vicar ordered that boys should be limited to three years in the school, not starting there until nine or ten years old, in order that more boys might benefit from it. Later there were two Blue Coat Schools, one for boys and one for girls, but the number of children attending them was "very irregular, and did not amount to twenty of either sex, the master and mistress being old and inefficient."<sup>2</sup> It was therefore decided in 1817 to unite the Blue Coat schools with the new National School, though subsequently children in the National School ceased to be appointed by the vicar through the charity.

Clearly the Blue School and the Grammar School together were not adequate to the task of providing schooling for the ever-growing numbers of poorer children in the town, and in common with other expanding industrial towns Preston during the early years of the nineteenth century was seeing the recognition in some quarters at least that an extension of schooling to the mass of children was desirable. At both local and national level the churches occupied a central role in the provision of schools for the working class, inspired by both religious motives and the desire to preserve social,

1. Ibid.

2. Ibid.

economic and political order. The earliest developments were the Sunday Schools; the minute book of the Vicar of Preston records a decision to establish Sunday Schools in the town in June 1787. Boys and girls were to be taught in separate apartments and all scholars were to be over six years old. These schools seem to have attracted considerable support, since it was decided in 1788 to draw the line at two hundred and forty scholars, one hundred and twenty of each sex.<sup>1</sup> Other Sunday Schools soon followed, although there does not seem to have been concerted action until 1841 when the Reverend J Owen Parr established the Preston Church Sunday School Society.<sup>2</sup>

The dissenting denominations were also active in the field of Sunday School provision, the Wesleyan Methodist Sunday School for example dating from at least 1824.<sup>3</sup> The Roman Catholics set up Sunday Schools often of avowedly spiritual intent and run by the Christian Brothers.<sup>4</sup> Taken together the dissenting denominations had a large number of schools and by 1833 many more scholars than the Anglicans.<sup>5</sup> This was apparently a familiar pattern in the country as a whole, with Mann noting in 1851 that the Church of England

1. Henry Cartmell, The Preston Churches and Sunday Schools, 1892, pp 11-12.
2. Ibid, p 16.
3. LCRO, DDP 138/28, Rules for the Government of the Wesleyan Methodist Sunday School, Preston, 1824.
4. See for example LCRO, RCLv, 1855 Visitation; Preston Chronicle, February 22nd, 1834; PP 1852-53 [1692] Vol XC, 1851 Census Great Britain, Report and Tables on Education England and Wales.
5. See Preston Chronicle, February 22nd, 1834.

had more than four-fifths of the day schools in the country but less than half of the Sunday Schools. He claimed that for long the Sunday School found little favour with the Church of England generally because many clergy possessed conscientious scruples as to the employment of lay agency for religious teaching.<sup>1</sup>

The main aims of all these Preston Sunday Schools, whatever the denomination, were moral and religious. The rules of the Wesleyan Methodist Sunday School for example laid down that .

"As the great object of Sunday School Institutions is moral improvement, the teachers shall endeavour to impress the minds of their scholars, with the great importance of religion, by reminding them of their duty to God and man; and by calling their attention to 'things lovely and of good report'." <sup>2</sup>

Similarly, at the Primitive Methodist Sunday School all endeavours were intended to benefit religion, and the main object of the teachers

"to feed their scholars with the sincere milk of the word, that they may grow thereby, looking for success to attend their labours, to him who alone can give the increase...." <sup>3</sup>

As a further moral imperative it was particularly recommended that teachers should impress upon the scholars the necessity of abstinence

1. Education Census 1851, op cit.
2. Rules for the Government of the Wesleyan Methodist Sunday School, op cit.
3. LCRO, DDPr 138/33, Rules and Regulations of the Primitive Methodist Sunday School, Preston, n d.



from all kinds of intoxicating liquors.<sup>1</sup>

Discipline, cleanliness and godliness were the qualities particularly required by the Sunday Schools, and in order effectively to inculcate these virtues regularity of attendance was insisted upon. At the Vicar of Preston's Sunday Schools children who did not attend regularly were expelled<sup>2</sup> and similarly at the Wesleyan Methodist Sunday School any scholar absent three Sundays successively without a satisfactory reason was to be excluded, though with liberty to apply to the president for readmission. At both the Primitive Methodist and the Wesleyan Methodist schools the rules stipulated that scholars were to be cleanly washed and with hair combed, and whilst the former required them to be present "precisely at the times appointed for opening the School", at the latter they were not admitted if more than twenty minutes late.<sup>3</sup>

A significant element in the provision of Sunday Schooling was the notion that a moral rescue mission needed to be carried out, as with the third Sunday School to be set up in Preston, which was located in the New Preston area, a working-class 'ghetto' which was seen very much in terms of the 'abyss' - one riddled with poverty, disease, alcoholism and ungodliness.<sup>4</sup> Similarly, a Ragged School

1. Ibid .

2. Henry Cartmell, op cit, pp 11-12.

3. See Rules and Regulations of the Primitive Methodist Sunday School, op cit; Rules of the Wesleyan Methodist Sunday School, op cit.

4. See eg Pilkington, op cit.

which was set up in 1848 by members of the Sunday School Union was to cater for "poor, miserably clad boys and girls who would otherwise be left to ripen in lessons of fraud and mendicity".<sup>1</sup> The Ragged School, located in a part of the town (Hope Street) inhabited by Irish labourers "and the most destitute of the population" was to provide religious instruction for destitute children on a Sunday; this was "entirely unsectarian", the teachers being members of various Christian denominations. Average attendance at the school was about one hundred, the great majority being boys, aged from four to fifteen, and the principal instruction was in scriptural reading. The opening of the school, it was later recalled, was not a very promising one:

"the teachers being greeted with whistling, cat-calls, shouting, singing, cries of 'Fish O', 'Lucifer matches', and a variety of similar street cries and noises; but with a firm determination --- the founders have gradually gone on overcoming the obstacles thrown in their way, and imparting to the children that instruction which would teach them knowledge of their own truly destitute condition, and point out the means whereby they might improve it." <sup>2</sup>

The approach of schools such as these was paternalistic. A resolution of the Marsh Lane Chapel Sunday School "that each teacher make himself more familiarly acquainted with the scholars of his or her class, by visiting them at their own homes"<sup>3</sup> was typical. The Reverend Robert Lamb, Vicar of St Mary's when their Sunday Schools were the

1. Preston Chronicle, December 8th, 1849.

2. Preston Chronicle, April 27th, 1850.

3. LCRO, MPr 20/1, Marsh Lane Chapel and Croft Street Mission School, Sunday School Teachers' Minute Book, 1851-1866; see also Cartmell, op cit.

largest in Preston, often visited the mills and workshops in the district and was "always pleased to see his Sunday School scholars neat and clean as they were going to, or returning from, their work."<sup>1</sup>

In addition to the emphasis on both physical and moral improvement, the Sunday Schools were seen as a way of keeping working-class children from mischief on the Sabbath. Horrocks of Preston for many years paid an employee to clear the streets on a Sunday and check that the children attended Sunday School.<sup>2</sup> This firm, along with other manufacturers, also made a contribution to the establishment of Sunday Schools in the town. St Peter's Church School was started in two cottages and a cellar lent rent free by Horrocks, Miller and Company, and the three cottages used to make St Mary's Sunday School came from the same source, again rent free.<sup>3</sup> The cotton manufacturers were also involved, with others, in the purchase of buildings intended for the establishment of churches and Sunday Schools.<sup>4</sup> There is some evidence to suggest that employers such as these may have been looking to the Sunday Schools to influence the scholars politically as well as morally. One witness to Sadler's Committee on the Factories Bill (1832) felt that some Lancashire Sunday Schools gave instruction "for the very purpose of making

1. Ibid, p 93.

2. Marjorie Cruikshank, Children and Industry, 1981, p 34.

3. Cartmell, op cit , p 64 and pp 90-91.

4. W T Baldwin, The Development of Elementary Education in Preston from 1814 to 1902, MEd Thesis, Liverpool University, 1970, passim.



those children as humble and as obedient to the wishes of the manufacturers as possible". Indeed, he said, they had been used in Manchester two or three years previously to instruct the children not to strike. He stressed however that he was referring not so much to the regular teachers and managers, but to visiting manufacturers and others who used the schools to serve their own purposes.<sup>1</sup> It does seem to have been the case both that the employers could exert political influence through the schools and that the "regular teachers and managers" may at times have had other ideas. The 1853/4 industrial conflict in Preston provides examples on both sides. During this dispute a factory girl who attended Sunday School regularly had been asked to sign her name there that she would pay no more trade union subscriptions<sup>2</sup> but at another church school a sick club and library were broken up and funds withdrawn by a master "because the incumbent would not preach the operatives into submission."<sup>3</sup>

Notwithstanding the emphasis on moral and religious regeneration, the instruction in the Sunday Schools may not always have been confined to religious teaching. In Sunday Schools in general the 'three Rs' often formed part of the activities, although equally often the Bible was the main or only reading text.<sup>4</sup> Baptist W Noel,

1. PP 1832 (706) Vol XV, Report from the Select Committee on the Bill to Regulate the Labour of Children in the Mills and Factories of the United Kingdom, pp 324-331.
2. LCRO, DDPr 138/87 a & b, Ashworth Cuttings; and see Preston Chronicle, October 29th, 1853.
3. Ashworth cuttings, November 12th, 1853.
4. See J F C Harrison, Learning and Living 1790-1960, 1961.

in his 1841 Report to the Committee of Council, found that the sabbath hours, which he believed should be occupied with religious instruction, were in some cases partly spent in learning arithmetic, grammar, secular history and elocution.<sup>1</sup> There was however considerable variation in the approach to Sunday education. Part of the time was often spent in taking the scholars to church or chapel. At the Wesleyan Methodist Sunday School in Preston half the scholars were taken each Sunday to the chapel, and the other half retained in the school "to receive a suitable lecture", on alternate weeks.<sup>2</sup> HMI Kennedy condemned this practice, claiming that

"The actual work that is done in the Sunday Schools is sometimes judicious; at other times it consists too much perhaps of repetition by rote of a hymn, or a collect, or the catechism, or of reading, without explanation, some little-understood Epistle of St Paul --- It would be a great help, I think, to the religious training of the young Sunday scholars, if the morning service were shorter than it is. These young children come to the school at 9 o'clock A.M., they spend an hour in religious reading or repetition of lessons, and they are then marshalled for church, where they remain two hours or more.---"<sup>3</sup>

By the time of the Newcastle Report, it was claimed that the Sunday Schools had ceased to be places of direct secular instruction except to a very limited extent, the primary aim of the promoters being to teach religious truth and instil religious principles.

1. Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education, 1840-1841, p 65.
2. Rules for the Government of the Wesleyan Methodist Sunday School, op cit.
3. Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education, 1850-51, Vol II, pp 445-6.



Writing was said to be universally banished, and reading directly taught only to the lower classes. The primary activity was Bible reading, along with some oral religious instruction, prayers and singing.<sup>1</sup> The primary aim remained the achievement of moral and religious improvement under paternalistic guidance, as summed up in the following retrospective statement from Preston:

"Too much, I think, has been expected from our Sunday schools, without giving due consideration to the material that the managers have had to work upon. Our doors are open to all, bad as well as good; consequently the teachers cannot, in a few hours on the Sunday, always counteract the home and street influence of the week, and they have not always parental authority to appeal to. The large earnings of young persons in the cotton mills soon make the children independent of their parents. There are drunkenness, low dancing and singing rooms, Sabbath desecrations, and other kindred vices to work against, and, if it were not for sustaining faith and love, many earnest-minded teachers would give up the work in despair---." <sup>2</sup>

Preston's Sunday Schools, then, were in the main founded on the desire to counteract the influences of working-class lifestyles and culture, and little evidence has come to light to suggest that they were a source of independent working-class culture.<sup>3</sup> The employers gave some donations and other support, and it is possible

1. Mr Winder's Report to the Newcastle Commission, PP 1861 [2794-II] Vol XXI, Popular Education (England): Reports of the Assistant Commissioners appointed to inquire into the State of Popular Education in England, pp 234-5.
2. Cartmell, op cit, pp 118-9.
3. For this perspective on the nineteenth-century Sunday Schools see T W Laqueur, Religion and Respectability: Sunday Schools and Working-class Culture 1780-1850, 1976.



to see the schools as an integral part of factory culture.<sup>1</sup> Some teachers do seem however to have been members of the working class. Noel felt that this was a decided handicap:

"Often, too, it happens that the scholars working in the same factories with their teachers and obtaining perhaps nearly equal wages, fail to regard them with that respect which superior station, age, and attainments, would command."<sup>2</sup>

This situation may have been less usual than Noel implies. The important role of 'superior station' in the work of Sunday Schools was often mentioned, as by HMI Thurtell in 1848.

"---The elder scholars are attached to their Sunday School by the interest taken in their welfare by persons who are their superiors in station and education. The teachers of the upper class are usually persons of this sort, who give up their leisure Sunday hours to this good work."<sup>3</sup>

Similarly, Horace Mann, reporting on a perceived improvement in the people due to Sunday Schools, argued that this did not result exclusively from the instruction given, but also from the position and character of the teachers - "members of the middle class".<sup>4</sup> This leaves little doubt as to which class the teachers came from in his opinion. Indeed, he saw them explicitly as agents of "a

1. See Patrick Joyce, Work, Society and Politics, 1980.
2. Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education, 1840-41, p 165.
3. Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education, 1847-8, Vol II, pp 30-31.
4. Education Census 1851, op cit., pp lxxiii- lxxiv.

constant kindly intercourse between the different classes of society---".<sup>1</sup> Later in the century HMI Steele gave an equally explicit judgement, claiming that the ordinary teachers in the great Lancashire Sunday Schools came from a body "which may be designated the lower section of the middle class --- sufficiently near the working class to understand them and sympathise with them, and at the same time sufficiently superior in position and culture to be their instructors."<sup>2</sup> Taking all the evidence together it seems that Sunday School teachers in general came from all social levels including the working class.<sup>3</sup> The latter may have had some degree of autonomy in the running of the internal affairs of the schools, although ultimate authority was in the hands of their superiors. Insufficient evidence is available to permit more definite conclusions on this point, but it can be said that Preston's Sunday Schools were in the main founded and guided by members of the middle classes whose primary motivation was religious and moral improvement.

## 2. Day Schooling

Similar motives lay behind the development and expansion of day school provision which had also been taking place since the beginning of the century at both local and national level, largely under the auspices of the Anglican National Society and the inter-denominational British and Foreign Schools Society. Both societies

1. Ibid.

2. Report of the Committee of Council on Education, 1870-71, p 197.

3. It has been suggested that in Lancashire the lower middle-class and higher working-class levels figured most prominently; see Joyce, op cit, p 247.

were founded in the early years of the nineteenth century and both emphasised the monitorial system as a cheap and efficient way of teaching large numbers of working-class children. In 1814 a Committee met in Preston to consider the establishment of a school on the plan of Dr Bell and in connection with the National Society, for the education of the infant poor. The first object of the committee was to solicit subscriptions both in the town and at a distance, from people who might be interested in the welfare of the town through connections of trade or property. Land for the erection of the school was given by the Earl of Derby. The school was to be ninety feet in length and forty-eight feet wide, to give accommodation for seven hundred children (boys and girls) under the monitorial system.<sup>1</sup> Not all children were free to benefit from such provision, however, and those who were at work were particularly excluded. The Committee noted this with concern and investigated the possibilities of extending the benefits of such institutions to the children employed in the cotton mills. Having consulted with the proprietors of the factories in Preston they found that such a plan was "altogether impracticable" unless legislation should be passed which would be equally binding on all the employers. Nevertheless, the plans for the school proceeded. It was to be united with the National Society in London, and was to be conducted by the same principles and rules as the National Central School in London, from which source a master was engaged.

An early problem was the question of funds for the school.

1. LCRO, DDPr 138/22, Report of the Committee for Establishing a National School at Preston in Lancashire, December 30th, 1814.



It had been hoped to unite the Blue School charity with the new institution, so that the funds of the former might be used to support the National School, but although the scholars were brought together it proved impossible to appropriate the charity's funds in this way, so the school was to depend on future donations, annual subscriptions and charity sermons. The Committee were optimistic about the effects of the school and the benefits in particular of the Madras system, which, as well as being "economical, simple, easy and expeditious", was said to have the following advantages:

"...that it renders instruction pleasant to the scholars; that by affording a constant stimulus to exertion, it calls forth, in a wonderful manner, the powers of the infant mind; that it generates habits of order, diligence and obedience, which cannot but be attended with the best effects at a more advanced period of life; that, above all, it fixes in the youthful mind those principles of Religion, which in proportion as they are more widely diffused, will tend to ameliorate the National Character---"<sup>1</sup>

In the years following this early experiment in day schooling for the working class, there was a proliferation of similar schools, mainly connected with the churches and often, like the first, linked to the National Society. These included St Pauls, founded in 1829, St Mary's in 1838, St Thomas's in 1842, St James's in 1850, the All Saints Schools during the 1850s and so on, one parish after another keen to develop provision of this kind.<sup>2</sup> In addition to the religious impetus and the emphasis on education as a potential

1. Ibid.

2. See for example Cartmell, op cit; PRO, Building Grant Files, Education; Records of the National Society; Minutes and Reports of the Committee of Council on Education.

force for moral regeneration and social stability, a variety of other influences lay behind these developments. The possibility of attracting government aid from 1833 onwards encouraged expansion, and as the town itself continued to expand existing facilities rapidly became inadequate, schools being needed in different parts of town, within easier reach of those towards whom they were directed.

Sectarian rivalry provided a further powerful incentive to action. The Catholics were also keen to develop and expand a system of schooling, both to provide learning and to strengthen faith through religious instruction. A school was connected with the mission of St Mary's and St Winifred's churches from 1814, the same year as the establishment of the first National school in Preston. Later on there were more Catholic schools and by the 1850s Catholic schooling was well established in the town.<sup>1</sup> This was a matter of grave concern to the Established church. In 1837 the Vicar of Preston, The Reverend R C Wilson, wrote to the National Society to report that:

"the papists are about to build a school not far off for one thousand children of all denominations. We must be enabled to counteract them if possible."

Voicing a similar anxiety the Minister of All Saints in applying for aid from the National Society stressed that there were no Church

1. See W J Lowe, 'The Lancashire Irish and the Catholic Church, 1846-71: the Social Dimension', in Irish Historical Studies, Vol 20, 1976-7, pp 129-155; W J Lowe, The Irish in Lancashire 1846-71, A Social History, PhD Thesis, University of Dublin, 1974, pp 300-317; LCRO, RCLv, Visitation Returns.
2. Quoted in H N B Morgan, Social and Political Leadership in Preston, 1820-1860, MLitt Thesis, Lancaster University, 1980, p 156. See also National Society Letter Files, for Preston.



schools in the area and that he had only recently obtained a Committee of Council grant.

"Hence the Dissenters, Roman Catholics and Infidels have for many years had control of this part of the town as regards the education of the rising generation."<sup>1</sup>

Owing to the 'sectarian' nature of the schools for the poor it was decided in 1835 to establish a British and Foreign School in Preston to impart "a more extended education" to the working class.<sup>2</sup> This school was to be unsectarian in its principles, confined to no sect or party in particular. However, the project initially failed due to a number of problems, one of which was that it was comparatively unknown. Other circumstances which apparently militated against its success were that some people objected to its situation (a large room under the Independent Chapel), some to teaching by monitors, some to the singing of lessons, whilst others felt that too much was taught and no learning would be acquired. However, the school re-opened in 1838 when the Committee was confident that these objections had been overcome.<sup>3</sup>

The re-opened school gave religious instruction "on strictly neutral ground" and also taught reading, writing, spelling, slate

1. Baldwin, op cit, p 71, and see National Society Files.
2. In fact the British and Foreign Schools Society was a Society of the Nonconformists but its policy was not to allow teachers to impart any particular creed. See John Hurt, Education in Evolution, 1971.
3. Preston Chronicle, January 6th, 1838.



and mental arithmetic, geography, grammar, practical geometry, mensuration, algebra etc. At the start there were only twelve children in attendance but later an average of one hundred and twenty attended and there were one hundred and sixty on the books. Joseph Livesey claimed at the re-opening of the school that he cordially approved it and its system of teaching, which was rational and efficient. He sent his own son there.

How long this school lasted is uncertain but it may have run into further difficulties, since in 1844 an agent of the British and Foreign Schools Society on a visit to Preston regretted that there were no such unsectarian schools in the town, following which a meeting was held to take preliminary steps for the establishment of such an institution.<sup>1</sup> Despite the insistence of this type of school that the children coming to them would be able to attend any place of worship which their parents might prefer,<sup>2</sup> they were affected by inter-denominational disagreement, as illustrated in this case by rejection on the grounds of association with the Independent chapel. Among the Preston schools inter-denominational rivalry apparently persisted for many years. In 1862 for example the managers of the Wesleyan and certain other Nonconformist schools refused to join the Guild Procession due to the fact that the Protestant Scholars were to be divided and the Roman Catholics given precedence to the above Dissenting groups.<sup>3</sup> However, by 1872,

1. Preston Chronicle, June 18th, 1844.

2. See Preston Chronicle, October 2nd, 1947.

3. Preston Chronicle, August 27th, 1862.

HMI Steele, commenting favourably on the ending of denominational inspection, said that at the collective examinations of pupil-teachers they, the principal teachers and the managers of all opinions mixed and met together with perfect goodwill, adding that at Preston and at Blackburn associations had been formed comprising teachers of all denominations, united to promote the interests which they had in common.<sup>1</sup>

By 1851 there were fifteen elementary schools in Preston providing schooling for the children of the poorer classes - nine National, four Roman Catholic, two Nonconformist - and by 1871 there were twenty-seven - fourteen National, six Roman Catholic and seven Nonconformist.<sup>2</sup> This pattern whereby all the major denominations became involved in provision, but with the Established church having predominance, was typical of the national picture.<sup>3</sup> In terms of overall availability of school places, whilst Lancashire as a whole came very low in the table of educational activity as measured by public day school provision in 1858, Preston's provision compared favourably with towns like Ashton-under-Lyne, Blackburn, Manchester, Salford and Oldham.<sup>4</sup> The Sunday Schools were more numerous; HMI Watkins

1. Report of the Committee of Council on Education, 1872, p 138.
2. See Dixon, op cit, pp 35-40, also for maps showing the distribution of these schools.
3. See W B Stephens, Regional Variations in Education During the Industrial Revolution 1780-1870, 1973. Stephens points out that the Anglican community was generally more wealthy and stronger in numbers, and had a deliberate policy of promoting day schools, whilst the Methodists for example placed great emphasis on chapels, class meetings and Sunday schools.
4. Ibid, pp 30-32.



argued that the Sunday Schools had been more systematically conducted and more carefully encouraged in Lancashire than in any other county, often, he believed, to the neglect of the daily schools.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, by mid-century the opportunities open to younger members of the working class to obtain some formal schooling were widening. The need to earn a wage and the availability of employment opportunities did however place constraints on the extent to which they could avail themselves of the increased provision. Educational activities outside working hours were thus always important, and the evening hours provided one such opportunity. As the churches became involved in education they often began to offer evening classes, and the range of activity connected with some of the larger schools was impressive. The Carlisle Street School, for example, which was attached to St Paul's Church, was built in 1832 and by 1846 had 958 scholars on its books. This school, in addition to its day classes, had a Deaf and Dumb Department established in 1839, evening classes twice a week, and Sunday Schools, both of which catered for a mixed age group. In 1852 a Mutual Improvement Society was established in connection with the school.<sup>2</sup>

The real impetus to the further growth and development of the schools came however through restrictions on hours of labour and the establishment of the half-time system, effectively set up by the 1844 Factories Act. In general, middle-class supporters of

1. Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education, 1846, Vol 1, p 54.

2. Ernest Hudson, Sketches of the History of the Parish of St Paul, Preston, 1826-1926, 1927.



the system were concerned to provide factory children with such education as was necessary in the context of a life of labour, with particular emphasis being placed on the importance of obedience, discipline, decency, hard work and moral values.<sup>1</sup> Employers, however, were not always convinced of the need for the educational clauses of the Factory Acts, their own interests to some extent being at odds with the intentions of the Acts. Leonard Horner illustrated the problem of employer attitudes during the early years of factory legislation.

"I was arguing with a mill-owner at Preston, who had a very large and well-ordered mill, on the great importance of the education clauses in the present Act, when he maintained that they were unnecessary, and that factory children are fully better off in point of instruction than other children in the same classes in society. The following morning I visited a small mill at Preston, where the relay system had been recently adopted, and where a school-room had been prepared on the premises, and a woman engaged to teach the children, of whom there were seventeen between the ages of nine and thirteen. I asked the school-mistress what state she had found the children in as to education, and her answer was, - 'We are only just begun; but, Sir, they are as ignorant as Hottentots; only three could manage to read the Testament, and the greater number did not know their letters.'<sup>2</sup>

Most half-timers in Preston attended the ordinary church schools, the manufacturers adopting the approach of supporting church education

1. See Harold Silver, 'Ideology and the factory child: attitudes to half-time education', in Phillip McCann, Popular Education and Socialisation in the Nineteenth Century, 1977, pp 141-166; also Gertrude Ward, 'The Education of Factory Child Workers 1833-1850', in Economic History, February 1935, pp 110-124.
2. PP 1837 (73) Vol XXXI, Reports of the Inspectors of Factories for the Half-Year Ending 31st December, 1836, p 10.

rather than establishing schools of their own.<sup>1</sup> The typical committee for the National Schools of the town included leading industrialists as well as members of the clergy.<sup>2</sup> The actual extent of the manufacturers' involvement however is not entirely clear. Beyond the basics - provision of a room, some support, serving on management committees and so on - they may not have been particularly active and may have been unwilling to be much inconvenienced by education, whether financially or otherwise. This is indicated by an 1861 Inspector's Report commenting on the problem of school funds and the lack of interest among the wealthy.

"There is a boys' school in Preston, where my colleagues and myself have year after year reported the insufficiency and unhealthiness of the room; and I know that the excellent clergyman has laboured incessantly for years in trying to get new and adequate rooms, but hitherto ineffectually. I know that he has literally worn himself out with his protracted anxiety and efforts for the school."<sup>3</sup>

Referring to the duties of school managers the report continues:

"it is quite the exception where the laity are found to take an active part in managing a school and looking into particulars."<sup>4</sup>

Another report contrasts Preston and Blackburn in this respect.

1. See for example LCRO, School Log Books for the various Preston Schools.
2. See Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education, 1841, p 326, and Baldwin, op cit, pp 55-6.
3. Report of the Committee of Council on Education, 1860-61, pp 92-3. (This particular passage refers to St Peter's boys' room, Preston.)
4. Ibid, p 96.



"Both are large manufacturing towns lying only 10 miles apart, with the same class of population and character of schools. In Blackburn, the management is a reality; and remarkable interest and activity are manifested by the principal laymen and employers of labour, as well as the clergy, in the cause of popular education. In Preston, the system seems to have established itself, of virtually leaving the school, and all its concerns in the hands of the teacher..."<sup>1</sup>

If this was the case, then teachers played a particularly important part in Preston's church schools. Even where the power of the teacher was less, however, their role was always a significant one for both the providers and those on the receiving end of elementary education. As far as the pupils were concerned, their day-to-day experience of schooling was partly shaped by the character and influence of the teacher, whilst if the schools were effectively to achieve the ends which the providers had in mind the quality of the teaching was crucial. In official reports and statements concern about levels of competence and cultivation of teachers was a constant theme. During the early part of the century recruitment into elementary school teaching usually came from adults, many of whom had previously been occupied in the craft trades.<sup>2</sup> The National Society provided some instruction for teachers, at its central and district schools, although this was on the whole fairly limited. At St Mary's School in 1841, for example, the master had been in trade and began his work as a teacher at the age of thirty-two, having trained for eight months at the Central School of the National Society. The mistress,

1. Report of the Committee of Council on Education, 1868-9, p 226.
2. See for example John Hurt, Education in Evolution, 1971; M Sturt, The Education of the People, 1967.



aged twenty-two, had previously been a straw bonnet maker.<sup>1</sup> Others had no training. At Preston Holy Trinity Boys around the same time the master had been a Sunday School teacher but took charge of the school without any training. At Holy Trinity infants the mistress had worked in a cotton mill and had "mere Sunday School education."<sup>2</sup>

Concern over the quality of such teachers led to the 1846 Minute aimed at improving teacher training, which instigated the pupil-teacher system. The pupil-teachers were to be scholars aged thirteen and over who were able to pass a preliminary examination. After five years' study and teaching in school they were to attend training college and eventually after examination to receive certification. The examinations were to be conducted by the inspectors and the pupil-teachers were to be paid; thus government control over teaching was greatly increased.<sup>3</sup> Untrained teachers could however continue to teach and present themselves for examination for certification. Still others were neither trained nor certificated, and some pupil-teachers never went to college. Training remained piecemeal for many years although the number of trained and certificated teachers did increase from the 1850s onwards. The 1851-2 Minutes of the Committee of Council give some indication of the impact of the changes on the Preston schools. At Preston St Paul's the boys had a certificated teacher trained at Chester, the girls' teacher was

1. Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education, 1840-41, p 316 and p 385.

2. Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education, 1847-8, p 57.

3. See Hurt, op cit; Sturt, op cit.

certificated and the infants' teacher was trained but not yet certificated. The Central, Trinity and Christ Church schools all had certificated teachers.<sup>1</sup>

The pupil-teacher system in its turn gave rise to concern. Mr Winder's evidence to the Newcastle Commission made much of the shortcomings of both the teachers and the system. Very frequently, he claimed, the staff of pupil-teachers was incomplete, a point confirmed by HMI Kennedy who found that the schools in the Northern district suffered particularly from an inadequate supply of male pupil-teachers, due to the difficulties of keeping a boy at school until thirteen, and the fact that those who did have such an 'extensive' education could obtain more desirable appointments.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, Winder felt, it was not uncommon for all to be so young as to be unable effectively to take the upper classes, with the result that the master frequently confined himself to these whilst the rest of the school 'took its chance' with the pupil-teachers. Thus the children were neglected in their early years. It was impossible, Winder went on, in the case of reading, "to overstate the imbecility with which it is taught by ordinary pupil-teachers."<sup>3</sup>

Pupil-teachers were not always found lacking, however, and indeed were sometimes praised. HMI Steele felt in his 1868 Report

1. Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education, 1851-2, Reverend Kennedy's Report.
2. Report of the Committee of Council on Education, 1860-61, pp 89-91.
3. Newcastle Commission, Vol II, op cit, Mr Winder's Report, pp 226-7.

on the Preston district that he could speak with entire satisfaction of the work of many of them. Nevertheless, he also felt that the good ones seemed to come year after year from certain schools and that the rest fell far behind.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, like other observers, Steele expressed anxiety about the backgrounds of those who were to teach the working class, feeling that as "less eligible" candidates than formerly were now being accepted, and as they came from "a somewhat lower social grade", their instruction and training were "matters of weightier importance than ever".<sup>2</sup> Two years later Steele was speaking of the need to attract into the service "a higher and better educated class of candidate..."<sup>3</sup> He felt that the social class from which pupil-teachers ought to be drawn was not that of labourers and artisans, at any rate not the "lower grade" of artisans. He wanted to see attracted into the schools in large numbers "the lower section of the middle classes", those near enough to the working class to understand them yet at the same time "sufficiently superior in position and culture" to be their instructors.<sup>4</sup> The cultural background and moral character of members of the working class was always in doubt. As a consequence, when pupil-teachers were being apprenticed the inspectors made preliminary enquiries about their character and conduct and the moral character of their families, the apprentices being required to board in an approved household if the latter were unsatisfactory. Moreover, although many of the

1. Report of the Committee of Council on Education, 1868, pp 226-9.

2. Ibid.

3. Report of the Committee of Council on Education, 1870-1, p 196.

4. Ibid, p 197.



female pupil-teachers were well qualified educationally as a result of lack of alternative employment opportunities for them, HMI Cook reported that

"with regard to the girls, the enquiries have been even stricter and more searching."<sup>1</sup>

Such intense concern for the backgrounds, culture and morals of the pupil-teachers reflects the expectations of many middle-class supporters of elementary schools. They looked to the schools to provide a stable, disciplined, moral and religious population, expressed by one commentator in the following words:

To estimate rightly the state of our elementary schools it is necessary to bear in mind some of the chief objects of the education of the people. These are to make them, under the blessing of God, happier and better; or in other words to make them well informed, intelligent, industrious, moral and religious."<sup>2</sup>

However, he considered many schools unsuccessful in attaining these objects.

"On the moral and religious training in these schools I can say very little. In almost all schools which I examined on this point there was scarcely any such thing. The children would be punished for breaking the school rules, or if a breach of morality was formally complained of to the master he would probably punish the child for it; but any direct endeavours to bring the children to be moral and religious I could hardly find."<sup>3</sup>

1. See Hurt, op cit, pp 120-1.
2. Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education, 1840-41, p 167.
3. Ibid, p 175.

This may indicate a gap between the intentions of the providers and the realities of elementary schooling; nevertheless, despite their perceived failure to provide adequate moral and religious training, the schools were often narrowly focussed on precisely these requirements. One example is St Mary's School, situated in the notorious 'New Preston' district. When inspected in 1841 this school had eighty boys and ninety-eight girls in attendance. Fees were one penny for reading, two pence for writing. Many of the children were from the very poor class of hand-loom weaver. The Inspector found that seven boys and sixteen girls could read "with ease" whilst twenty-nine boys and twenty girls could read simple narrative. Few of the children could write. Books used for reading in this school were the Bible and religious tracts. There was also Hogarth's History of England - Outlines in use. There was no arithmetic, geography, grammar, etymology, music, drawing or gymnastic exercises. The girls were engaged in sewing and marking.<sup>1</sup>

In view of the disapproval often expressed by inspectors and other contemporary observers of the public elementary school it is interesting to consider what might constitute success. In addition to the emphasis on religion and morals already discussed, another salient requirement was discipline and control, a notable concern throughout the inspectors' reports, and one which is vividly illustrated in Mr Winder's description to the Newcastle Commission of a 'model school'.

1. Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education, 1841, p 373.



"The best public inspected schools achieve, I suppose, something like the maximum of success possible under the present conditions of attendance. I was fortunate in having the opportunity of frequently observing one of the noblest specimens of the class in the parochial school of Rochdale. There could hardly be a more striking sight to the understanding eye than the interior of this school, in which I have seen 600 children present at one time, all under the most perfect command, moving with the rapidity and precision of a machine, and learning as though they were learning for their lives..."<sup>1</sup>

Parochial education in general rarely received this sort of praise.

The Poor Law Commission had laid down that each Union was to set up a properly constituted school, with a minimum of three hours each day spent in the 'three Rs' and principles of religion, as well as industrial training.<sup>2</sup> Yet HMI Browne believed that whilst outdoor pauper children often received no education whatsoever, workhouse education in the North, for those who found themselves institutionalised as paupers, was of a generally low standard.

In Preston the main subject taught was reading. Very few children were taught writing or arithmetic and there were no other subjects taught. Annual expenditure on the school was nil.<sup>3</sup> Browne himself stressed the need for religious education as well as some kind of industrial or agricultural education in order that the child might become self-supporting, but felt also that there was a need for "sound historical and constitutional knowledge", since the inhabitants of the town were more political than those of the country. For

1. Newcastle Commission, Vol II, op cit, Mr Winder's Report, pp 224-5.
2. Francis Duke, 'Pauper Education', in Derek Fraser (ed) The New Poor Law in the Nineteenth Century, 1976, p 68.
3. Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education, 1847-8-9, Schools of Parochial Unions, see p 144 and pp 212-3.



similar reasons there should be education in Political Economy and the use of Christianity to combat infidelity. Browne complained that "half-educated or uneducated operatives and mechanics base conclusions of infinite moment to themselves on sophisms of the most trivial and puerile character...",<sup>1</sup> and his statements give a clear indication that provided education had an important role as a response to the 'education by collision' and other educational activities of Preston's working-class inhabitants. They also reveal the paternalism inherent in the middle-class approach to moral improvement, as well as betraying other common value judgements of his class and time, as in the following extract:

"In some of the most important and populous unions of Yorkshire and Lancashire, as Huddersfield, Wakefield, Preston... the teachers are or were paupers, and education, both moral, it is to be feared, and intellectual, are in a very low state. Some of these teachers are grossly incompetent, cannot write, or spell, or ask a question in a proper manner. Occasionally I have found a pauper teacher an educated man, who had been in much superior circumstances; but such a person is not therefore competent to teach children, as he has<sub>2</sub> probably become a pauper through his own misconduct."<sup>2</sup>

In the three schools of the Preston workhouse the teachers were all paupers, and Browne concluded that no material progress could be expected "as long as persons of this class are permitted to teach".<sup>3</sup>

\* \* \*

1. Ibid, pp 178-9.

2. Ibid, p 160.

3. Ibid, p 213.

Throughout all the developments in the provision of schooling which have been discussed in this chapter the same concerns are highlighted: religion; morals; the inadequacy of the working-class family and environment; the need for paternalistic guidance by more 'highly cultivated' members of society; and fear of working-class association and infidelity. The overall approach is illustrated in the Report of the 32nd Annual Meeting of the Preston National Schools, which alludes to the difficulties involved in the successful management of their schools.

"It was a lamentable fact that the heads of families amongst the working class were not in the habit of attending with regularity any place of worship; and in such cases, it was uncertain whether the good instruction the children were receiving at school was not destroyed by the bad examples and precepts taught them at home. Until the parents were properly instructed, it was vain to expect any very great results for the benefit of society at large, even from the best modes of education. So long as the parents were living in a state of absolute heathenism, it was not to be supposed that scriptural education would make rapid progress among the younger branches of their families.<sup>1</sup>

The working-class targets of this kind of educational endeavour had difficulties of their own to contend with, however, and may well have viewed the work of the provided schools in a different light. In addition to the omnipresent pressures of labour and the need to earn a living, the dominance of this particular form of education was not yet assured, and the following chapter goes on to explore more fully its place in working-class life.

1. Preston Chronicle, February 12th, 1848, Report on the 32nd Annual Meeting of the Preston National Schools.

## CHAPTER 6

## THE DEVELOPMENT OF MASS SCHOOLING: 2. THE USERS

Much has been written about the provision of mass schooling in the nineteenth century, but although a great deal has been said about the attitudes, aims and intentions of the providers, less is known about the responses of those on the receiving end of the endeavour. This chapter therefore attempts to develop some understanding of the experiences and attitudes towards provided schooling of Preston's working class. The first section explores the extent to which working people used the schools, and some of the factors influencing patterns of attendance. Section 2 deals with the day to day experiences of the scholar and the final section considers the impact of provided schooling on the working-class.

\* \* \*

### 1. Access and Attendance

Daytime schooling, as offered by what became known as the public elementary schools, was obviously of limited usefulness to those who had to work for a living, but as already noted some form of instruction was also available in the evenings and on Sundays. In Lancashire as a whole, the Sunday Schools were regarded as being particularly numerous and well attended, and as having considerable general influence.<sup>1</sup> It is however difficult to know the actual

1. See for example Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education, 1844, Vol 2, p 249, and Minutes of the Committee of Council, 1850-51, Vol 2, pp 445-6.



level of attendance at Sunday School since records and statistics are fragmentary; nevertheless, some indications are available. A speaker at the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Preston Sunday School Union urged that they should strive to get more into their Sunday Schools, claiming that at the time they had one in 7 of the population<sup>1</sup> and the 1851 Education Census found that in Preston the proportion of Sunday School pupils to population was one in 6.23.<sup>2</sup> This census and earlier estimates indicate that attendance at Sunday School was higher than attendance at day schools,<sup>3</sup> and this was a common pattern. In towns where employment opportunities for the young interfered with daytime schooling, the Sunday Schools could provide some instruction without sacrifice of earnings.<sup>4</sup> By mid-century, however, the Sunday Schools were seen as enabling a continuing influence to be exerted over children after they had left a daily school, as well as being a substitute for such schooling. HMI Thurtell noted both aspects when he visited Sunday Schools in the 1840s to see children who did not make an appearance in the day schools. Most of the children

1. Preston Chronicle, July 15th, 1854.
2. See W B Stephens, Regional Variations in Education During the Industrial Revolution 1780-1870, 1973, p 31.
3. See for example Preston Chronicle, June 24th, 1843, for a copy of statistics on Preston from a table published in the Leeds Mercury. Sunday scholars totalled 8,424; day scholars 5,805 including the private schools. See also Michael Sanderson, 'Social Change and Elementary Education in Industrial Lancashire 1780-1840' in Northern History, 1968, Vol III, pp 31-154, for evidence that in most of the Lancashire textile towns, including Preston, Sunday schools were predominant.
4. Day schooling predominated over Sunday schooling in towns like Lancaster, Warrington and Wigan, where craft trades, metal working and the coal industry were the main sources of employment; see Sanderson, ibid.

appeared to have left some day school when between ten and eleven years of age. A considerable proportion of those under thirteen had never attended a day school and most of them were working for their parents. A large number of the girls were being kept at home to take care of the infants of their family.<sup>1</sup>

It was certainly the case that the Sunday scholars were not all children. The Reverend J Rigg for example claimed of Preston St Paul's Sunday Schools that

"Not merely the young were to be found there, but many also of those in years; some of them heads of families who, finding their deficiency in religious knowledge, had been induced by his encouragement to disregard both the false shame of confessing their ignorance, and the difficulty of acquiring knowledge at their years, and to range themselves in the ranks of his scholars."<sup>2</sup>

This age mix seems to have been very much a feature of the St Paul's schools: at an 1849 meeting a complaint was made of "frequent misconduct in Church of some adult male scholars".<sup>3</sup> Observers often commented on the range of ages in similar institutions. HMI Thurtell, commenting on the importance of Sunday schooling in Lancashire, noted that

1. Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education, 1847-8, Vol 2, Appendix, pp 30-31.
2. Ernest Hudson, Sketches of the History of the Parish of St Paul, Preston, 1826-1926, 1927, pp 21-23.
3. LCRO, PR 2973/17, Sunday School Minutes for Teachers' Meetings, St Pauls, 1842-1851.



"The most striking peculiarity is the advanced age of many of the pupils... who continue to value this opportunity of adding to their instruction in the best things, long after the ordinary age of leaving school. It is quite usual for young men to remain in connexion with the Sunday school until eighteen years of age, and young women till twenty, at the least; sometimes men over thirty, and women over forty, are found in regular attendance, as scholars."<sup>1</sup>

Indeed, the use of the Sunday Schools by older scholars, both male and female, was such that some schools established separate classes for them. In 1848, for example, St Mary's Church established male adult classes in the Sunday Schools, a development which was also instigated by the other churches, both around this time and in later years.<sup>2</sup>

In accounting for the phenomenon Thurtell noted as one factor the provident clubs of different kinds connected with the schools, to which periodical payments were made, which led to a bond "of interest, as well as sympathy" being established between the members.<sup>3</sup> In similar vein, Mr Winder's report to the Newcastle Commission made favourable comment on the indirect effects of the Sunday Schools, such as the organisation of Mutual Improvement Societies, the establishment of night schools, and the maintenance of free lending

1. Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education, 1847-48, Vol 2, pp 30-31.

2. See Henry Cartmell, The Preston Churches and Sunday Schools, 1892.

3. Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education 1847-48, Vol 2, pp 30-31.



libraries<sup>1</sup>, the latter having been a long-standing feature of the Sunday Schools in Preston.<sup>2</sup>

A main attraction of the Sunday Schools for adults however was undoubtedly the opportunity to acquire basic skills. Winder himself, although not convinced generally of the value of Sunday Schools as places of secular instruction, argued that they were particularly important in this respect to the older scholars, especially the females, who would otherwise "be under no educational influence whatever". Through the means of the Sunday School women had at least a weekly opportunity of reading "without which, debarred as they are for the most part by household duties from the night school, the mechanics' institute, and the other means of instruction open to men, they might be in danger of losing altogether the small stock of knowledge which they had acquired as children."<sup>3</sup> Winder's estimation of the importance of Sunday Schools to women, in which he claimed that it was quite a common thing for women to come to school after their marriage, is supported by John Clay's observations of a Whit Monday Sunday School procession in Preston. He and a friend had made a count of the numbers of boys and girls of apparently fifteen years and upwards who walked in it, and had agreed "that

1. PP 1861 [2794-II], Vol XXI, Popular Education (England): Reports of the Assistant Commissioners appointed to inquire into the State of Popular Education in England, (Newcastle Commission), Mr Winder's Report, pp 234-5.
2. PP 1835 (63) Vol XLI, Abstract of Answers and Returns relative to the State of Education in England and Wales, Vol 1, Bedford-Lancaster, see Preston Borough.
3. Newcastle Commission, op cit, Mr Winder's Report, pp 235-6.

while about 310 young men were counted, about 1,120 young women were observed."<sup>1</sup> In an earlier report Clay had claimed that in the Preston district there were thousands of young women who continued their attendance at Sunday School until or even after their marriage.<sup>2</sup>

Notwithstanding the contribution of the Sunday Schools to the secular education of adults, the primary aim of their promoters remained religious, and the implications of this were not always well received by their pupils. The "excellent and intelligent" incumbent of one parish deplored to HMI Kennedy the "repugnance" of the boys at being led from the Sunday School to the church.

"He said that the teachers had to act like police in charge of prisoners, so anxious were the children to escape."<sup>3</sup>

Kennedy reported that "much weariness and disgust" resulted from this "excessive constraint".<sup>4</sup>

By the time of the Newcastle Report it was claimed that since not more than two hours on each Sunday were devoted to teaching, and since the attendance was irregular, the teaching far from efficient,

1 . Letter to John Stanley, June 1855, quoted in Rev Walter Lowe Clay, The Prison Chaplain, A Memoir of the Reverend John Clay, BD, 1861, p 562.

2 . Ibid, pp 557-8.

3 . Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education, 1850-51, Vol II, pp 445-6.

4 . Ibid.

and all secular instruction as far as possible eschewed, the Sunday School was "a very feeble auxiliary to the day school".<sup>1</sup> Yet in recent years it has been argued that the Sunday Schools were the prime institution in bringing the printed word to working-class children, and that in the context of working-class childhood Sunday Schools had a significant impact on the creation of mass literacy.<sup>2</sup> The words "within the context of working-class childhood" are clearly significant here. Whilst the main focus of the Sunday School, particularly after the earlier years of the nineteenth century, was rather narrowly religious, within the context of working-class life the Sunday Schools were, for both adults and children, one opportunity to explore the world of literacy and learning.

Whilst attendance at Sunday Schools was fairly numerous (though their promoters were always anxious to see it improved) there was concern over the failure of weekday schooling to attract widespread support. In 1837 the Preston Chronicle argued that although it supported Brougham's educational scheme there were several problems with it, one of which was that

"in this town there are free schools, and yet they cannot be filled"<sup>3</sup>

1. Newcastle Commission, op cit, Mr Winder's Report, pp 234-5.
2. T W Laqueur, Religion and Respectability: Sunday Schools and Working-class Culture, 1780-1850, 1976, p 123.
3. Preston Chronicle, December 16th, 1837. By 1851 the proportion of day school pupils to population in Preston was one in 9.05, a figure which in fact compared favourably with many other Lancashire towns - see Stephens, op cit, p 31.



The newspaper named as "adverse motives": children working; disinclination of parents to separate from children at an early age; fear of imperfect superintendence; fear of unfitting children for labour by over-educating them; local prejudices; dread of association with other children; difficulty of clothing children with sufficient neatness; and "many other bars", which led to the conclusion that it was necessary to begin by educating "the generation in advance of the children". This emphasis on attitudes rather than material factors may have been misplaced however. In the first place, availability of schools on paper could be deceptive, since geographical location may also have made an impact on attendance patterns in an era when public transport was poor.<sup>1</sup> A straightforward comparison for any one year of number of school places available with number of school age children can never take such points into consideration, as Winder's comments to the Newcastle Commission on the schools of Bradford and Rochdale make quite clear.

"The existing schools do therefore in the aggregate supply much more than sufficient places for the existing scholars. It would be a fallacy, however to infer from this that the present supply of schools is adequate. Without entering into the question of the expediency of encroaching upon the number of the children now in private schools the point obviously is, not whether the school space be sufficient in the aggregate, but whether it be sufficient at each point."<sup>2</sup>

Secondly, there is no doubt that two central problems affecting

1. For further discussion of this see P J Dixon, Urban Environment Socio-Economic Condition and School Attendance in a Lancashire Borough, 1850-1876, MEd Thesis, University of Liverpool, 1977.
2. Newcastle Commission, Vol II, op cit, Mr Winder's Report, p 187.

school attendance were the existence of child labour and widespread poverty, which of course went together: children needed to work in order to contribute to the family income. Furthermore, most schools charged fees, however small, and finding the school pence was clearly not always easy. The presence of a child at school was often related to the economic state of a household, which for working-class families was frequently in flux. Children might be sent to school in good times and removed when things were worse.<sup>1</sup> The 32nd Annual Meeting of the Preston National Schools reported that

"the late depression of trade in Preston has had a tendency to diminish the number of scholars<sub>2</sub> in attendance, and to injure the state of the funds."<sup>2</sup>

For the later part of the century school log books provide ample illustration of this problem, as the following examples show:

St Paul's School, November 1st, 1864

"Some of the boys sent from the Infant School returned thither, saying they could not afford 2d."<sup>3</sup>

St Mary's Street Methodist School, May 8th, 1878

"The school suffer somewhat in numbers, and more in fees,

1. See also David Vincent, Bread, Knowledge and Freedom, p 96.
2. Preston Chronicle, February 12th, 1841. For further evidence to suggest that fluctuations in trade affected the amount of schooling received, see the discussion of weavers' children in Sanderson, op cit.
3. LCRO, SMPr 30/1, St Paul's C of E Boys Log Book, 1862-1887.

from the effects of the disturbed state of trade arising out of the ten per cent reduction in the cotton factories."<sup>1</sup>

Although periods of depression and therefore poverty clearly did affect school attendance, it was also argued that periods of prosperity could be detrimental too, since at such times opportunities for employment for young children were found "irresistible".<sup>2</sup>

HMI Morell claimed that as a rule the schools situated in the cotton manufacturing areas were more numerous attended when work was slack and times bad than they were when every cotton mill was in full operation and the demand for labour was great.<sup>3</sup> During the cotton famine, when distress was widespread and severe it was argued that

"large numbers of children have been in tolerably regular attendance at school, who had previously been at no school or where school attendance was extremely fitful and irregular"<sup>4</sup>

During the cotton famine work was not an option, but increased attendance was undoubtedly also aided by school managers remitting the fees to children of the unemployed, and by relief committees making attendance at school a condition for the receipt of assistance.

1. LCRO, SMPr 28/1 St Mary's Street Methodist Log Book (Mixed) 1871-1916.
2. Report of the Committee of Council on Education, 1860-61, pp 89-81.
3. Report of the Committee of Council on Education, 1862-3, pp 79-80.
4. British and Foreign Schools Society Report, 1864, quoted in Dixon, op cit, p 151.



It is perhaps too easy to overlook, however, the sacrifices which were made by families themselves to secure education for the children. HMI Kennedy was told at several schools that the parents had struggled and stinted themselves during the distress in order to pay the fees.<sup>1</sup> Earlier, in 1841, an inspector's report on St Mary's School in the 'New Preston' district found that many of the children were from the very poor class of hand-loom weavers.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, throughout much of the nineteenth century witnesses were not optimistic that the elementary schools were providing for the very poor, feeling rather that

"the tendency has been to give a much better education to the children of well-to-do mechanics and skilled labourers of all kinds, and also unskilled labourers who are in pretty good circumstances. I do not think that the effect has been so marked upon the classes below these."<sup>3</sup>

For those in less favourable circumstances, interest in education could not be expected to overcome the ever-present need to make a living, and long hours of labour were another obvious obstacle to any attempts to extend education, particularly during the first half of the century. That there was an interest in education despite the difficulties is illustrated by the popularity of the night schools and evening classes, which attracted considerable support in Preston

1. Report of the Committee of Council on Education, 1863-64, p 82.
2. Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education, 1840-41, p 373.
3. Newcastle Commission, 1861, op cit, [2794- VI], Evidence of J D Morell, Inspector of British and Denominational Schools, p 202.

and in other urban centres. HMI Watkins outlined some of the reasons for this in his 1846 report.

"The increase is, of itself, no slight proof of the inability of the daily schools to meet the wants and circumstances of the youthful labouring population. In many places the National school is open, under its usual teacher, for two or three hours every night, or on certain nights of the week, for the reception of young people chiefly between the ages of thirteen and twenty. The two sexes generally come at different hours or on alternate nights. In these schools, attended for the most part by those who are anxious to improve themselves, a fair amount of instruction is imparted in reading, writing and arithmetic... If the hours of daily labour were shortened these schools would form a large and important part of our educational arrangements for the working class."<sup>1</sup>

Although these schools were popular with both men and women the educational experiences of the two groups within them were not always the same. HMI Stokes, reporting on his inspection of the Roman Catholic night schools in Preston argued that the women required only a cheerful, warm, well lighted room, a teacher with kind words and a pleasant face, and they would attempt to read and write and sing. Revealing his own attitudes to the education of women, he continued:

"Such schools are chiefly valuable for their moral effects and for the sound public opinions which they create in favour of an innocent virtuous life. For males, something of a higher character is needed."<sup>2</sup>

- 1 . Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education, 1846, Vol 1,  
pp 456-7.
- 2 . Report of the Committee of Council on Education, 1860-61;  
pp 195-6.

Nevertheless, women were attempting to acquire basic skills in such institutions, and evening schools were a significant element in the range of educational activity available to working people of both sexes. The 1851 Education Census confirms their particular significance in Lancashire, which was recorded as having 314 such schools with 9,687 pupils altogether, by far the greatest number for all counties, only Yorkshire coming close with 237 schools and 7,785 pupils.<sup>1</sup> Many observers, including the inspectors, spoke of the necessity of such schools in an area where the population went to work at an early age, and by 1859 their numbers were still increasing.<sup>2</sup>

According to HMI Kennedy, those who attended evening schools could be divided in three main types. First, the very young, aged from eight to twelve, who were mainly employed by their parents during the day to assist in their labour. The favourite subject of these pupils was apparently writing, and their attendance was best on the evenings when they knew such activity was to take place. Next, there were adults with little early education, who came to the schools "to pick up the rudiments of reading, writing and arithmetic". Finally, those whom Kennedy considered most likely to benefit from the instruction: young people aged from thirteen to twenty-five who had previously attended day school and now came at night

1. W B Stephens, op cit, p 35. These figures do not include mechanics and literary institutes.

2. Report of the Committee of Council on Education, 1858-9, p 91.



to carry on their education.<sup>1</sup>

Attendance at night school could not have been easy for any of these groups. After long hours of labour and hard work during the day, great effort was obviously required to embark on a course of instruction during the evening. It has also been argued that night school attendance was dependent to some extent on practical factors such as the availability of washing facilities, nearness of mill, home and school, and so on, and that attendance was not entirely regular. It seems to have been highest for example in Autumn and Spring, with both summer and winter nights acting as a disincentive.<sup>2</sup> Though such difficulties greatly hindered the educational progress of the working class, many of them were interested in education, as the following comments by HMI Kennedy clearly illustrate:

"I see no sight in the course of my work more interesting than that of the young men and women who frequent these schools, coming as they do after a hard day's toil almost direct from their work, some to begin the very rudiments of learning, others to improve themselves in studies such as arithmetic and mathematics, which cannot but be dry and comparatively uninteresting to beginners. It seems to me a peculiarly interesting fact, - for fact I believe it is, - that a desire of self-culture thus attracts numbers to the night school who would by no means come there for mere intellectual amusement."<sup>3</sup>

1. Report of the Committee of Council on Education, 1860-61. pp 93-94.
2. Sanderson, op cit.
3. Report of the Committee of Council on Education, 1858-9, p 91.

Mr Winder, in his evidence to the Newcastle Commission, also commented that he was "...particularly struck in the [night] schools which I visited, with the anxiety to learn which was displayed" and he felt that the progress made was frequently "extraordinarily great",<sup>1</sup> despite the fact that he was far from convinced of the general efficacy of such schooling, due to its "chaotic and unorganised condition."<sup>2</sup> He believed that the number of such schools showed how clearly they were felt to be necessary, and furthermore that they touched greater numbers than those in actual attendance. In Rochdale, for example, through the system of nightwork, not less than four or five hundred families took an interest in the education of their younger members:

"I was assured over and over again by parents who had children at the school, that the scholar's slate of night questions frequently concentrated the attention of his whole family, who are thus associated with the work of the school, most beneficially both for themselves and for him."<sup>3</sup>

The response of working-class people to the night schools and evening classes shows quite clearly that lack of attendance at daytime schools did not necessarily mean lack of interest in education in general. Weekday schooling could never hope to compete successfully with the dual imperatives of labour and sheer physical survival. The factory acts which regulated child labour were thus crucial

1. Newcastle Commission, Vol II, op cit, Mr Winder's Report, p 225.

2. Ibid, p 236.

3. Ibid, p 225.

to the development of the public elementary school system.

The 1831-2 Select Committee on the Bill to regulate hours of labour found that in the textile areas as a whole quite young children could be in the mills for about thirteen or fourteen hours, and even up to sixteen hours. These children, witnesses stated, were unlikely to attend night school and were also reluctant to attend Sunday Schools; when there, they were drowsy.<sup>1</sup> One example of working hours in Preston comes from the statements of Horrockses, Miller and Company, one of the largest employers in the town. Their time of working for all ages in the cotton factory was sixty-nine hours per week, i.e. twelve hours for five days, and nine hours on the Saturday.<sup>2</sup> This company claimed that it did not like to take children under ten, "unless at the express request of their own parents, under whose superintendence they have to work", but they did prefer to start the children at some kind of work in the factories under the age of twelve, claiming that those introduced young made the most skilful workmen. "Indeed", they argued, "in some branches, it is quite necessary that they should commence as early as ten or eleven years of age..."<sup>3</sup>

An emphasis on the detrimental effect of such long working

1. See PP 1831-2, (706) Vol XV, Report from the Select Committee on the Bill to regulate the Labour of Children in the Mills and Factories of the United Kingdom, pp 324-5.
2. PP 1834, (167) XX : Factories, Employment of Children, Supplementary Report of Commissioners, Evidence of Messrs Horrockses, Miller & Co, Preston, Section D1, pp 266-268.
3. Ibid.



hours on the education of both child and adult workers can be seen in much of the 'Ten Hours' agitation of the 1830s and 1840s, and an early 'short hours experiment' at Robert Gardner's factory in Preston was much praised by workers. This factory was being worked eleven hours each day for five days a week, and eight hours on Saturdays.<sup>1</sup> At a meeting and tea-party to celebrate the anniversary of the 'experiment' mottoes wishing 'Happiness and Prosperity to Robert Gardner, Esq., and Family' and 'Health, long life and happiness to Mr John Heaton, the Friend of Short Time', were encircled by coloured rosettes bearing such statements as 'Less work and more school for the factory child'; 'Richard Oastler Esq., the factory child's king'; and 'Short hours of labour will improve the intellect'. In speeches, many references were made to the opportunities for education which the experiment had afforded and one speaker mentioned that the schools in his neighbourhood were "becoming thronger".<sup>2</sup> Since these statements and speeches were aimed at persuading the mill-owners and legislators that shorter hours were desirable some appeal was obviously being made to the kinds of sentiments which would be likely to sway such observers; nevertheless, it seems that opportunities for educational advancement were genuinely welcomed by many workers and a report that of the children employed in Gardner's mill, the number attending evening school had gone up since the experiment from twenty-seven to ninety-six<sup>3</sup> bears witness to this.

1. See Preston Chronicle, March 8th, 1845.

2. Preston Guardian, April 26th, 1845.

3. Preston Chronicle, April 12th, 1845.

From 1833 onwards the Factory Acts had begun to make some inroads into the problem of labour inevitably taking precedence over schooling, although the half-time system was not effectively established until 1844. This actually lowered the age of employment to eight, but provided for half a day's education five days a week up to the age of thirteen, for children employed in textiles, or firms could provide five hours' education on alternative days instead if they preferred.<sup>1</sup> Following this legislation much comment was made on the impact and effectiveness of half-time schooling. By mid-century one HMI claimed:

"A vast number of the factory population... depend on the factory school for the entire education or quasi education of their families. Go along the streets of almost any manufacturing town or village in Lancashire, and you will in all probability see multitudes of children, between 6 and 8 years of age, running about wholly destitute of instruction. If you inquire of the parents the reason of this, the answer will be - that they must go to school, as soon as they begin to work in the factory..."<sup>2</sup>

As to how the system itself actually worked, the Newcastle Commission's report gives a detailed account:

"The mode in which the half-time plan is carried out is almost universally as follows:- Every child between the ages of eight and 13, working in a factory, spends half the day, from 6 A.M. to 12 noon, or from 1 P.M. to 6 P.M. in the mill. During the other half, i.e. from 1.30 P.M. to 4.30 P.M., or from 9 A.M. to 12 noon, it

1. See Gertrude Ward, 'The Education of Factory Child Workers, 1833-1850', in Economic History, February 1935, pp 110-124.
2. Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education, 1851-2, Vol II, p 566; on the last point see also Report of the Committee of Council, 1868, Mr Stoke's Report on the Roman Catholic schools.



is in school. Periodically, in some cases monthly, in others weekly, the morning and afternoon batches of children in each mill change turns, so as to effect an equitable division of school-time and work. On Friday, the school-master makes up for every mill, from which short-timers are sent to him, a record of the attendance or absence of each child for every day of the past week; without this certificate of previous school attendance, it is illegal to continue to employ a child. If absence has extended to the whole week, the child cannot be employed at all, if it has been but partial, for one or two days, it is the practice to compel the offender to make up for lost school time by an additional attendance of an equal, or as is the rule in some factories, a double time, by way of compensation. Schools being open only five days in the week, a short-timer is in school something less on an average than 15 hours a week, from which must be deducted for each day not less than half an hour for prayers, an interval of recreation, and various interruptions..."<sup>1</sup>

This last sentence suggests that the half-time system may have been something less than an ideal solution to the problem of how to extend weekday schooling. Nevertheless, it was an important step in the construction of the idea that education should be a stage in life for all children, and by 1863 HMI Kennedy was able to claim that education - by which he meant formal, provided schooling - was becoming a familiar and accepted process. He argued that one of the most interesting aspects of the cotton famine in Lancashire was the way in which "the minds, both of those who relieve the distress and of the distressed themselves, seemed at once to turn to education as the best way of occupying the unemployed." Only a quarter of a century previously "neither would such an occupation have been resorted to, nor, even if it had, would there have been buildings

1. Newcastle Commission, Vol II, op cit, Mr Winder's Report, p 228.



or teachers for the purpose."<sup>1</sup>

In fact, as the activities of Preston's cotton spinners, for example, show, people had previously turned to education, both as a means of "occupying themselves" and as a means of bringing about a change in their circumstances. Nevertheless changes had taken place since the beginning of the century which had greatly extended the availability of formal schooling to working-class children, even if many remained relatively untouched by it. The rest of this chapter thus takes a closer look at the experience of provided education for those who came into contact with it.

## 2. Experience of schooling

The early elementary schools were intended to provide a very basic education for working-class children, to encourage 'correct' values and habits and to fit them for their future role in society. The schools themselves, in terms of their actual physical condition, were not always conducive to either intellectual effort or a pleasant atmosphere. A survey of the buildings of Preston in 1861 found all kinds of horrors.

"Half-way down Back Bolton-Street is the rear of St Peters's School, a dirty old brick building, with a small playground for the boys that overlooks, in one corner, a cavernous pit of liquid filth... and within a stone's throw is St Peter's Church, with a graveyard choking full and closed... In the rear of Moss-rose-Street there are

1. Report of the Committee of Council on Education, 1862-63,  
pp 44-45.

backyards but they are literally one yard wide, and the ashpits, with their rotting contents, are within one yard of the backrooms of the dwellings. This is near St Peter's School for girls - a tasteless, neglected brick building, of the same type as those just mentioned for boys - where the girls' privvies are so disgusting that the children are reduced to the necessity of using the paved yard which is accordingly defiled with pools of urine; further, a channel has actually been made to convey these past the entrance door. The state of the windows and of the whole of the establishment too, would be a disgrace to a community of savages..."<sup>1</sup>

There were more favourable reports of some Preston schools. Those of St Ignatius Church for example were said to be clean, with large and airy rooms.<sup>2</sup> The superior condition of this establishment may be partly explained by its being a Catholic school. Preston had a large Catholic population apart from the poor Irish, so money was available, and it seems to have been common for Catholic children of different social classes to be educated together.<sup>3</sup> The district containing St Peter's school on the other hand was composed of "poor labourers, factory hands, mechanics or overlookers, small shopkeepers; no upper class residence but the parsonage". It contained nineteen cotton mills and four foundries.<sup>4</sup> Some of the newer schools received more favourable descriptions, but these

1. Article from The Builder, December 14th, 1861, reprinted in Preston Chronicle, December 18th, 1861.
2. LCRO, Report to the General Board of Health on the Borough of Preston, 1849, p 14.
3. See W J Lowe, The Irish in Lancashire 1846-71, A Social History, PhD Thesis, University of Dublin, 1974.
4. PRO, Building Grant Files, Ed 103/9, St Peter's National School. Sources such as these show that other districts were similarly disadvantaged.



too were often surrounded by filth and decay, and the article in The Builder concluded that "all over Preston this contrast is present. New churches and new schools, surrounded by the most unsanitary conditions, denote that cleanliness is further from godliness in Preston than it is in the adage."<sup>1</sup>

Within the classroom, it seems that things were often little better, and the inspectors were frequently unimpressed by both the physical conditions and the activities which were taking place. In 1846 it was said of Trinity School that the boys were "undisciplined, noisy and careless of reproof; spitting at each other in class; dirty and ragged." The room itself was "very dirty".<sup>2</sup> Frequent references are made in inspectors' reports and log books to the problems of damp, lack of ventilation, excessive heat and cold, overcrowding and far from desirable sanitary arrangements. Furthermore, the physical condition of the children themselves had obvious implications for their experience of schooling and set limits on their achievement. One witness to the Newcastle Commission, comparing his current pupils "of the lowest class" with the middle-class children he previously taught in a grammar school, claimed that whilst the working-class children had no less power of attention, their physique was "very low indeed. To instruct them is like ploughing in clay. There is very great difficulty indeed; but here and there there is an exception. I find that even the advanced pupil-teachers, when they are scrofulous or diseased, seem suddenly

1. The Builder, op cit.

2. Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education, 1846, p 381.



to fall off, at 18, 19 or 20, and become quite mediocre." It was, he felt, as if they were exhausted.<sup>1</sup> The condition of the part-timers drew particular comment from several observers, sometimes condemnatory, in the sense of their causing particular problems, but also more sympathetic, as in the following extract from an 1844 inspector's report:

"Where others are clean in person, and neat in dress, and happy in expression, - these are dirty and labour-soiled, in ragged and scanty clothes, with heavy eyes and worn faces. In the clothing districts, their faces, necks and hands, are deeply stained with the blue of the dye used for the cloth. From the spinning mills they come covered with the "flock", or as it is termed, "the fluff" of the yarn - their hair thickly powdered with it - tangled, especially that of the girls, as if no comb could ever penetrate it; the black velveteen dress of the lads, and the thick brown dresses of the girls, bearing on them memorials of the scene which they have just left - the mill, with its "fluff laden" atmosphere, and its continual whirl of machinery."<sup>2</sup>

Given that both the material conditions of working-class life and conditions in the schools undoubtedly affected ability to benefit from what was on offer there, it must also be said that this was itself often of dubious value. The curriculum was usually narrow, and the teaching often less than inspired, itself affected by the circumstances under which the work had to be carried out. In St Thomas's schools in 1846 the inspection found that in both schools the chief employment of the children was "reading with difficulty or spelling monosyllables of three or four letters on cards". This school had 185 boys under one master and 164 girls under one

1. Newcastle Commission, Vol VI, op cit, p 553.

2. Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education, 1844, Vol II, pp 280-81.

mistress.<sup>1</sup> At Trinity School the progress of the boys was said to be "very small; not above half a dozen read without hesitation, or answer questions on the Holy Scripture correctly; their writing is tolerable; they have little knowledge of arithmetic; very few can say the whole of the Catechism... There is at present very little appearance of education here. All the subjects appear to be taught by rote."<sup>2</sup> The girls were said to be fair in reading and writing but had made no progress in arithmetic beyond the tables. Their needlework was said to be good; they learned no other subjects.

Similar criticisms were levelled at most of the schools, although some obviously found more favour than others and this could vary over time with say a change in teacher. The Preston Central School, for example, connected with the Parish Church, was sometimes called the model school; but following the 1851 visit the inspector commented "I cannot say, however, that in present times it altogether deserves the name..."<sup>3</sup> Although the inspectors' observations on the unsatisfactory nature of elementary schooling were partly due to a belief that what the schools should most importantly be teaching was religion and morals, and to their feeling that both the curriculum and the teaching fell down in this respect, they were equally scathing about the standards of secular achievement. Some of them, perhaps surprisingly, also registered their disapproval of the use

1. Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education, 1846, p 381 and p 411.
2. Ibid, p 381.
3. Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education, 1851-2, Vol II, p 360.



of the Bible to teach reading.<sup>1</sup> Noel felt that it excluded from the schools books on subjects with which the children were familiar, and associated the Bible in children's minds with rebukes, so that it became "a symbol of things irksome". He claimed moreover that because the only attempts at morality were repetition of the scriptures and church catechism few Protestant dissenters and hardly any Roman Catholics would send their children to the schools.<sup>2</sup>

The narrowness of provision in the public elementary schools was sometimes exacerbated by the method of collecting fees. The system in practice at St Peter's Girls School in 1852 was fairly common throughout the elementary schools, the charge to each child being one penny per week, whilst those who wished to learn to write were charged twopence, and had to find their own copy books. HMI Kennedy commented that this system acted as "a great discouragement to writing" and that "if a girl brings her own needlework she is charged another penny per week; this too appears disadvantageous."<sup>3</sup> Several years earlier another inspector had observed that a change to a fixed fee, varying with parental income, would undoubtedly benefit the schools in Preston.<sup>4</sup>

1. Books for teaching reading in the nineteenth century were generally of poor quality and some schools used only the Bible. The National Society used mainly religious books recommended by the Christian Knowledge Society. See K W S Garwood, 'Towards Literacy: Elementary Schools of the 1840s', in Educational Review, Vol 13, No 1, November 1960, pp 56-64.
2. Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education, 1840-41, pp 175-6.
3. Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education, 1852-3, p 786.
4. Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education, 1846, Vol 1, pp 447-451.



For half-timers, the schooling provided may have been even less adequate. Some observers believed that because they spent less time in school they were more alert whilst there; more likely they were exhausted from hard labour, and the time during which they were under "effective instruction" was very short.<sup>1</sup> In the case of girls, a large portion of this time was abstracted for teaching sewing, about an hour and a half in mixed schools, an hour and three-quarters in schools for girls. Furthermore, as Winder pointed out:

"... as, in a majority of cases, by a stupid arrangement, the needlework lesson is given only in the afternoon, a mill girl may, during her afternoon turn, lasting a week or a month, as the case may be, have not more than an hour a day for intellectual instruction."<sup>2</sup>

It may be, however, that the part-timers were better off in Preston, where most of them were sent to the ordinary schools, than in some other districts where private factory schools were used, since the latter were not spoken of highly as a whole. One working-class autobiographer records his experience of attendance at such a school.

"It was a cottage at the entrance to a mill yard. The teacher a poor old man who had done odd jobs of a simple kind for about 12s a week was set to teach the half-timers. Lest, however, he should teach too much or the process be too costly he had to stamp washers out of cloth with a heavy wooden mallet on a large block of wood during school hours."<sup>3</sup>

1. Newcastle Commission, Vol II, op cit, Mr Winder's Report, p 228. See also previous chapter.
2. Ibid.
3. From Thomas Wood, 'The Autobiography of Thomas Wood, 1822-1880', quoted in Vincent, op cit, p 99.

Winder's report to the Newcastle Commission on the quality of private factory schools in Rochdale confirms this impression. He found them "on the whole very unsatisfactory" and at least five "schools only in name and a complete fraud upon the Factory Acts". In two, "taught in cottage rooms by old incapacitated weavers" hardly any of the children learnt writing, and none could "do more in the way of reading than scramble through an easy verse in the New Testament." In another he found at least sixty girls "crowded into a frightfully hot room so tightly that it was almost impossible for them to move, with desk room for about 10, and apparently hardly any instruction given except a little reading and sewing".<sup>1</sup> Leonard Horner expressed similar feelings about the quality of such factory schools and the teaching in them, wishing that those who impeded government aid to schools would see some of them for themselves so that they could see "very plainly the wretched state of a large proportion of these schools in almost every part of the country..."<sup>2</sup>

This does not mean that all was well for the half-timers in the ordinary schools. In addition to their restricted access to schooling and the effects of labour upon them it seems that they were excluded too from some of the activities of the schools. Watkins felt that in some of the schools which he inspected little attempt was made to include them, and in one school the master claimed that this was impossible without injuring the progress of the other

1. Newcastle Commission, Vol II, op cit, Mr Winder's Report, p.231.

2. PP 1847-48 [900], Vol XXVI, Factory Inspectors' Half-Yearly Reports, Leonard Horner, 22nd November, 1847, p 5.

children. Watkins, though feeling that "charity and justice" must be extended to the half-timers, felt that there was some logic in this answer, and recommended some form of separation in schools: that all should learn the basics, whilst only full-time children would take 'secondary' subjects such as history and geography, or even arithmetic.<sup>1</sup>

The curriculum in the nineteenth-century elementary schools was, with some variation, fairly rudimentary. The basics were reading (usually the Bible and other religious works), sometimes writing, and for girls domestic subjects such as sewing and needlework. The less disadvantaged might also encounter arithmetic, history, geography and music. The limited nature of such education lay not only in this narrow range of subjects, however, but in the level and standard to which they were taught. The quality of the teaching in the schools was variable, but at its worst left very much to be desired.<sup>2</sup> The pupil-teacher system, though aimed at achieving a trained workforce, was held responsible for much inadequate instruction. Winder blamed some of the failure of children who had been learning for years without mastering the rudiments on the "imbecility" of pupil-teachers; it was, he said, a wonder that the children learnt anything at all on the plan which he had frequently seen adopted.

1. Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education, 1844, Vol II, pp 280-81.

2. See previous chapter on the training and backgrounds of teachers in the elementary schools.



"A large class, probably of 25 children, stands up, sometimes in their parallel desks, sometimes in a group on the floor, to read to a pupil-teacher. Each child in order reads a single sentence so low, and in such a Babel of sound, that it is with the utmost difficulty, heard by the teacher, and only half heard, if heard at all, by the rest of the class. When the child comes to a word which he does not know, he simply spells it letter by letter, and then, without making any attempt to find it out for himself, looks up at the teacher, who forthwith to save trouble pronounces the word. No attempt is made to teach the art of division into syllables, and the old method of spelling seems universally discarded. The lesson goes on, and at the end each scholar has perhaps read two sentences, and heard three or four more, but it would be difficult to say what he had learnt.<sup>1</sup>

It was apparently difficult to attract pupil-teachers of the desired quality. Some were little older than the pupils they were to teach, and further problems resulted from the method of payment of pupil-teachers. Their wages rose with each year of service and HMI Steele believed that schools were therefore tempted to get rid of those who were older and more expensive, and to keep up the staff by presenting new candidates. Thus, he argued, "a pupil-teacher in his first year and one in his fifth are reckoned alike competent to teach 40 scholars, and a school is accounted to be duly supplied with teaching power whatever may be the standing of the pupil-teachers, so long as the required number of teachers is kept..."<sup>2</sup>

Despite the fact that the teaching in some of the elementary schools was undoubtedly of poor quality, two points must be remembered. First, the inspectors along with other middle-class observers

1. Newcastle Commission, Vol II, op cit, Mr Winder's Report, pp 226-27.
2. Report of the Committee of Council on Education, 1870-71, p 198.

were convinced that 'the lower orders' had neither the skills nor the cultivation to qualify them as educators, and secondly the teachers in these schools were, like the pupils, labouring under considerable difficulties. Attendance was usually short, irregular, and fragmentary, and this limited what any teacher was able to achieve. HMI Watkins gave an account of what he regarded as a typical pattern of schooling in 1846.

"We have no means of ascertaining accurately the school-time of the poor man's child; but it seems very probable that it does not exceed two years. In large towns, as Liverpool, Manchester, Preston, Hull, Leeds, etc., where there are many schools with the same rate of payment, and where the labouring classes are not only frequently removing altogether, but often shifting their residence from one part of the town to the other, 'following the work', as they justly describe it, the school children move with the parents, and change their school as they change their home. But it is obvious that such locomotion is a great impediment to sound instruction, and still more so to proper training; and that 5 months at St. James's School, and 6 at Christ Church, and 4 at the parish church, and 8 at St. Bartholomew, are not equal to a shorter but uninterrupted time given steadily to the instruction even of the least successful of these schools. I believe it may be stated that the average age of children in the upper classes of our national schools is 11 years, and the average time during which they are under the more direct instruction and influence of the teachers not more than 6 months:"<sup>1</sup>

In 1851, following his inspection of St Paul's boys school HMI Kennedy came to similar conclusions,<sup>2</sup> and the problem of a constantly changing school population seems to have persisted well into the second half of the century. An 1866 report contained the

1. Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education, 1846, Vol I, pp 436-7.
2. Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education, 1851-52, Vol II, Rev. Kennedy's Report.



following table:<sup>1</sup>

Number of children who have been in the same school -

Less than 1 year	2,474
" " 2 " and more than 1 year	1,345
" " 3 " " " " 2 "	703
" " 4 " " " " 3 "	312
" " 5 " " " " 4 "	162
Above 5 years	142
The number who have left school during the year	4,427
The number admitted	4,903

Later still, in 1873, St Thomas' Log Book records:

"The scholars have changed so constantly that though 510 are, or have been on the books in the past year, only about 100 over seven are presented for examination."<sup>2</sup>

Half-timers frequently changed schools, particularly in towns

1. Report of the Committee of Council on Education, 1866-87,  
p 95.
2. LCRO, SMPr 32/1 St Thomas C E Boys' School Log Book, 1872-1893,  
entry for November 14th, 1873. Contemporary research also  
shows that movement within Preston was extremely common. See  
Michael Anderson, Family Structure in Nineteenth Century Lanca-  
shire, 1971. In his intensive sample of one area only 14%  
(45 out of 311) of the males and 19% (75 out of 390) of the  
females aged ten and over in 1861 were in that year living  
in the same house as they had been in 1851, and the sample  
seems to have been not untypical of the town as a whole in  
this respect.



like Preston where factories were numerous. Since many employers - "almost every employer"<sup>1</sup> according to Winder - compelled their employees to attend one particular school, changes in school followed changes in employment, which could be frequent. Examples of this occur often in the school log books, where teachers were "much bothered by children changing mills and schools so much"<sup>2</sup>. Employers clearly exerted considerable control over which schools were patronised. St Mary's Street Methodist school sent out circulars in 1871 requesting masters to permit the Wesleyan half-timers in their employ to attend that school<sup>3</sup>, and at English Martyrs Roman Catholic School in 1886 a source of grievance was said to be "the summary withdrawal of boys when they change their factory."<sup>4</sup>

Evidently pressure from manufacturers for children in their employ to attend particular schools was often due to religious preference, which could of course go against the religious preference of the family. An 1855 Visitation of the Catholic schools in Preston noted that short-timers attended a Protestant school<sup>5</sup>, and following his visit to Preston St Joseph's a factory inspector, "finding how well the half-timers were provided for, said that there ought to be more and this he thought accrued from the prejudice existing among factory masters towards Catholic schools, a practice which

1. Newcastle Commission, Vol II, op cit, Mr Winder's Report, p 229.
2. LCRO, SMPr 28/1 St Mary's Street Methodist Log Book (Mixed) 1871-1916, entry for June 8th, 1874.
3. Ibid, entry for May 5th, 1871.
4. LCRO, SMPr 4/1, English Martyrs R C Log Book, 1871-1891, entry for April 21st, 1886.
5. LCRO, RCLv, 1855 Visitation.

he strongly condemned."<sup>1</sup> Sometimes, however, schools might be chosen for geographical or perhaps administrative convenience, as in the example from the log book of St Peter's Boys school.

"Mr Charnley having ordered all his half-timers attending this school to leave and in future to attend St Thomas' School with the intention to reduce the number of Halftime Books, I called upon him and pointed out the injustice of such procedure, and ultimately prevailed upon him to cancel the order"<sup>2</sup>

Such decisions by the employers could directly contravene the explicit wishes of the parents, as another teacher records.

"Last week Susannah Greenhalgh was compelled to leave this school against the wish of her parents, on account of having gone to work at Messrs Horrockses Miller and Company's Mills and this week I have had to refuse permission to a girl whose mother wished her to come, for the same purpose. This is continually happening"<sup>3</sup>

It was continually happening at many of the schools in the town and it can be considered another disadvantage of the half-time system that it could reduce parental choice in the matter of schooling, ignore the religious preference of the family, and cause frequent disruptions and inconvenience to the child.

1. See B K O'Neill, A History of St Joseph's Parish, Preston, Centenary 1860-1960, 1960, p 26.
2. LCRO, SMPr 31/1, St Peter's C of E Boys Log Book, 1875-95, entry for November 3rd, 1882.
3. LCRO, SMPr 28/1, St Mary's Street Methodist Log Book, Mixed, 1871-1916, entry for June 30th, 1882.

Schooling was also disrupted for many children by frequent absenteeism and inability to attend regularly. Inspectors' reports throughout the century and school log books which are available for the later years make frequent comment on the problem, and indicate some of the reasons for it. These include employment; leaving town; no school pence; doing messages; minding house; unusual events (such as ship launching, fairs, sports and so on); fine and bad weather; Friday absenteeism; absence before and after holidays; sickness; and children sent home for dirtiness and untidiness.<sup>1</sup> The availability of teachers' comments in the later years provides evidence that absenteeism was a constant concern right through to the closing years of the century, as in the following examples:

"St Mary's Street Methodist School

November 11th, 1872

Heard that J.W. Hurst has left the school because he 'learns nowt'. His attendance averages about one actual attendance out of fifteen possible attendances. Must not be admitted again."<sup>2</sup>

1. See for example Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education, 1844, Vol II, pp 268-287. The distribution of disease, an important factor in keeping children away from school, varied throughout the town, and was apparently higher in the working-class areas - see Dixon, op cit, p 33.
2. LCRO, SMPr 28/1, St Mary's Street Methodist Log Book (Mixed) 1871-1916.



"St Paul's Boys School

April 4th, 1888

Neither Managers, School-Attendance Committee nor My Lords can appreciate this difficulty of irregular attendance. Only the teacher can. It disorganises the school, depresses the teacher, injures the grant and affects the Report by retarding the progress not only of those who are absent, but those who attend more regularly."<sup>1</sup>

The second entry shows that the existence of compulsory attendance bye-laws in the last decades of the nineteenth century was insufficient to solve the problem. Similarly, despite the requirements of the law, half-timers, like other children, seemed to find a variety of reasons not to go to school. They were frequently absent when the mills were stopped, for example, seeming often to grasp the opportunity of strikes, breakdown and recession to miss school altogether.<sup>2</sup> HMI Watkins in 1844 saw lack of contact between teachers and parents as a contributory factor in poor attendance,<sup>3</sup> and much later, in 1871, a teacher commenting on absences felt that the reason might be that the mothers of many of the children were employed in the mills, and were thus, to some extent "prevented from pushing their children off to schools".<sup>4</sup> There were however likely to have been more reasons than this for irregularity of attendance. The conditions of working-class life in the nineteenth century affected educational endeavour of all kinds, and the elementary school was

1. LCRO, SMPr 30/2, St Paul's C of E Boys School Log Book 1887-1917; there are numerous similar examples of these kinds of comments in the log books for the various schools.
2. See for example Report of the Committee of Council on Education, 1868, p 137; and various school log books, LCRO.
3. Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education, 1844, Vol 2, p 287.
4. LCRO, SMPr 28/1, St Mary's Street Methodist Log Book (Mixed) 1871-1916, entry for June 13th, 1871.

no exception. Working-class attitudes may also have been a factor. More radical workers had many criticisms of provided education, others objected on religious grounds, whilst at a broader level neither acceptance of a period of schooling as essential for all children nor the general principle of interference in the family by the state had yet been established. Furthermore, certain aspects of the schooling process may well have discouraged both parents and children, one such being the use of physical punishment in schools. Some schools received frequent complaints from parents about teachers and pupil-teachers striking pupils<sup>1</sup> and such punishment could be extremely brutal, as in the following example from St Paul's School log book.

"July 21st, 1868

Mr Stout beat a boy with a thick cane across the shoulders - disabled him - could not put his jacket on - in addition to the above injury a large lump was raised on the boy's head above the ear. The boy is a little over 6..."<sup>2</sup>

This same log book includes many entries on the problems of pupil-teachers striking the pupils and of parents removing the latter from the school. This seems to have been far from unusual; the new principal of St James' C of E School declared in 1892 that the boys were surprised at his intention to refrain from the use of corporal punishment, commenting that "they seem to have regarded it as indispensable and that it was bound to come as a natural

1. See for example LCRO, SMPPr 28/1, St Mary's Street Methodist Log Book (Mixed) 1871-1916.
2. LCRO, SMPPr 30/1, St Paul's C of E Boys' School Log Book, 1862-1887.



course of events."<sup>1</sup>

Whatever the reasons for it, irregularity of attendance clearly affected the working-class child's experience of education as well as what the schools themselves were able to achieve. Nor was this the only disruption to schooling; log books and inspectors' reports also record problems such as constant unpunctuality, lack of books and equipment, and other demands on the childrens' time and attention. Some of these provide interesting examples of the extent to which older traditions prevailed well into the industrial period. In 1871, for instance, the master of St Paul's Boys School recorded, following the Whitsun holiday: "many boys late, but excused on account of the holidays, and custom."<sup>2</sup> (my emphasis). At St Mary's Street Methodist school the teacher recorded that she had "very great difficulty" in getting the children to attend punctually, and that they seemed to be left very much to their own choice whether to attend or not,<sup>3</sup> whilst in 1872 St Luke's Girls School recorded a plan to give marks and prizes for those present at 9 a.m. and 2 p.m. precisely, suggesting that this was a somewhat unusual event.<sup>4</sup>

The use that working-class children were able to make of

1. LCRO, SMPr 23/2, St James' C of E School Log Book 1883-1894, entry for January 1892.
2. LCRO, SMPr 30/1, St Paul's C of E Boys School Log Book 1862-1887, entry for June 5th, 1871.
3. LCRO, SMPr 28/1, St Mary's Street Methodist Log Book, (Mixed), 1871-1916, entry for May 12th, 1871.
4. LCRO, SMPr 25/1, St Luke's Girls C of E School Log Book, entry for June 1872.



elementary schooling was clearly affected by the demands and realities of working-class life. In 1844, HMI Watkins, speaking on the "minor evils" to which schools in the manufacturing districts were exposed, described one of them which he had noticed at St Michael's, Manchester.

"At about half past three in the afternoon, I observed several boys going up to the master, and then leaving the school. I inquired the reason; it was that they might go with the "baggings", that is, the tea, or the coffee, or afternoon meal, to their relatives in the different mills. For this purpose they were to lose an hour's schooling, that is, one-sixth of the already short time in which they are to be instructed in useful knowledge, and learn their duties to God and man".<sup>1</sup>

The course of working-class schooling was far from smooth and many children were battling against innumerable obstacles in their struggle to survive let alone acquire some small stock of learning. Though both material conditions of existence and the quality of the schools themselves affected all working-class children, some were more disadvantaged than others. The system of charging variable fees according to subjects taken was argued to be a handicap to many of the poorer children, who were also often totally excluded from the schools through inability to pay the fees. HMI Morell noted in 1861 that the effect of charging a penny in most of the schools in Lancashire would be to empty a school rather than fill it. "The result would be that a few children of the lowest classes of all would go in, and then the mechanics, who considered themselves to be a little above all those classes would not let their children

1. Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education, 1844, Vol II, p 283.

go and learn with them."<sup>1</sup> Such discrimination was apparently not uncommon. It was claimed by another inspector that parents sometimes removed their children from a school when factory children were sent to it<sup>2</sup> and some schools for their part refused to take half-timers, claiming that they caused disciplinary problems, were dirty and foul mannered, more backward, less willing to learn and too tired to do so. Their presence also necessitated the disruption of lessons in the morning and afternoon "to the manifest loss of ordinary scholars."<sup>3</sup> In some of the schools, however, particularly those attached to the Catholic churches, children of different classes were educated together,<sup>4</sup> and although this may have been one reason why the instruction in these schools was often commented upon favourably it was not a practice which was universally approved. HMI Kennedy in 1854 expressed reservations about the mixing of the children of the middle and labouring classes, on the grounds that it led to the neglect of the "lower grade of scholars". He believed that it was

"...contrary to human nature to suppose that the poor boys paying the small fees will be as much encouraged as the well-dressed boys paying the more remunerative fees... Moreover, I have always noticed that (as a general rule) the children of the middle grade are more forward

1. Newcastle Commission, Vol VI, op cit, pp 198-9.
2. Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education, 1846, Vol I, p 440.
3. Report of the Committee of Council on Education, 1868-9, pp 317-319.
4. See for example Newcastle Commission, Vol VI, op cit, p 171; Minutes of Committee of Council on Education 1853-4, pp 431-2.



than the poorer children of the same age. They pick up more cultivation at home, and possess more conveniences and opportunities for private study. On this account, and also because they would stay longer at school, they would naturally form the upper classes in the school, and engross a preponderating share of the head master's attention, to the detriment of the poorer classes, however much the master were disposed to do equal justice."<sup>1</sup>

Clearly some children were visibly different from those alongside whom they were taught; and could thus be accorded different treatment. HMI Watkins found in one of the Bolton schools a "wall of separation built up" between the part-timers and their "more fortunate school fellows", the former being huddled together in a large class close to the door, "in the coldest and most comfortless part of the room" and largely excluded from the business of the school.<sup>2</sup>

Despite the manifest difficulties faced by many of the half-timers, many witnesses found much to say in favour of the system, claiming for example that the attentionspan of young children was not as long as six hours anyway<sup>3</sup> and that the disadvantage of shorter hours was compensated for by regularity of attendance.<sup>4</sup> Set against this are the disadvantages already noted, and the argument that half-timers may not start school until compelled to do so, by which

1. Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education, 1853-4, Vol 2, pp 431-2.

2. Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education, 1844, Vol II, pp 280-81.

3. Newcastle Commission, Vol VI, op cit, passim.

4. See eg PP 1852-53 [1642] Vol XL, Factory Inspectors' Half-Yearly Reports, Leonard Horner, 30th April 1853, pp 14-17.



time valuable years had been lost (or, in the words of one middle-class observer, the "habits of the street" were held to have had a deleterious effect).<sup>1</sup> Whatever view is taken it seems clear that for the half-timers as well as for most other working-class children who had any taste of formal schooling, elementary education was irregular, fragmented and rudimentary, and could be a less than pleasant, even harsh experience.

### 3. Impact of Schooling

Given the context within which the public elementary schools were operating in the nineteenth century, it is perhaps unsurprising that the education received in them seems to have been often very rudimentary. Study of working-class autobiographies suggests that although the autobiographers might be numbered among the intellectual 'elite' of the working class, the most they gained from schooling was basic skills and knowledge, a foundation which they then went on to build upon themselves.<sup>2</sup> This certainly seems to have been the case for those who were adult in the 1840s and thus grew up during the early years of the nineteenth century, but it also persisted after public elementary schooling was more widely available. William Pilkington, born in 1840, gives the following account of his own education:

"The only education I ever had was in St Thomas's school, Lancaster road, as half-timer. Elijah Simmons was the

1. Report of the Committee of Council on Education, 1868-9, pp 317-319.

2. Vincent, op cit.

master. At that early day I appreciated the value of learning, but did not get much. In those days lads got more cane than tuition. My small stock of learning has been acquired by my own industry, without tutor or assistant and to add to my difficulties, my exertions have frequently been made under circumstances the most unpropitious to my pursuits..."<sup>1</sup>

Even allowing for the tendency for such autobiographers to stress the contribution of their own commitment and effort, elementary education was undoubtedly limited in scope and indeed was intended to be just that: working-class children should not be encouraged through it to advance beyond their station in life. In addition to the emphasis on moral and religious instruction and the narrow range of secular subjects available the standards expected at the end of such an education were not high. In the highest standard (standard six) the 'Revised Code' of 1861 laid down that the child should be able to read a short ordinary paragraph in a newspaper or other modern narrative, write another short paragraph in a newspaper or other modern narrative, slowly dictated once by a few words at a time, and cast up a sum in practice or bills of parcels.<sup>2</sup> It should be remembered too that basic though these requirements seem, they were a step towards a greater insistence on the importance and effectiveness of secular teaching, and that immediately before this the Newcastle Commissioners had found many children leaving school way below this standard of achievement.<sup>3</sup>

1. William Pilkington, Then and Now, 1911, pp 13-14.
2. PP 1867-68 [4010] Vol XVIII, Factory Inspectors' Reports, p 30.
3. See John Hurt, Education in Evolution, 1971, p 200.

Whilst the main aim of the founders and early supporters of the elementary schools was to foster religious and moral education, many pupils and parents seem to have adopted quite a different approach. Mr Winder claimed that in the northern district the most active demand was for reading, writing and arithmetic, and some parents were said to be dissatisfied with the amount of time devoted to religious instruction, as impinging on these subjects.<sup>1</sup> Inspectors' reports regularly noted this demand for basic skills, writing being the one which was perhaps particularly valued. HMI Kennedy attributed this partly to the demand for bookkeepers in the county, but added that schoolmasters "would do well to remember that the parents appreciate a school chiefly by the way in which their children write. Writing is almost the only thing the parents can judge of; and I have never seen an empty school where this branch of learning was duly attended to..."<sup>2</sup> This makes an interesting point: writing could be the key to future occupation but was also, even for uneducated parents, very visible evidence of learning and a sign of progress. It may not have been a skill which was equally valued for all pupils however; there was discrepancy between the numbers of boys and girls learning to write in most schools, and Kennedy noted that on the whole the boys "though not the girls" (my emphasis) continued to acquire this accomplishment.<sup>3</sup>

1. Newcastle Commission, Vol II, op cit, Mr Winder's Report, pp 196-7.
2. Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education, 1850-51, Vol II, p 435.
3. Minutes of the Committee of Council on education, 1848-49-50, p 180.



The success of the night schools and evening classes in attracting popular support certainly seems to have been mainly due to interest in acquiring basic skills of literacy and numeracy - a secular education. Even the Roman Catholic schools, which particularly emphasised spiritual matters, apparently had to concede this, as HMI Stokes noted in his report on the Roman Catholic Night Schools in Lancashire, in 1861.

"Little direct religious instruction is imparted in night schools. In Preston, indeed, where a system of evening teaching has been carefully kept up for a long period, as well as in some other places, a class-room or other apartment is assigned to those where youth or ignorance of religion calls for particular pains, and here the chief work is in catechetical instruction. Into the night school proper young persons are not admitted until they have received their first communion... School generally opens and invariably ends with hymns and prayer. In other places religious instruction is given on an extra night when attendance is not obligatory. The scholars, it must be observed, have arrived at years of discretion, and at all events are earning their own support. Their taste, therefore, and wishes must be consulted in selecting subjects of instruction. They hear sermons, they say, and frequent the sacraments in church; but they attend night school to acquire secular learning. Attempts based on a different view have often been made, but I have not observed any of them to succeed"<sup>1</sup>.

Similarly, with regard to the Sunday Schools, Noel claimed that "with many of the scholars the main object of coming to school is to learn to read".<sup>2</sup> He went on to say, too, that "in some cases the teachers seem to forget that they ought to have higher ends in view", a remark which, coming from the same report in which Noel

1. Report of the Committee of Council on Education, 1860-61,  
p 193.

2. Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education, 1840-41,  
p 165.

laments the problems caused by many of the teachers also working in the factories, raises the possibility that some teachers were able to 'subvert' the curriculum and to exert their own influence on a school.<sup>1</sup>

The middle classes, despite increasing emphasis in some quarters on the importance of a sound secular education, continued to see what Kennedy called "training in character" as an indispensable part of the schooling process.<sup>2</sup> On both counts, however, they often found the elementary schools inadequate. Yet, as Horner noted in 1855, parents who were often themselves unable to verify the quality of schooling made sacrifices to send their children to such inadequate schools, the consequences of which were "not only that the poor people are cheated of their money, but they get disgusted by the loss, and no longer send their children to school, unless a very different one is within their reach."<sup>3</sup>

This is not at all the same as saying that working-class parents were not generally interested in education, a claim which was and is often made. The Newcastle Report contains many references to the idea that efficient schools were full; moreover evidence of

1. Several of the Chartists were ex-Sunday school teachers (see eg PRO, HO 20/10, Confidential Reports on Political Prisoners, 1841) although this occupation was sometimes given up on joining the movement.
2. Report of the Committee of Council on Education, 1860-61, pp 93-4.
3. PP 1856 [2031] Vol XVIII, Factory Inspectors' Reports, Leonard Horner for year ending 31st October, 1855, p 19.



interest in schooling is obvious from the considerable popularity of the evening schools and by the relatively large sums of money which were paid to the private schools. These were often supported by the working class - often, indeed, preferred by them, even though they could cost sixpence a week as opposed to twopence a week in the church schools.<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately it is not at this stage possible to reconstruct a detailed picture of this type of schooling in Preston, due to the difficulties involved in investigating the phenomenon. These are extensively discussed in a recent work on the working-class private schools, which found local evidence to be patchy and incomplete, making the construction of a coherent local study impossible.<sup>2</sup> The schools themselves seldom advertised and those who ran them often had reasons for concealing this activity. Definitions of education used by middle-class investigators and observers often excluded establishments such as these, which they dismissed in derogatory terms. The census data is unreliable. Difficulties such as these may mean that the number of schools has been under-estimated, and that more working-class children were receiving a schooling than is often thought - albeit of a short, fractured nature. In 1851 even Horace Mann suggested it was probable that "very few children are completely uninstructed; nearly all, at some time or another of their childhood, see the inside of a schoolroom."<sup>3</sup>

1. See for example Thomas W Laqueur, 'Working-class Demand and the Growth of English Elementary Education, 1750-1850', in Lawrence Stone (ed) Schooling and Society, 1976; and P W Gardner, The Lost Elementary Schools of Victorian England, 1984.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid, p 75.



The popularity of the working-class private schools, or 'dames schools' as many of them were known, caused considerable consternation among many of the providers of public elementary schooling and among other middle-class observers, who on the whole had far from favourable opinions of them. In particular such commentators found it difficult to understand why such schools did not fall into disuse with the greater availability of the public elementary schools. An 1841 inspector's report on the Lancashire dames schools which makes no direct references to Preston but gives general descriptions for the area as a whole presents as its overriding impression that such schools were little more than childminding institutions, just somewhere for the children to be sent to be looked after, in often bad conditions, where little semblance of education could be found. In one such establishment the inspector found thirty-one children aged two to seven in a small, airless cellar. The children sat "in the pestiferous obscurity" of a dark corner, "totally destitute of books and without light enough to enable them to read." They had a few old, soiled and battered books to read, and were encouraged by the reward of sugar-plums.<sup>1</sup> The prowess of the teachers in the dames schools was often doubted. Winder argued that they were usually much less highly educated than those in the public elementary schools, and gave the following description of them.

"The number of cripples amongst them is very high indeed... Nearly all of the schoolmasters have previously been engaged in some other calling. Several whom I met with were broken-down tradesmen, a good many had been weavers,

1. Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education, 1840-41, pp 162-4.

and the rest had for the most part been handicraftsmen of various kinds... The dames seemed for the most part to be very little more instructed than the average of the class to which they belonged. Many, by the reluctance which they exhibited to taking the pen in hand, when asked to sign the returns, showed pretty clearly that they could not write."<sup>1</sup>

He did however admit that some of the dames taught subjects such as reading very effectively, even "far surpassing" a monitor or a second rate pupil-teacher in a public school. Nevertheless, he still felt that they did not produce the same "general result" on their scholars as a really good infant school.<sup>2</sup> Similarly, Noel had noted earlier that such schools could teach some of the children reading, writing, arithmetic, and even the elements of grammar or a few pages of history, but they could "answer few of the purposes of education."<sup>3</sup> What, then, was education? Noel explained what the dames schools did not offer:

"...the mass of the children cannot there learn their duties nor obtain any useful knowledge, nor become observant or reflective, nor acquire the habit of self-government, nor be prepared to be wise and good men in after life."<sup>4</sup>

As the inspectors' reports themselves frequently noted, however, it was the basic skills which working-class parents particularly valued, and this was very probably one reason for the popularity

1. Newcastle Commission, Vol II, op cit, Mr Winder's Report, pp 219-20.
2. Ibid, p 227.
3. Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education, 1840-41, pp 162-4.
4. Ibid.



of the private schools. They were also free of the stigma of charity, with which the public elementary schools were often associated, they were part of the community rather than something imposed from outside, and they offered a greater flexibility, being less rigid about punctuality, regularity of attendance and requirements such as cleanliness or standards of dress.<sup>1</sup> HMI Watkins drew attention to some of these aspects of private schooling in his report on the dames schools in the Yorkshire area, where he claimed

"... there is no discipline, and no regularity of attendance is required. At a National school or a public school there is discipline and regularity of attendance is required. In the one case the parents of the children are free, and in the other case they are under authority, and I am not sure that would not be quite enough to counterbalance the feeling in their minds connected with paying more."<sup>2</sup>

Such extracts show that working-class parents, even with their limited means and resources, could be discriminating in their approach to education. This fact, together with the existence of a variety of learning networks more closely linked to aspects of working-class culture, meant that they could themselves be an educational force of significance and could make an impact on what was on offer to them. This is not to deny that for the whole of the period under study education for most working-class children was of a fairly random nature, and it is therefore not possible to identify institutional education firmly with a particular period of childhood. The difficulty of classifying schoolchildren by age

1. See Laqueur, op cit, (in Stone, 1976), pp 197-201; and Gardner, op cit.
2. Newcastle Commission, Vol VI, op cit, p 155.



even towards the end of the century is illustrated in school log book entries like the following.

"January 21st, 1887

Have admitted two new scholars this week named Pilkington. One is eight years of age, and the other nine; yet they are only fit for the infant room, never having been at school before."<sup>1</sup>

Departure ages were similarly flexible, with many children leaving school after only a small amount of schooling. It is therefore not possible for this period to establish rigid boundaries between schooling and other forms of educational activity. Learning could begin or be taken up again at evening or Sunday schools or within a range of collective associations. The pattern it took can only be understood in the context of a life in which labour was the central experience. Work - or lack of it - determined conditions of existence for both adults and children and created the constraints within which other activities took place.<sup>2</sup> In this context, the half-time system, though it could undoubtedly be seen as providing inferior schooling for 'inferior' children, was one way in which education could be fitted into the demands of a working life. It was also, however, an important step in the establishment of government regulated education as a set stage in the life-cycle, which, whilst it was a triumph in the sense of removing children from the

1. LCRO, SMPr 44/1, Ribbleton Avenue Methodist Junior School Log Book.
2. This point is illustrated particularly vividly in accounts which working-class children in employment have provided of their daily lives. See Appendix 2 for extracts from evidence to the 1843 Children's Employment Commission.

punishing routine of labour, was also a loss, in that it imposed narrow educational visions and definitions and neglected or rejected more wide-ranging activities of the kind discussed in earlier chapters.

\* \* \*

Despite the many hindrances faced by the working class in their pursuit of education, Winder found "not a trace of learning being positively disliked or despised";<sup>1</sup> what he and other commentators did find, as a broader perspective makes clear, were conflicts of interests, lifestyles and culture between the classes which were reflected in their attitudes to and experiences of education.

1. Newcastle Commission, Vol II, op cit, Mr Winder's Report, p 195.

## CHAPTER 7

## CONCLUSION : THE SOCIAL RELATIONS OF EDUCATION

In an attempt to escape from narrow definitions of education this thesis began by investigating the kinds of activities which working people were involved in during the course of their daily lives; the kinds of knowledge and skills they required in order to participate fully in these; and the means by which they might pursue their acquisition. This led to consideration of a wide range of educational activity, from the 'education by collision' offered by participation in the life of a large manufacturing town, to more deliberate and sometimes more formal educational initiatives, and finally to a form of educational provision for the working class which came to occupy a central position in the history of education: the public elementary school system. These activities incorporated many local elements whilst also being influenced by wider social movements. In this patchwork of educational provision the boundaries between the different kinds of educational endeavour were often fluid. All have to be located within the context of material conditions and the work requirements of industrial capitalism. This in itself meant that the educational experiences of most working people were fragmentary and might involve contact with a whole range of different agencies and institutions. Those in attendance at elementary schools for example were frequently not merely the children of workers but workers themselves, who also had access to trade unions and other forms of collective association. Nor were the intentions of the providers aimed at them alone: one task for the schools was to counteract the effects of so-called



inadequate parenting, and the whole family was seen as in need of education. Older workers were involved in Sunday and evening schooling as well as in the trade union or temperance society. The picture of educational activity which emerges from all this is one of complexity, within which class relationships can nevertheless be identified as a central factor.

Social class is an important factor in educational developments in Preston and other nineteenth-century towns partly because of its influence in shaping educational experience and partly because it could lead to different approaches to the whole question of education. The working class were not just passive recipients of provided schooling and other educational schemes but had an active role, both through the exercise of choice in relation to educational provision and through their participation in a broad range of activities which can be - and were - seen as educative. It has therefore been argued throughout the thesis that the working class were themselves a significant educational force, and that educational development can be seen in terms of an interaction between the attitudes, activities and responses of different class groups. The word 'interaction' is important here. Middle-class provision drew much of its inspiration from fears of working-class association and infidelity but at the same time was forced to take some account of working-class demands in this era of alternatives. Working-class activities could be in explicit opposition to middle-class 'propaganda' but might also draw on the models, resources and support of the wealthier providers.

This conclusion to the thesis pursues questions about how far

it is possible to depict an explicitly working-class view of education and about the representativeness of an 'improving' tradition amongst Preston's working class. It looks at two main areas of relationships: first, that between the 'improving' tradition and the working class as a whole, including the question of to what extent there was uniformity amongst the 'improvers' themselves; secondly, the much neglected subject of the relationship between the 'improving' tradition and the working-class family, particularly women - in other words, how far gender complicates the picture of the social relations of education presented in this thesis.

\* \* \*

# 1. A Working-Class Tradition in Education?

Despite internal disagreements over the significance of education and some collaboration with the middle classes, movements such as Chartism and trade unionism did often articulate an explicitly working-class educational interest. In particular they emphasised the potential of education as a force for radical change. Education, it was believed, could aid the emancipation of the working class, but to do this it had to be untainted by false messages and middle-class propaganda. Independent collective action including the dissemination of knowledge was stressed as an essential aspect of the defence of working-class rights and freedoms. In this sense education was viewed as either complementing politics or as completely inseparable from political action. Though some adherents to such organisations may have been indifferent to education, those who

spoke out against it were rejecting not education per se but any suggestion that it was a necessary qualification for the granting of other demands. It was felt that this was the implication behind many educational schemes, and this suspicion may have been well founded. HMI Kennedy, for example, felt that attaching some political privilege to a certain amount of education would be a powerful stimulus in attracting scholars.

"To secure a vote, for instance, in the election of a member of Parliament, would I believe, stimulate thousands to come up to a certain standard of education, while at the same time, and by the same means, they would be qualifying themselves for the exercise of such a vote..."<sup>1</sup>

This equation of education with 'fitness' to vote was rejected by many working people including those on both sides of the moral/physical force divide within Chartism. Within radical movements there was widespread agreement that education was part of the struggle for emancipation and far-reaching changes in society, not a separate pre-requisite. One of the Chartists' own historians, Gammage, a fierce denunciator of O'Connor and 'mere excitement', added to his claim that Lovett's plan might have brought success if generally adopted the significant qualification:

"always taking care that it was not perverted to mere middle class purposes."<sup>2</sup>

1. Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education, 1850-51, Vol II, p 449.
2. R C Gammage, History of the Chartist Movement, 1894, p 197.



The content of education was seen as crucial; the wrong kind of knowledge could be more limiting than none at all, another reason for suspicion of government and philanthropic schemes. This kind of emphasis both arose out of and gave rise to conflict between the classes. In 1843 accusations that socialists were using a room in Preston's Cannon Street to propound "blasphemous doctrines" led to a call to the authorities to put a stop to the nuisance. In response, a member of the 'Mutual Instruction Class' referred to in the complaint wrote to the Preston Chronicle that

"All that they want is to arrive at the truth, in every science that affects man, and especially in the present sectarian arrangements, where poverty, vice, crime and misery are so plentifully found, they want to arrive at a true knowledge of the causes, and what would be a remedy."<sup>1</sup>

Beliefs about the purpose of education and how it might effectively take place were thus a key area of debate. The two elements were interlinked: the concern to uphold the existing social order which was felt by many members of the middle classes, led to an insistence that the workers could only be guided by those of a 'higher cultivation'. Thus, properly organised education could be seen as potentially beneficial in countering discontent and upheaval. Attempts to interfere with the natural working of the economy were based on delusions, it was often argued, which stemmed from inadequate instruction and guidance. Ignorance or half-formed ideas were seen as leaving workers open to the appeals of the more skilled and fluent

1. Preston Chronicle, April 1st, 1843.

agitators which the more educated person would see through in an instant.<sup>1</sup> Education could therefore only properly be carried out under guidance from those of superior station and cultivation.

In this vein HMI Watkins commented that although the night school developments of the National Schools imparted a fair amount of instruction in reading, writing and arithmetic, there was little place for education in them. The nearest approach to this, he felt, was in the instances where the clergyman's wife employed herself in reading and working with the young women from the factories, giving them at the same time the knowledge and the example of useful industry.<sup>2</sup>

That the clergyman's wife should be looked on with favour highlights a central element of much middle-class educational activity: the religious motive. Amongst Preston's middle-class educators, the voice of the clergy was that which was most often heard. These advocates of a religious approach were often sceptical of the powers of secular education to do good. The Reverend Owen Parr, Vicar of Preston, was one such. Speaking on 'capital and labour' he expressed the view that one possible remedy for conflict lay in religious, not secular education, since the former alone would awaken, improve and confirm the instinct of good sense and good feeling.<sup>3</sup>

1. See for example PP 1854 [1796] Vol XIX, Half-Yearly Factory Inspectors' Reports, Leonard Horner, May 1854; other examples in previous chapters.
2. Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education, 1846, Vol 1, pp 456-7.
3. LCRO, A Lecture on Capital and Labour, Delivered at the Institution, Preston, on Tuesday December 27th, 1860, by the Reverend Canon Parr, MA.



Indeed, it was sometimes noted by local commentators that the most restless and ready to agitate were not the least educated. In 1848 it was said to be "notorious that of the troublers of the public peace for the last ten years many were not altogether without education."<sup>1</sup> Education from this viewpoint would not benefit society at large unless heathenism in the home could also be countered.

Education as an activity which inherently involved religion was of course one of the fundamental assumptions of the providers of elementary schooling. The comments of the inspectors illustrate clearly the kind of approach thought by many to be essential. They also illustrate the way in which the emphasis on religion was linked to a particular view of the social order. Noel, for example, saw the chief objects of the education of the people as being

"...to make them, under the blessing of God, happier and better; or, in other words, to make them well informed, intelligent, industrious, moral and religious."<sup>2</sup>

He elaborated with an extensive commentary on what education should and should not be trying to do, a commentary which encapsulates the dominant approach of the providers of the elementary school system. Education, he asserted, should not raise false expectations which would inevitably result in disappointment and worse, would give false views of a life of labour. Labour could lead to a genuine

1. See Preston Chronicle, February 12th, 1848, and Reverend Canon Parr, op cit.

2. Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education, 1840-41, pp 167-172.



happiness and dignity, and was essential to the nation. However, although education was not meant to raise the working class above their station it could enable them to get the best out of their humbler situation. It could rescue them from undesirable pursuits and associations and arm them to resist "the wild doctrines of a licentious infidelity."<sup>1</sup> In addition to making the working classes happier, education could also make them better. It could teach them thrift, civility, respect for females, animals, parents, employers and property, and loyalty to Queen and country. Finally, it may lead them to love and serve God.

In terms of educational philosophy this represents an altogether different approach from that of the radical workers, although it has to be said that Noel was in fact lamenting what he saw as the distance between this ideal and what he actually found in schools, where the teaching of reading was in his eyes often the only significant activity. Nevertheless, as an educational vision this can clearly be seen as one which imposes restrictions and constrains workers both as individuals and as a class. In contrast, the vision of much working-class educational activity was one which emphasised change, not simply at an individual level but in terms of society as a whole. Radical workers did not see the Bible and political economy as between them encompassing the most useful knowledge a labourer could require; for them, 'really useful knowledge' meant something quite different. It involved an understanding of society which would lead to change, above all to the emancipation of the

1. Ibid.

working class. From this perspective religion could be seen as serving "mere middle-class purposes"<sup>1</sup>, hence the frequent hostility or indifference towards it.<sup>2</sup>

Despite the concern felt by many of the middle classes, as voiced by Noel, that education for the working class should not encourage ideas beyond their station, some of its promoters did draw attention to the possibility that self-help, through 'respectability' and personal effort, might improve individual prospects. The chairman of Preston's Institution for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, for example, urging operative support for the establishment, commented that through this "those who had been in the habit of using the gallery, might, by their talent and industry, like the late Mr John Horrocks, have improved their station in life and descended to the pit or the boxes."<sup>3</sup> In general, however, there were felt to be limits to working-class potential, and the possibility that they might rise to the heights of intellectual attainment was often discounted. The words of Preston's Vicar, the Reverend Owen Parr, exemplify such an approach, in his claim that it was impossible to give the labouring classes "that finished cultivation to the intellects... which would enable them to sift the true from the

1. Gamage, op cit, p 197.

2. For further discussion see previous chapters. The Spinners' Institute stipulated that books for use there should be divested of all religious opinion; factory operatives attended their employer's school but not his chapel; and night school attenders spurned attempts to include religious observances.

3. Preston Chronicle, October 9th, 1841.

false in specious statements, especially in matters of calculation; to discern between sound and unsound reasoning, between shallow plausibilities and substantial proofs."<sup>1</sup>

Such claims were swiftly discounted by radical leaders and spokespersons, in Preston as elsewhere, in statements which show clearly that at stake was not simply independence but the very definitions of ignorance and knowledge, and what it meant to be an educated person. During the 1854 conflict in Preston, for example, George Cowell forcefully challenged the assumption that the working classes were ignorant, that they did not understand the laws by which labour and capital were regulated.

"These political economists [he argued] will fail to convince you that 18s a week is preferable to 20s. We all have brains enough to know what would be best for us in that respect, whatever Mr<sup>2</sup> Turner or Sir James Kay Shuttleworth may say..."<sup>2</sup>

James Waddington, another of the workers' representatives, took the issue further.

"We were told that the only remedy for our difficulties was the education of the people - especially an education in political economy... [but he contended that] in the present condition of society, without an alteration of the relationship between capital and labour, the education of the people would only make strikes more frequent than they were, because as you educate

1. Reverend Canon Parr, op cit.
2. Preston Guardian, January 28th, 1854.



the people you make them less capable of bearing tyranny and of submitting to oppression and degradation... education was not preventive of strikes unless that education should teach the people of this country how to make labour and capital identical. It was of no use saying - for this was a favourite teaching of the manufacturers - that their interests were identical. When they told them that, they told them what ought to be, but not what is..."<sup>1</sup>

In this insistence that the position of working people in society was unjust and must change, radical protest movements at both local and national level did articulate an explicitly working-class educational interest. Questions remain, however, about the extent and impact of these movements amongst the working class as a whole. Such questions may be difficult to answer due to the fact that accurate records do not exist, but it is possible that such movements were more widespread than would at first appear. It has been pointed out that 'continuous association' may exist without formal organisation; there may be recognition of regular leaders and development of routine practices without the keeping of formal records.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand many workers may have been deterred from participation by both legal threats and the everyday practices of employers in relation to organised protest movements. Evidence of pressure being exerted on workers not to be members of trade unions comes for example from the 1836 spinners' strike in Preston, which was argued to be a dispute not only over wages but also over membership of trade unions. In December of that year a general

1. Preston Guardian, March 15th, 1854.

2. H A Turner, Trade Union Growth, Structure and Policy, 1962.

meeting of the employers unanimously resolved "that the members give public notice of their fixed and unalterable determination not to receive into their employment any workman who is connected with any Trades Union."<sup>1</sup> This dispute eventually failed; some spinners found themselves unemployed and others brought in instead.<sup>2</sup> This situation was far from unusual and examples abound of the hostility of the masters towards working-class association.

The rules of Thomas Ainsworth and Sons stated that persons employed there must engage not to be a member of, or directly or indirectly a subscriber to or a supporter of any trade union or other association whatsoever (my emphasis). Further, whilst all workpeople were required to give a month's notice before leaving, the masters reserved full power to discharge any person without any notice whatsoever.<sup>3</sup> Some sanctions could be even more severe. In 1839 Joseph Carter was jailed for a month at the request of his master William Ainsworth for urging fellow operatives to join the Chartist strike.<sup>4</sup> Richard Marsden noted in a speech to the Chartist Convention that "not in one mill out of twenty would a man be received who was known to be a Radical."<sup>5</sup> This contention is supported by an account of the fortunes of John Huntingdon, grinder in the cardroom

1. Preston Chronicle, December 31st, 1836.

2. Preston Chronicle, February 18th, 1837.

3. Christopher Aspin, Lancashire: The First Industrial Society, 1969, p 72.

4. Preston Chronicle, August 17th, 1839.

5. Northern Star, March 2nd, 1839.

at one Preston mill (Seeds) and married to a weaver at Horrockses. Huntingdon became a delegate in the 1853 lock-out and played an important part during the dispute on the side of the operatives. When the dispute ended his services were no longer required and he could find employment at no other mill. Eventually he emigrated to America (where, incidentally, he became extremely prosperous).<sup>1</sup>

The cotton masters undoubtedly did exert a very real influence through their threats and sanctions. Marsden claimed that on one occasion after he had placed a placard in his window against the millowners, "not a man in Mr Goodair's employ dared to come the next week for his Northern Star."<sup>2</sup> During particularly hard times, with short-time working and reduced wages, food such as soup and potatoes was sometimes made available by the better off at cheap prices, but the Northern Star recorded that "some destroy their charity by confining it to such and such political and religious creeds."<sup>3</sup> Not all employers operated on such a basis however. Gardners were singled out for praise for continuing to run full time, keeping their hands in full employment, providing foodstuffs at an unrivalled price and making them available to all comers "without any questions being asked whatsoever."<sup>4</sup> Nevertheless, Gardner does seem to have been exceptional amongst local employers. In

1. William Pilkington, Then and Now, 1911, pp 39-40.

2. Preston Chronicle, January 15th, 1848.

3. Northern Star, February 5th, 1842.

4. Ibid.



1853 he refused to join the Associated Masters of Preston, in the belief that the masters had broken faith with the operatives in not paying them the ten per cent which had been promised<sup>1</sup> and his firm had been the first in the town to experiment with reductions in working hours.<sup>2</sup> The masters generally were both powerful and implacable in their opposition to organised protest; Charles Davies, a seller of newspapers and periodicals in Stockport at the time of his imprisonment for Chartist agitation, had been unable to get work as a cotton spinner for two years "in consequence of taking an active part against the masters on the subject of wages and being a delegate from the working men."<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, the threat of arrest and imprisonment was never far away. Richard Marsden, however, himself a recipient of such treatment, stated that it made no difference to him, who was alike starving in work as out of it.<sup>4</sup>

Other aspects of life in the town added to the difficulties of sustaining collective association. Preston's population was fairly fluid, at least up to the middle of the century, rendering the maintenance of traditions more difficult and contributing to the ephemeral nature of many associations (just as frequent removal apparently had a serious effect on the schooling of children). The establish-

1. LCRO, DDX 1116/3/1, Letter Book of the Preston Master Cotton Spinners and Manufacturers Association, October 1853 - September 1897.
2. See also chapter 6.
3. PRO, HO 20/10. Confidential Reports on Political Prisoners, 1841.
4. Mark Hovell, The Chartist Movement, 1918, Reprinted 1950, p 165.

ment of permanent institutions also required buildings and other resources, a problem in Preston where wages were not high and there were fewer workers than in the large centres such as Manchester or Birmingham. For much of the century too 'leisure' time was in very short supply and only available during the evenings and on Sundays.

Despite these difficulties, movements such as Chartism and trade unionism did attract support, as evidenced by the degree of alarm which they provoked in the press and amongst middle-class observers. The Chartists of the town claimed in 1839 that they had four hundred actual members but many of these had influence over others,<sup>1</sup> and later in the century the Spinners' Institute attracted over eleven hundred members to participate in its activities.<sup>2</sup> It seems too that a range of workers was involved in popular movements. In November 1841 the Preston nomination list to the National Charter Association's General Council named a tailor, a mechanic, a joiner, a cordwainer, a rushdealer, two weavers and a dresser.<sup>3</sup> Six months later there were two cordwainers, a tailor, a joiner, two spinners and two weavers.<sup>4</sup> Some support obviously came from the factories judging by the masters' attempts to prevent it. It may be asserted then, that the educational activities of a significant range and

1. British Museum, Francis Place Collections, Add Mss 34, 245 A & B, Letters to the Convention.
2. Preston Chronicle, December 22nd, 1860.
3. Northern Star, November 6th, 1841.
4. Northern Star, June 18th, 1842.



number of workers embodied approaches and philosophies opposed on several counts to those of the middle classes.

Not all working-class educational activity centred on agitational organisations of this kind, however, as the previous chapters show, and forms of association such as temperance or religious groups might be seen as sharing common ground with much middle-class reforming activity. The language of middle-class missionary tracts aimed at rescuing the poor from their own degeneracy emphasised the need for religious principles and practices, and placed stress on values such as sobriety, respectability and thrift. These same values were advocated by many working-class self-educators and 'improvers', and the similarity of approach has contributed to suggestions that such educational activity was engaged in mainly by an 'aristocracy' of labour, the 'respectable' working class.

There is little doubt that educational activity, particularly when associated with church or temperance, could bring its followers into conflict with other workers. 'Improvement' might imply some superiority over others and could include hostility to some features of traditional labouring culture such as drinking, games and gambling. Thomas Whittaker, the temperance lecturer, provides a clear example in his autobiography of the centrality of the pub in working-class life. Common practice at the mill where Whittaker worked was to pay the men in a body by cheque; the custom was to take this cheque to a pub near the works, cash it, and share the money out. A room was set aside in the pub for this purpose. Whittaker noted however that the money was not always prompt in coming, and since they could



not occupy the room and consume coal without some return they became customers for liquor. The centrality of the pub as a meeting place and focus of much collective activity undoubtedly contributed to the hostility expressed towards temperance reformers by those who did not support the cause, but it seems that some workers also had more ideological objections. Whittaker's autobiography suggests that these could be vociferously expressed, as the following extract shows.

"The working men had been taught to believe that it was a system got up by the masters to ascertain how little working men could live upon; and when they had done that they would drop wages! When I signed the pledge I was a working man among working men. They looked upon me as their enemy and taunted me as such. They secretly spoiled my work and damaged my machinery. They refused me the help common to each other and frequently necessary, and misrepresented me to my employers. In fact they did all they could to make my practice of teetotalism an impossibility..."<sup>1</sup>

Such hostility was not uncommon. When the Preston temperance reformer Henry Anderton tried to introduce sermons into the pub he found that some of his audiences had a dislike for "anything that had the resemblance of religion and sobriety."<sup>2</sup> Yet hostility to some forms of 'improvement' such as teetotalism may not have been wholesale opposition to all forms of broadly educational activity. The very reason for Anderton wishing to introduce sermons was that

1. Thomas Whittaker, Life's Battles in Temperance Armour, 1884, p 69.
2. William Pilkington, The Makers of Wesleyan Methodism in Preston, 1890, p 184.

"infidel publications" were read in the pub, and this at a time when the successful pub was said to be the one with a good reader for the newspaper.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, there were not merely divisions between different forms of collective activity, there was often overlap too. Chapters three and four of this thesis illustrate the extent to which workers might become involved in a range of activities and campaigns, and other writers have suggested that during the 1830s and 40s many working-class activists at local level joined several movements.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, different movements had common elements; the organisation of Chartist branches into 'classes' of ten, for example, was based originally on Methodist class organisation.<sup>3</sup>

The possible distortions caused by polarising different working-class movements and activities are highlighted by evidence of the connections between Chartism and temperance, as in newspapers such as the English Chartist Circular and Temperance Record. Though Chartists were by no means united on the temperance question many of them stressed the importance of respectability and moderation, and teetotal Chartism was not a negligible force. It was however contentious: drunkenness was an often used Victorian argument against the franchise, and temperance could therefore be seen as a ploy to withhold power from the workers. Chartist teetotalers differed

1. Ibid, pp 183-4.

2. See for example Asa Briggs, 'The Language of Class in early Nineteenth Century England', in M W Flinn and T C Smout, Essays in Social History, 1974.

3. Hovell, op cit, p 197.



from others in insisting on the conflicting interests of employer and employee, and, as one historian describes it, recognising that the size of the wage was more important than how it was spent.<sup>1</sup> All serious attempts to reform society required some discipline and restraint and this was acknowledged by the Preston branch of the Chartist organisation, which passed strong resolutions "pledging the people to firmness and sobriety - the consequence of which was that the publican in whose house they met refused them his room for another meeting, even though he was paid for the use of it."<sup>2</sup>

Just as the lack of available meeting places was instrumental to the centrality of the pub in traditional culture, so it gave rise to other connections between the various strands of working-class life. The first quarterly meeting of the Preston Operative Radical Association was held in the Primitive Methodist Chapel<sup>3</sup>; the Temperance Hall was a meeting place for the Preston Chartists,<sup>4</sup> and a report in the local paper on a Chartist camp meeting outside Rochdale described the following:

"The primitive methodists had a camp meeting, at the same time, on the same common, and about four or five yards distant from that of the Chartists. A constant stream of people were moving from one place to the other, during

1. On this and for further discussion see Brian Harrison, 'Teetotal Chartism', in History, Vol 58, 1973, pp 193-217.
2. Northern Star, August 22nd, 1840.
3. Preston Chronicle, November 11th, 1837.
4. See for example Preston Chronicle, November 14th, 1846.



the afternoon; but the Chartists had by far the greater attendance."<sup>1</sup>

This overlap between the various kinds of activity was not merely coincidental or convenient. Several of those imprisoned for Chartist activity were recorded as being involved in religious movements, particularly various shades of nonconformity, although it must be said that several also denied membership of any sect or persuasion, saying they had their own ideas on religion, or preferred to think for themselves.<sup>2</sup>

That there should be overlap between different forms of collective association seems to have been seen by some participants at least as entirely natural. During a meeting in 1845 to discuss the Chartist land plan, one speaker from Birmingham, referring to the habit of entering Oddfellows Societies and similar organisations, argued that he did not want them to leave these societies and become members of the Land Society - far from it, but he thought it would be better for them to join this society along with others, as they were all likely to work harmoniously together.<sup>3</sup>

The lines between different forms of activity were, it seems

1. Preston Chronicle, July 30th, 1842.
2. PRO, HO 20/10, Confidential Reports on Political Prisoners, 1841.
3. Preston Chronicle, September 6th, 1845. See also Barbara Taylor, Eve and the New Jerusalem, 1983; Taylor records that Owenite meetings were often held in Methodist chapels in the early years, particularly in the North, and on one occasion a Primitive Methodist Congregation turned itself into a co-operative society.

often fluid, and a range of different workers was involved in them. There seems to have been no simple correspondence between cultural style and social level; 'improvement' was not restricted to artisans nor was it engaged in by all of this section of the working class.<sup>1</sup> Movements such as Chartism attracted widespread support, whilst temperance and religious societies encompassed members from a variety of backgrounds. At the half-yearly festival of the Preston temperance society in 1834 the crowded house was composed chiefly of "persons in the middle and humble walks of life"<sup>2</sup>, whilst a year later the eight "reformed characters" who addressed the meeting were a weaver, a labourer, two mechanics, one brickmaker, one joiner, one mason and one book-keeper.<sup>3</sup> It should be remembered too that there were often close, even intimate, ties between different kinds of workers. Richard Marsden was a hand-loom weaver, but in 1841 his wife and family were working in a cotton mill and Marsden was renting a house - reluctantly - from the millowner.<sup>4</sup>

It has nevertheless been suggested that 'improving' activities were not of great significance to the majority of the working class.<sup>5</sup> Their actual impact is always difficult to assess and numerical

1. See for example Patrick Joyce, Work, Society and Politics, 1980; David Vincent, Bread, Knowledge and Freedom, 1981; Neville Kirk, Class and Fragmentation: Some Aspects of Working Class Life in South-East Lancashire and North-East Cheshire, 1850-1870, PhD Thesis, University of Pittsburgh, 1974.
2. Preston Chronicle, October 4th, 1834.
3. Preston Chronicle, October 24th, 1835.
4. Northern Star, October 9th, 1841; 5th July, 1845.
- 5 See for example Joyce, op cit, 1980.



or structural analysis is beyond the scope of the present study, requiring further research. Nevertheless, two points can be put forward. In the first place, it is likely that the more formal kinds of adult education succeeded in attracting only a small minority of the working class, as the records for the Preston Institution for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge would suggest. The material conditions of life which played an important part in the history of such education varied between workers, as did backgrounds, ideologies, interests and inclinations. The second point however is that it may be a mistake to insist on a gulf between 'respectable' self-educators and the masses who were supposedly not interested in education. Such an approach may simply represent a perpetuation of contemporary ideologies and stereotypes, as well as resting on certain assumptions about the nature of education. If we broaden our view of educational activity to take account of popular struggles and popular recreational forms, then these seem to have made significant contributions to the education of the working class. Activities which took place in pubs, clubs and music halls for example cannot always be dismissed as 'mere entertainment'; this is discussed at greater length in previous chapters, and Lovett's insistence that a wide range of experiences 'from the cradle to the grave' were educational itself illustrates this point. Moreover, despite differences between workers there were also many shared experiences. Study of a number of autobiographies shows that even skilled working men suffered constant financial insecurity. They were almost always vulnerable and rarely fully in control of their own destinies. Such common experiences could unite workers despite the differences between them. The autobiographer Thomas Carter, although highly



critical of and isolated from his fellow craftsmen, was nevertheless turned to in order to present their case in a dispute, and other memoirs provide similar examples of the extent to which, despite divisions, the 'improvers' were still working class in occupation, outlook and material conditions.<sup>1</sup> William Pilkington's description of the effects of the cotton famine in Preston clearly illustrates the extent to which all working men were vulnerable.

"This was a calamity indeed, which reduced honest and struggling poverty to a state of absolute humiliation and destitution. The first step on the downward path to pauperism was the withdrawal of the savings of honest industry from the savings bank; then came the sale of some cherished article of furniture. At last the working man found himself on a level with the idle and the dissipated, and was obliged to pawn the Sunday clothes of the family."<sup>2</sup>

The diary of John Ward<sup>3</sup>, a Clitheroe weaver with family in Preston, provides a vivid and moving first-hand account of the ups and downs of working-class life. It is worth taking space to illustrate at length some of the contents of this diary, since Ward conforms to many peoples' idea of the 'respectable' working man. He possessed books and read the newspaper most days, commenting in his diary

1. Vincent, op cit.

2. Pilkington, op cit., 1911, p 30.

3. LCRO, DDX/636/2, Diary of John O'Neill (otherwise Ward) of Clitheroe, 1856-1860; DDX/28/299 Diary of John Ward, Weaver of Clitheroe, 1860-1864; DDX/636/3 Diary of John Ward (or John O'Neill), Clitheroe, Weaver, 1872-1875. The diaries are deposited in different names but through the entry relating to the marriage of his daughter the author is identified as John Ward. There is no doubt whatever that all are by the same man.

on the foreign news and other items of interest. A Catholic, he attended church (though not every week) and church events such as tea parties. Before losing work in Carlisle in 1854 he was secretary to the Working Men's Reading Room. He occasionally attended concerts at the Preston Temperance Hotel with friends of his in the town who had "joined teetotal". In good times he records having "plenty of good clothes and some good furniture and Jane [his daughter] is much the same she is very well off for clothes." In November 1860 he bought a £5 share in a co-operative spinning and weaving factory in which his Union, under his presidency, agreed to invest £300 of its funds. 'Respectability' was clearly important to him. In April 1859, following a visit to his brother in Manchester, he records:

"...he promised me he would keep from drink and get himself and his children some decent clothes...and when he got himself decently dressed he would come and see me. I told him he need not come unless he was and so we parted."

In June that year he visited his brother again and found the following:

"he was dressed a little better than at Easter but the wife told me he drinks as hard as ever and he says he does not and that he will drop it altogether I told him he must if he wishes to be respectable."

Despite the trappings of respectability Ward considered his election as Union president "a very high honour" and was extensively involved in strike action and other protests. He walked many miles to other towns to attend public meetings and to seek contributions to strike funds, often meeting up with his brother in Preston who was also a Union man. His own experience of working-class life as precarious



is clear. In June 1856, looking back on the previous two years, he recalls how on losing his job in Carlisle he sold a few things and went on the tramp. He got work in Bentham, Yorkshire at the power looms weaving linen, and did very well for a few weeks. He then sent for his wife and daughter. Shortly after this the linen trade became very slack, wages were reduced and they became as badly off as when they were in Carlisle. The hard winter made things worse and his wife died of an asthmatic complaint. A fortnight later he and his daughter moved to Clitheroe, where things went much better for a while, as evidenced by his lifestyle and ability to invest in the co-operative plan, but in 1861 the cotton famine started, bringing problems of short-time working and lower wages. The following extracts from Ward's diary are quoted at length because they demonstrate in a way in which mere summaries could not the devastating effect of fluctuations in trade.

April 10th, 1864

"It is nearly two years since I wrote anything in the way of a diary. I now take up my pen to resume the task it has been a very poor time for me all the time, owing to the American war which seems as far of (sic) being settled as ever the mill I work in was stopped all last winter during which time I had three shillings per week allowed by the relief committee which barely kept me alive when we started work again it was with Surat cotton and a great number of weavers can only mind two looms we earn only very little I have not earned a shilling a day this last month and there are many like me my clothes and bedding is wearing out very fast and I have no means of getting any more as what wages I get does hardly keep me after paying rent rates and firing I am living by my self my daughter and son in law having gone to a house of their own during the time I was out of work I went twice to Preston to see my brother Daniel but him and his family were no better off than myself having nothing better than Surat to work at and it is the same all through Lancashire... the principal reason why I did not take any notes these last two years is because I was sad and



weary one half of the time and the other I had to work as hard as ever I wrought in my life and can hardly keep myself living if things do not mend this summer...."

April 17th 1864

"I have had another weary week of bad work I have just earned 7/3½ off these looms and there are plenty as bad off as me and if any one complains to the master of bad work he says if you don't like you can leave he wants no one to stop that does not like it and that is all the satisfaction we can get... [refers to news] at home there is not much doing but squabbling in Parliament about things that is of no use to us..."

May 1st 1864

"...at our mill things are getting worse I have given up my odd loom as I cannot keep two looms going and last week I had only 5/1½ after a very hard weeks work but they have promised us better work as soon as the cotton is done that they have on hand they have promised so often that we can hardly believe them."

October 23rd 1864

"We have been stopped all week and likely for stopping a little longer as there is no cotton bought yet although it has fallen twopence per pound last week but in the cloth market there is nothing doing whatever. I went to Preston last Monday but only to find that my brother and family had left last Whitsuntide owing to the Mill they were working in stopping..."

At this point the book is full. It is possible that Ward continued in another book now lost; his diary is preserved from 1872 onwards when he is again in a more favourable position. The extracts quoted here clearly illustrate both the limits placed on intellectual endeavour and political commitment by extreme material hardship and the dangers of insisting on a gulf between a 'respectable' minority and the majority of the working class. There were many

disagreements between workers as well as differences of lifestyle and outlook, but in the overall context of class relationships they shared a common class position.

There was, then, less of a gulf between different groups of workers than is often assumed; moreover, it is not only in connection with radical protest movements that disagreement over definitions and control of education can be seen. John Clay's initial support for the Preston Temperance Society stopped short of support for teetotalism largely because of his belief in the profound ignorance of many workers. He believed that depriving the people of "their chief means of animal gratification" whilst they were still incapable of any gratification which was not animal, would be a dangerous experiment. "They drink because they are ignorant" he argued. "Educate them, and they will abandon the vice of their own accord."<sup>1</sup> Yet the previous chapters of this thesis have shown that Preston temperance and teetotalism were themselves educational resources for many men and women, providing opportunities to develop abilities in organisation, administration and public speaking as well as lectures, classes and other 'improving' activities.

There is no doubt however that whilst the attitudes of working-class and middle-class educators often conflicted, they were never entirely independent of one another, the existence of each having an influence on the other. As far as the workers were concerned,

1. Rev Walter Lowe Clay, The Prison Chaplain : A Memoir of the Rev John Clay, BD, 1861, p 496.



in addition to overlap between the various forms of collective association, many had been on the receiving end of some kind of provided education, even though this was often extremely limited.<sup>1</sup> Before schooling became institutionalised as a set phase of the lifecycle boundaries between the different forms of education were fluid. Scholars of all ages were involved in Sunday schooling, night classes and mutual improvement societies. Furthermore, education did not take place in isolation from other aspects of daily life. Whilst organisations such as trade unions could provide independence and solidarity, the factory and its owner were also central elements in working-class lives. Some consequences of this - the pressures of 'coercion' or persuasion which employers were able to exert - have been discussed earlier in this chapter, but it has been argued that the ritual quality of factory social life, with its echoes of the family, was also significant in shaping working-class attitudes.<sup>2</sup> Births, marriages and deaths in the employer's family were celebrated by employees too. At Thomas Miller's funeral in 1865 the mills of the deceased were closed for the day, so that all adult hands could attend, and they were allowed to accompany the funeral cortege. At the first news of his death it was said that "the interior of the various workrooms presented more the appearance of a chamber of death where some near and dear relative had just departed than the interior of the workroom of a mill." Young girls, middle-aged women, and children were in tears, all,

1. See for example PRO HO 20/10 Confidential Reports on Political Prisoners, 1841; working class autobiographies provide further evidence - see eg those mentioned in this thesis, and Vincent, op cit.

2. See Joyce, op cit.



it was reported, feeling "that they had lost a friend whom it would be impossible to replace." At one of the works alone, out of 1,100 workpeople, 250 had been employed by the firm above twenty years each, while nearly 600 had worked there more than sixteen years. The great majority of the workpeople had been employed there from childhood, and had never worked anywhere else.<sup>1</sup> This last fact was said to be a "peculiarity", however; and besides, the role of the factory could be ambiguous. It could lead to deference, parochialism and acceptance of middle-class values, but could itself give rise to working-class institutions developed out of common experience and leading to greater class awareness.<sup>2</sup> Pilkington records that in 1842, the year of the 'plug plot' riots, Mr Samuel Horrocks had to be guarded by soldiers as he walked in the Guild procession.<sup>3</sup>

Ambiguity characterises many of the activities in which working people were involved, precisely because they developed in the context of class relationships. Although relations between workers and the middle classes were not always harmonious, still there was to some extent a shared language and workers were inevitably influenced by the ideas of the dominant classes. Even their opposition "was necessarily expressed in terms that their opponents could understand."<sup>4</sup>

1. Preston Chronicle, July 1st, 1865.

2. See also Joyce, op cit.

3. Pilkington, op cit, 1911, p 27.

4. William H Sewell Jr, Work and Revolution in France, 1980, p 13.

Thus, even the more radical movements such as Chartism, though explicitly anti-middle class much of the time, often seemed eager for working men to win the good opinion of their 'superiors'<sup>1</sup> and the rhetoric of 'improvement' or self-help often included an emphasis on self-discipline which could be closely allied to middle-class ideas and approaches.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, the middle classes themselves often held complex and contradictory views and could not ignore the ideas and activities of the workers. One example is the famous middle-class promoter of self-help Samuel Smiles, whose attitudes were much more complex than later interpretations suggest.<sup>3</sup> Smiles was not a supporter of laissez-faire political economy and was in favour of complete suffrage. He also claimed that despite his examples of the elevation of a number of individuals from poverty to social eminence, education was to be regarded as a means of elevating and improving the whole of the working class. This comes close to many of the statements of the Chartists and trade unionists on the question of education. Nor is this surprising, since Smiles' notion of self-help came from experience of what the working class in Leeds were already doing for themselves and from awareness of the problems of purely provided institutions and activities. However, though he saw self-education as a means of changing the social system and improving the lot of working people, it was also to make working

1. Trygve Tholfsen, Working-class Radicalism in Mid-Victorian England, 1976.
2. See for example Patricia Hollis, Class and Conflict in Nineteenth-Century England, 1973.
3. For further discussion and the source of the following paragraph see Simon W Frith, Education, Industrialisation and Social Change: The Development of Elementary Schooling in Leeds, PhD Thesis, University of California, 1976.



men more 'virtuous' and better able to do their appointed task.

Whilst similar values - the importance of thrift, dignity and self-reliance, for example - can be found in both working-class and middle-class philosophies of 'improvement', these must be understood in their socio-economic context: they can mean different things to different people at different times. The wish for domestic comfort and 'respectability' is not by its very nature 'bourgeois'.<sup>1</sup> What can be seen as conservative from one angle may also be viewed as threateningly radical from another, and vice versa. Pilkington recalls going in his younger days with some of the temperance reformers to hold a teetotal meeting in a Wesleyan chapel "when the meeting was not as respectable as at present" and finding the door locked against them.<sup>2</sup> The Institution for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, though supported by respected members of the middle classes, came under attack through charges of Sunday opening and because its books and teachings were not religious.<sup>3</sup> Joseph Livesey, one of the leading lights of the Institution, who can be seen as a middle-class paternalist, was disapproved of by many as teaching the poor to despise established institutions, and Livesey's biography provides many examples of his own contradictory position.

1. Neville Kirk, op cit.

2. Pilkington, op cit, 1911, p 20.

3. Preston Chronicle, October 9th, 1830. These contradictions were apparently often found in the history of mechanics' institutes; see for example Thomas Kelly, A History of Adult Education in Great Britain, 1962, p 134.



Despite Livesey's repeated claims that he was above all a friend of the poor, and felt himself most at home with working men, there are indications that his overtures towards them were not always successful. The Institution for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, for example, his most lasting educational project, found difficulty in attracting and keeping working-class members. He set up at least six 'general reading rooms', supplied with 'all the leading newspapers and periodicals', some free and others at a low charge, but these too, though successful, were not so with the working class. This may have been partly due to the various practical difficulties which were attendant upon this kind of endeavour, but all was not smooth in Livesey's relations with the workers. In an 1845 dispute between Livesey and the Journeymen Printers, the latter claimed that Livesey was paying less than the trade rate; employing too many apprentices; working his men too many hours; and harassing them if they belonged to or joined trade unions or societies. In a series of handbills and articles the workers were vituperative, sneering at the 'working men's friend'. One asked whether Mr Livesey forgot his own advice of some years ago, in the course of his advocacy of teetotal principles, that young working men ought to be sober, take care of their money, and unite together to protect themselves from the inhuman and merciless conduct of their masters. Now, it went on, "when he finds that this union has been entered into, and is likely to put a check on his own grasping disposition, he starts back, like another Frankenstein, terrified by the creature of his own creation...."<sup>1</sup> Another extract claimed that Livesey's notion of equality went no

1. LCRO, DDPr 128/10, Series of Handbills and Articles.

further than that of placing him on a level with his superiors.

"He would suffer none below to pass into his circle; he merely claims for himself the privilege enjoyed by those above him; and failing to rise to the desired elevation by his own talents, knowledge and energies, he seeks to mount on the shoulders of the working men employed by him, and to drag the higher class, whose easy seats he still cannot reach, down to his own position."<sup>1</sup>

Livesey had also clashed with the Chartists over the years. In 1841 a series of meetings held in the Preston (Radical) Association rooms to debate the question of Chartism and Corn Law repeal found Livesey among others speaking in favour of repeal, and the Chartists against. The resolution which was "triumphantly carried" was that though the Corn Laws were "iniquitous and unjust, and ought to be repealed" there was no hope of carrying the repeal until the Peoples<sup>2</sup> Charter became the law of the land.

However, Livesey equally often clashed with the town establishment and regarded himself as being firmly on the side of the poor. In his anti-Poor Law activities, for example, he quarrelled with the local Tories, who were themselves against the Poor Law but disliked Livesey's methods and supporters.<sup>3</sup> As a member of the Board of Guardians he was apparently often opposed by others as being too lenient or indulgent, and he was against the break-up

1. Ibid.

2. Northern Star, December 11th, 1841.

3. Nicholas C Edsall, The Anti-Poor Law Movement, 1834-44, 1971, pp 85-142.



of families by forcing them into the workhouse. He constantly wrote in vociferous terms to the local newspapers on the subject of the distress of the poor, and as he put it, was always inventing something for bettering their condition. Several times he attempted to set up poor men in business, but his words on this matter are revealing. With one exception, he thought, they were all failures, "so clear is it that success depends far more upon personal qualifications than upon other circumstances". He insisted that self-help and reliance was far better than patronage and favour, and he always saw drink and dissolution as the central problem which had to be cured. In his tracts and pamphlets he spoke of "industry, economy, sobriety, against smoking, shopping, pledging, dealing with tallymen, and generally on better domestic management" - a familiar prescription for working-class ills. Like so many middle-class reformers, Livesey seemed uncertain whether to blame established institutions or the poor themselves for poverty, unclear as to whether the solution lay in self-help, legislative change, or paternalistic guidance and improvement.<sup>1</sup>

In this he differed from Richard Marsden, in his own way another 'ubiquitous reformer' or radical, a weaver as Livesey had been, and the leader of the Chartists in the town. Marsden's own attitudes were also complex. His politics consisted partly of attacks on

1. This information on Livesey is collected from various sources. In addition to the sources already cited here see LCRO, DP 376/5, Scrapbook of Newspaper Cuttings, Joseph Livesey's Obituary; W E Moss, Joseph Livesey - Friend of the People, 3rd Memorial Lecture at the 101st Conference of the British Temperance League; The Staunch Teetotaler, 1868, 'The Editors' Autobiography', Nos.1-12.



the aristocracy and 'Old Corruption' together with a defence of the constitution, Magna Carta, an Englishman's inalienable rights; and partly emphasised the re-distribution of wealth within capitalism so that both labour and capital should have their share. He held religious beliefs, stating on one occasion that "the great moral principle of the Christian Religion is the only correct standard of right and wrong",<sup>1</sup> and he supported the temperance movement.<sup>2</sup> Marsden, however, was unwavering in his belief that working people must be independent of other classes and had to achieve their rights through their own actions.<sup>3</sup> He opposed alliances with other classes especially at election time<sup>4</sup> and in 1842 when the Preston Chartists passed a resolution urging the establishment of a standing joint conference of unionists and Chartists they insisted that the persons so chosen should be men belonging to the working community "wholly unconnected with either the middle or the upper classes".<sup>5</sup> Marsden insisted that nothing would be good for the workers if it was achieved through the interference of any third party.<sup>6</sup> He was identified with the 'physical force' arm of Chartism yet could himself be said to have been an educator of note.

'Improvement' did not necessarily mean acceptance of 'middle-

1. Preston Guardian, May 17th, 1845; see also January 1st, 1848.
2. Preston Guardian, January 2nd, 1847.
3. See eg Preston Pilot, January 1st, 1848.
4. See eg Northern Star, May 30th, 1846.
5. Northern Star, June 25th, 1842.
6. For further discussion of Marsden's life and politics see J E King, Richard Marsden and the Preston Chartists, 1837-1848, 1981.

class' values. Some working-class improvers were undoubtedly seeking individual advancement but others saw that the pursuit of knowledge could have the effect of fragmenting and weakening their culture, and autobiographies show some regret and confusion surfacing here.<sup>1</sup> One response was to contribute to organisations which furthered collective working-class interests, within which, notwithstanding some collaboration with the middle-classes,<sup>2</sup> 'self-help' was more likely to be interpreted in the collective rather than the individual sense, and to be set in the context of class independence and pride.<sup>3</sup> Given the fragmented nature of educational activity and provision, however, it seems likely that a worker seeking 'enlightenment' may have encountered a range of complex and contradictory approaches and attitudes which would in turn contribute to the development of his or her future outlook.

## 2. Working-class Educational Activity, Women and the Family

It has been argued in this chapter that insistence on a gulf between the 'respectable' minority and the mass of the working class may primarily reflect contemporary stereotypes and ideologies and thus distort the complexity of patterns of educational activity.

1. See Vincent, op cit, pp 188-9.
2. Some of the Preston reformers who at some stage had Chartist involvement did join with the middle classes on some issues. See King, op cit.
3. See also R Q Gray, The Labour Aristocracy in Victorian Edinburgh, 1976.



It may also distort by ignoring other divisions within the working class, the most obvious and significant of these being sexual divisions. Although the thesis set out to study the class relations of education, the educational experiences of working-class women were not the same as those of working-class men. Furthermore, patriarchy, assumptions about women's role, and the cult of domesticity all had implications for the development of education in the nineteenth century.

Women did participate in a range of educational activities in Preston as elsewhere, but they were more constrained in this than men, and their participation was limited. The Institution for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, for example, though it claimed to want to attract women, never really succeeded, having one year not above twenty or thirty out of over six hundred members.<sup>1</sup> Women were said to be less interested in libraries and classes, partly because they were less literate.<sup>2</sup> Women's domestic and childcare responsibilities exerted stronger demands on their 'leisure' time, whilst notions of propriety and respectability further circumscribed their involvement in some forms of association. Both these factors seem to have given a particularly prominent role to Sunday schools in the education of women and girls. In terms of less formal educational activity temperance societies seem to have been more accessible to women than those based on the workshop or the pub, as well as offering the possibility of a more stable domestic life

1. Preston Chronicle, November 28th, 1846.

2. See eg PP 1849 (548) Vol XVII, Report from the Select Committee on Public Libraries, p 129.



due to the emphasis on sobriety.<sup>1</sup> The Preston Temperance Society attracted large numbers of women to its festivals and meetings,<sup>2</sup> though their participation was apparently mainly behind the scenes and 'unsung'.<sup>3</sup> Despite this they may have gained some personal benefit educationally; Henry Anderton, one of Preston's leading temperance reformers, formed an association of working men and their wives (my emphasis) to begin a course of reading.<sup>4</sup> At the same time, the emphasis on temperance could enforce female standards of behaviour too, and perpetuate notions of respectability which were themselves a constraint on women.<sup>5</sup> Nevertheless, women were also involved in the more radical kinds of activity, a matter of great concern to many observers. As the Leeds Mercury commented on a strike of 1,500 female card setters:

"Alarmists may view these indications of female independence as more menacing to established institutions than the education of the lower orders."<sup>6</sup>

Female independence and organisation was seen as a threat to the very basis of authority in society.<sup>7</sup> Yet despite women's significant

1. See Taylor, op cit.
2. See for example Preston Chronicle, October 4th, 1834.
3. Moss, op cit.
4. Pilkington, op cit, 1890.
5. Taylor, op cit.
6. Leeds Mercury, May 4th, 1833; quoted in Sheila Rowbotham, Hidden from History, 1973. This also raises the interesting point that these 'indications of independence' may themselves have been educational to those involved.
7. Exchanges within Owenism on the subject show that for some men the idea of women organising and meeting outside their homes was a source of great anxiety. See Taylor, op cit, p 99.

contribution to working-class movements their role was generally seen by men as a supporting one, their status secondary to that of men. During the anti-Poor Law proceedings in Manchester one area collected 1,065 signatures, plus a petition signed by 254 females. The latter raised the question of whether females were allowed to sign petitions, all the delegates being of the opinion that had this been the case the signatures would have been increased four-fold.<sup>1</sup> It has been argued in relation to Lovett's position within Chartism that his policy of enfranchisement of women was alone sufficient to put his association "out of the pale of practical politics."<sup>2</sup> Lovett records that he and some of the members of the committee which drew up the original Peoples' Charter had wished to specify women's suffrage among the demands, but were overruled because several members thought this may retard the suffrage of men. His National Association later declared that it intended to advocate the rights of women as much as those of men, and that this had been neglected by working men.<sup>3</sup> Lovett was an advocate of education for women as well as men, arguing however that this was necessary in order that they could educate the children and provide for the happiness of men. He did add that since women could be punished under law and must pay taxes, they should have some rights.<sup>4</sup>

1. Northern Star, February 10th, 1838.

2. Hovell, op cit.

3. Dorothy Thompson, 'Women and Nineteenth-Century Radical Politics' in Juliet Mitchell and Ann Oakley (eds) The Rights and Wrongs of Women, 1976.

4. William Lovett and John Collins, Chartism: A New Organisation of the People, 1840.



In Chartism generally, the attitude towards women's rights seems to have been ambiguous. Women were often active in the movement, in the earlier years particularly, and there is evidence that they saw themselves as having an educational function. In Sheffield, for example, the female Chartists collected the names of sympathetic women and enjoined them to "instil the principles of Chartism into their children."<sup>1</sup> Women may also have been involved in informal education by their husbands. Lovett explained in his autobiography that he had tried to interest his wife by "reading and explaining to her the various subjects that came before us, as well as the political topics of the day."<sup>2</sup> The involvement of women was seen by some male radicals at least as desirable; Chartists like O'Brien followed the Owenites in arguing that tea parties and soirees were preferable to pub meetings because women could attend.<sup>3</sup> J R Richardson saw women as the educators in the family and supported the vote for unmarried and widowed women, although not for married women, the latter apparently due to his concern to argue his case within the existing legal framework.<sup>4</sup> Women did not, however, sit on the political councils; the only woman to hold an official position at a Chartist Convention was Mary Lovett, who in 1839 took over her husband's post as Secretary whilst he was imprisoned.<sup>5</sup>

1. Sheffield Telegraph, 6th April, 1839, quoted in Thompson, op cit, pp 125-6.

2. Ibid, p 132.

3. Northern Star, August 14th, 1840, quoted in Taylor, op cit.

4. Thompson, op cit, p 131.

5. Ibid, and see Taylor, op cit, p 349.



The belief of Owenite Socialism that environment was a crucial determinant of 'human nature' led to an emphasis on education for men and women, and theoretically there was a desire within the movement to break down divisions between the sexes.<sup>1</sup> Women were welcomed to assemblies, and forms of recreation such as Halls of Science activities and social festivals involved whole families. Special emphasis was placed on the attendance of women at membership meetings so that they could be coached in Social Science and have a forum to discuss their own condition. In the 1830 struggle over the democratisation of the Manchester Mechanics' Institute female admission was one of the reforms demanded. A breakaway institute was established which initiated classes for women and urged radicals in other towns to do likewise. However, within Owenism too there were ambiguities and contradictions. Despite the theory, the number of female officials and social missionaries was very low. Men were often hostile to their wives obtaining an education. Moreover, despite the higher concerns of some Owenites, the predominant reason given for women's instruction was conservative - it was to enable them to be better wives and mothers; the emphasis was on husbands' and childrens' needs rather than their own. Even so, given the 'progressive' nature of Owenism it is likely that most working-class women had even fewer opportunities.

Despite the greater emphasis within the radical working-class movements on education as part of the struggle for a more equitable

1. This and much of the following discussion is informed by Taylor, op cit, passim.

and moral society, their view of women's role was in some ways not all that far removed from that of the middle classes. John Clay's vision of female Sunday School attenders as "the civilisers and meliorators of their families and their class"<sup>1</sup> presents a picture of the relationship between women and education remarkably similar to that of both Lovett and the Owenites, although the 'civilisation' in view was crucially different.

Men of all social classes seem to have shared many 'common assumptions about the kinds of education appropriate to female members of the working class. A correspondent to the Preston Chronicle, encouraging imitation of Caterall's factory adult school, was particularly impressed by the education in the female department, which, revolving around dressmaking, had the virtue of combining efficient instruction with practical occupation in housewifery or female economy;<sup>2</sup> Inspector Stokes felt that whilst males needed education of a higher character females needed mainly a moral schooling in the desirability of an innocent virtuous life;<sup>3</sup> and working men advocating greater opportunities for education particularly mentioned the importance of 'feminine' pursuits. The emphasis was invariably on two aspects of women's role: the domestic and the

1. Rev Walter Lowe Clay, op cit, pp 557-8.
2. Preston Chronicle, November 25th, 1848, and see previous chapters.
3. Report of the Committee of Council on Education, 1860-1861, pp 195-6, and see earlier chapters. Girls in the elementary schools were much less likely than boys to learn to write, and it was argued that the time given to needlework left little for any 'intellectual instruction'.



moral. Both are illustrated in the speeches made at the party to celebrate Gardner's experiment in shorter working hours.<sup>1</sup> One speaker produced two specimens of his daughter's work in worsted as evidence of learning; another commented on the particular need to educate the females who worked in factories. It had, he claimed, long been common to advise young men above all things in the world not to marry a factory girl. Why?

"It was not because they were not so handsome or less active than others, for they were quite as handsome and active as any other girls; but it was because they had not been properly educated, because they had not received the moral training necessary to fit them for the discharge of the highly-responsible duties imposed on them in the married state (Hear, hear, and much cheering)."<sup>2</sup>

The moral responsibilities of women were a recurring educational theme. Enquiries into the character, conduct, and family background of pupil-teachers in the elementary school system were even stricter and more searching with regard to girls.<sup>3</sup> The moral and domestic aspects of women's role were not of course separate issues; rather they were interrelated aspects of a notion of domesticity and what the family ought to be like which affected all social classes. This involved an ideology of childhood, the family and sexuality as existing in a separate sphere from the competitive world of commerce and industry. To some extent provided education existed

1. See chapter 6 and Preston Guardian, April 26th, 1845.

2. Ibid.

3. HMI Cook, quoted in John Hurt, Education in Evolution, 1971, p 121.



because of the perceived gap between this image and much of working-class family life; it 'removed' children from their environment and their parents, and attempted to reconstruct moral and social life through religious education.<sup>1</sup> Similarly, in many schools the teacher was seen as a surrogate (though more adequate) parent, hence the frequent emphasis on the benefits of 'motherly' teachers: kind, moral and virtuous, able to maintain good order and command respect.

Notwithstanding the gap between the ideology of domesticity and the reality of working-class life, the image was a powerful one, encapsulated in the statement of a speaker at the seventh annual meeting of the Preston Institution for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge that

"for his own part, he could conceive of no more delightful picture than that of the youth, seated in the family circle on a winter's evening, exploring the rich mines of science and learning; or dwelling with harmless intensity on the development of some moral or pathetic narrative."<sup>2</sup>

Such an image, it seems, appealed to working-class as well as middle-class 'improvers'. In Owenism, for example, there was hope for future marital relationships as genuine intellectual companionship. A letter received by Holyoake from a friend, referring to his marriage, reflected:

1. For further discussion of this point see Malcolm McKinnon Dick, English Conservatives and Schools for the Poor, c. 1780-1833, PhD Thesis, Leicester University, 1979.
2. Preston Chronicle, October 10th, 1835.

"I can fancy that I see you seated beside your intellectual companion working out a problem in mathematics, or giving or receiving other general instruction."<sup>1</sup>

The actual role of the family in working-class life remains something of a mystery, partly due to the difficulties inherent in investigating it and partly due to the long-time neglect of 'the private' in favour of 'the public' in historical research. It is however possible to suggest that its role in relation to working-class educational activity may have been a rather ambiguous one. In one sense the working-class family could play an important part as a promoter of radical ideas and collective struggle. In the early part of the century, prior to the growing disapproval of extra-familial employment for married women, the whole family might be employed in local industry and thus influenced by the experiences of the workplace. Wives and children could also encourage radicalism in their role as dependants however. Working-class speeches made many references to starving wives and children, as in Richard Marsden's widely reported account of how when there was no food in the house his wife had become so reduced that when she put their baby to her breast it drew nothing but her own blood.<sup>2</sup> The Preston Chartists sent money for the families of imprisoned Chartists and petitioned Parliament for the restoration of the Glasgow Cotton Spinners to their wives and families.<sup>3</sup> Oral history material indicates that a tradition of radicalism could be an important and well remembered

1. Taylor, op cit, p 341.

2. See Gammage, op cit, p 108.

3. See Northern Star, October 31st, 1840 and February 24th, 1838.

aspect of childhood; in one study for example an interviewee remembered having read Tom Paine and this colouring his outlook from the age of twelve.<sup>1</sup> Isaac Johnson, one of the Chartist prisoners, explained his lack of education as due to him being turned out of school after gaining six prizes on account of his father obliging him to go to school in a white hat with crape and green riband at Peterloo time, for which he was expelled and never went anywhere afterwards<sup>2</sup>. Other Chartist prisoners spoke of how their fathers and brothers were also Chartists, suggesting that family tradition was important in encouraging participation in working-class association. Women may have had an important role which can be seen as educational; it has been noted that the writers of working-class autobiographies in the Chartist period nearly all seem to have been brought up by widowed mothers or other female relatives.<sup>3</sup> 'Improving' activity, though sometimes involving withdrawal from family and friends<sup>4</sup>, could also take place within its circle.<sup>5</sup>

How far women themselves benefitted from this kind of activity is not clear from the evidence available in this study. It seems most likely that domestic duties, often combined with paid labour, limited rather than widened women's horizons, as did the emphasis

1. Stephen Humphries, Hooligans or Rebels?, 1981, p 44 and p 132.
2. PRO, HO 20/10, Confidential Records of Political Prisoners, 1841.
3. Thompson, op cit, pp 413-4.
4. Vincent, op cit.
5. See chapter 3.



on developing others rather than themselves. It is also possible that men's involvement in a range of collective activities could have an adverse effect on the other members of the family. One correspondent to the Preston Chronicle, urging that "so called political education" should be stopped claimed his prime anxiety to be that several of those who attended were leaving their wives and families at home starving. As a visitor, he said, he knew this to be the case.<sup>1</sup> It is thus possible that the interests of male members of the family were taking precedence over those of the females; but such emphasis on family obligations could also be used in attempts to defuse radical protest, and could divide workers. During the 1853 dispute a committee of workers who advocated conciliation released an address urging restraint, which contained several references to the material implications of the strike and asked "will you deprive yourselves and your children of subsistence, and bring upon yourselves all the miseries of want and destitution?"<sup>2</sup>

Family life, it seems, could have both positive and negative effects on men and women. The superior position of the male was however widely apparent both at work and in other areas of working class life,<sup>3</sup> and along with the cult of domesticity had an influence on educational ideologies and activities. This was particularly the case from the mid-nineteenth century onwards when a change seems

1. Preston Chronicle, October 20th, 1841.

2. LCRO, DDHS 75, Handbill entitled 'Closing of the Mills', Preston, 1853.

3. For further discussion of this point see for example Joyce, op cit.

to have occurred in women's expectations and their place in society. Women increasingly withdrew into the domestic sphere<sup>1</sup>, and the emphasis on their role as home-maker exerted a powerful influence on all aspects of social life, including education.

### 3. Conclusion

In Preston during the period under study, working-class attitudes to and experience of education varied between workers of different age, sex, occupation, politics and so on. Nevertheless, as a class, notwithstanding limitations of poverty and material conditions, they were able to exercise some independence and active choice in the matter of education. In this way, and through the pursuance of a variety of collective associations, they constituted an educational force of some significance.

Despite allegations that the 'lower orders' were ignorant and uninterested in learning, there is evidence that many working-class people were anxious to secure education for themselves and their children. The topic was a recurring one in struggles for shorter hours and better conditions, and if an attempt is made to step outside narrow definitions of education it can be seen that many of the activities in which workers participated can be considered educational, and many were intended to be so.

It is possible to distinguish explicitly working-class approaches

1. For further discussion see Thompson, op cit, and Taylor, op cit.

to education; clashes over the kinds of education that might be valuable for working-class people almost certainly contributed to the lack of success of middle-class inspired ventures like the Institution for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, and to the failure of the elementary schools in their early years to make the desired impact on working-class children. Except for the case of factory children, parents did not have to send their children to school, and as most education also had to be paid for, some influence at least could be exerted over its form and content. Some of the committed radicals may have ignored provided education for ideological reasons, whilst others seem to have rejected what they saw as inadequate or inappropriate, or certain elements of the middle-class approach. This can be seen in the preference of some for the private schools; the demand for reading, writing and arithmetic as essential elements of the curriculum; and the necessity for night schools to abandon religious observances as an obligatory element. Workers of all ages had alternative forms of education available, albeit often ephemeral and under-resourced; they were not merely passive recipients of middle-class reforming zeal. Nor had they 'turned their backs on education' as was so frequently argued - unless, that is, education is so narrowly defined as to exclude alternative approaches. Even the Chartists, despite their many denunciations of middle-class education as propaganda, and their rejection of the linking of schooling with the vote, often claimed education for the working class as a basic right, so long as it was not 'perverted to middle-class purposes' - meaning so long as it was not used to spread the message that the working class should know its place. For Preston's middle classes, however, this message was



one of education's most significant elements. Although the providers disagreed on many aspects - denominational teaching and scope of the curriculum for example - there was nevertheless widespread agreement that education was to fit the working class better to discharge their existing duties, not, on the whole, to elevate them to another sphere. Provided education was ultimately supportive of the status quo, and this shaped the very definitions of education and knowledge. Thus it was said of the Owenite Hall in Manchester that, "since it is much used for political meetings and the propagation of peculiar opinions, it cannot be described as an ordinary educational institution."<sup>1</sup> The biggest gulf in attitudes towards education lay between those who said that working men should know their place and who judged 'improvement' and 'respectability' largely in terms of ability to understand the world as perceived by the middle classes<sup>2</sup> - hence Clay's rejection of working-class educators as "blind leaders of the blind"<sup>3</sup> - and those who believed that education should open the eyes of those who had the opportunity of acquiring it to a "proper consciousness of their own importance in society."<sup>4</sup>

It has been widely argued that this gulf in attitudes narrowed over time, and that after the middle of the nineteenth century the area of agreement between working-class and middle-class values

1. LCRO, An Illustrated Itinerary of the County of Lancashire, 1842.
2. See Tholfsen, op cit, p 209.
3. See Chapter 4, and LCRO, QGR/2/31, 1840 Report of the Chaplain of the House of Correction.
4. Preston Chronicle, November 26th, 1836 - speaker at a meeting of the Cotton Spinners' Union.

enlarged. Although changes in the economy and the nature of capitalism have usually been central to such accounts, it has also been suggested that the trend towards more reformist politics cannot properly be understood without consideration of the influences on workers of developments in state schooling, welfare legislation and the nuclear family.<sup>1</sup> Some historians have argued that the steady expansion of elementary education both eroded working-class radicalism and meant that voluntary associations increasingly had less to offer; at the same time there was an increase in the provision of leisure, recreation and entertainment, and a greater possibility of working-class involvement in the politics of civic improvement, often in alliance with the Liberals.<sup>2</sup> In the struggle for control and definition of education the middle classes did achieve a dominant position: government finance, inspection, control of teacher training and the power to enforce particular requirements through legislation meant that over time the approach to working-class education which was enshrined in the elementary system was increasingly able to exclude alternatives. The process was by no means a straightforward one however; elementary schooling evolved during a period of alternatives and was influenced by them both at its inception and during the course of its development. Nevertheless, working-class ideas themselves were not static; they changed and were adapted in the context of changing circumstances. The extension of elementary

1. H F Moorhouse, 'The Marxist Theory of the Labour Aristocracy', in Social History, Vol 3, No 1, 1978.
2. See Tholfsen, op cit; Kirk, op cit; and Caroline Reid, Middle Class Values and Working Class Culture in Nineteenth Century Sheffield, PhD Thesis, University of Sheffield, 1976.



schooling meant that as the century wore on more and more workers had some experience of it and had some of their own views shaped by it. At the same time providing educational facilities of their own, always a difficult task, could be seen as less of a priority than organising responses to those which were already available; struggles took place increasingly within the sphere of provided education rather than outside it. Workers continued to develop their own educational resources long after the turbulent '30s and '40s however; Preston's spinners established their large educational institution in the 1860s, a move still discussed by them in terms of class relationships and independence. Moreover, in a wider context, despite the mellowing of the language of class conflict since the earlier period, the Amalgamated Trades Council of Preston in 1869 unanimously passed a vote of regret at the death of Ernest Jones, the former Chartist leader.<sup>1</sup> The very existence of the trades council, formed during the 1860s, indicates that if workers' attitudes had changed this had come about as part of a wider spectrum of social change. The workers now had more extensive trade union organisation, some improvements in working conditions, and an extension of the franchise. By 1870 it was clear too that provided schooling was here to stay, the half-time system had more firmly established education as appropriate to a particular stage of the lifecycle, and one era of alternatives had come to an end.

The history of the working class as an educational force did not however come to an end with the 1870 legislation, and as early

1. Preston Chronicle, January 30th, 1869.



as the 1880s a whole new set of alternatives was opening up whose influence persists to the present day. There is a continuing impulse, illustrated by institutions such as trade union colleges, to educate and be educated out of the mainstream of provided education. The very debates and conflicts over education which characterised the earlier period have not gone away; nor can they be expected to do so in a society still characterised by profound social divisions. The accusation by the 'new' Sociology of Education in the 1970s that the discipline had previously neglected the social construction of definitions of 'education', 'knowledge', 'success' and 'failure'<sup>1</sup> highlights the power of current taken-for-granted definitions and illustrates the centrality of historical study to the understanding of contemporary institutions. In the light of history, the educational debates of the 1970s and 80s seem familiar; concern for standards, the need to preserve the existing social order, to teach morality and discipline, have all been given fresh voice in recent years, and emphasis on the relationship between education and the labour market has been renewed. The concern on all sides is to equip children for their future lives, but the visions of what these might be and what kind of education might serve them best are still at issue; the ideas and struggles of more than a century ago remain relevant today.

\* \* \*

1. See M F D Young (ed), Knowledge and Control, 1971.

In the process of attempting to answer the questions with which it started, this thesis has necessarily been framed by constraints of time, space and availability of evidence. As a result some issues have inevitably not been fully explored and some of the findings have been tentative; furthermore, the research ends at a point where many new questions begin to emerge. Suggestions can therefore be made for future research which would enlarge and develop the scope of this thesis and contribute further to our knowledge about the relationship of the working class to education in the nineteenth century.

The first point which can be raised is that whilst research into subordinate groups such as the working class is always difficult due to their relative invisibility - as the present study has confirmed - material pertaining to women's experiences, activities and attitudes is even more elusive. Although this thesis has attempted to give women a voice wherever possible, the extent to which patriarchal relations influenced both work and other aspects of life, such as education, is an important area for investigation which probably, to be effective, demands separate study and analysis.

Secondly, the main emphasis of this study has been on the reconstruction of experience and meanings as seen by social actors. Another possibility for further research would be to engage in a more structural kind of analysis through the use of sources such as the census. Individuals might be followed up to investigate more systematically such questions as whether radical workers sent their children to school and if so what kind of school; whether they had attended school themselves; whether particular groups of workers were involved in particular



kinds of educational activity; and the impact of the various kinds of activity on social and occupational mobility.

Finally, the research focussed on one town only, over a fairly limited period, in order to construct a fuller, more detailed picture of the relationship between the working class and education at a local level, in contrast to studies which have scattered their nets more widely. This in itself was a large task, given the attempt to question established definitions and unearth more 'hidden' forms of educational activity, but having done this it might now be useful to extend the study in both time and space. Other towns might yield similar data, confirming the present findings, or might provide a different picture of educational relationships arising from a different social and occupational structure. There is also much still to be explored about Preston itself. It has been argued elsewhere that at a national level, by the last third of the nineteenth century, radical working-class 'improvers' had moved from a defence of their own forms of education to demands for more equal access to provided educational facilities.<sup>1</sup> This thesis stops short at this point, and the preceding discussion (pp 300-302 ) of the suggested change in class relations over the century is brief and merely tentative; more work could be done here. Preliminary investigations of the later years show little sign however of working-class involvement in debates over the 1870 Act and the possibility

1. See for example Richard Johnson, 'Really Useful Knowledge : Radical Education and Working-Class Culture, 1790-1848', in John Clarke et al (eds) Working Class Culture, 1979; Brian Simon, The Two Nations and the Educational Structure 1780-1870, 1974; and W P McCann, 'Trade Unionists, Artisans and the 1870 Education Act', in British Journal of Educational Studies, Vol XVIII, No 2, 1970.



of the establishment of a school board in the town. Was this really the case? If so why? Did a 'new' radical educational tradition emerge in Preston as elsewhere during the 1880s, and if this did happen was there any continuity with the kinds of activities and movements outlined here? These are just some of the questions which still remain to be answered.

## APPENDIX 1

## A CAMPAIGNING SONG

The following is a verse from a so-called 'ten per cent song' of the 1853 industrial dispute in Preston.

"In eighteen forty-seven, my boys,  
I am sorry for to say,  
They took from us the ten per cent  
Without so much delay;  
And now we want it back again,  
Our masters, in a pout,  
Said they would not grant it us,  
So we're every one locked out.

(Chorus)

So now, my boys don't daunted be,  
But stand out to the fray,  
We ne'er shall yield, nor<sup>1</sup> quit the field,  
Until we've won the day."

1 Various Writers, Fortunes Made in Business, Vol III, 1887, p 57.

## APPENDIX 2

EXTRACTS FROM EVIDENCE TO THE 1843  
CHILDREN'S EMPLOYMENT COMMISSION.<sup>1</sup>

These extracts concern children not covered by the provisions of the Act regulating the employment of young persons in mills and factories (winding and warping by hand-frame being one such exception). Chapter 6 of this thesis presents some evidence of the experiences of half-timers; the accounts here give a very vivid picture of life for children and young people who worked full-time. They illuminate the difficulties of such a life, and the importance of more flexible educational activities and institutions.

The first two accounts come from children involved in winding and warping in Preston.

Elizabeth Feartlove

"Aged 14 years and 2 months. Winds cotton at Mr Garston's mill. Comes at 6 o'clock in the morning; goes home at 8 o'clock, comes back to work at half-past 8; goes to dinner at 12, returns at 1; goes to tea at 4 o'clock and returns at half-past 4; leaves at night at half-past 7; has not staid (sic) later for a long time past; has staid till 8, not later; once came at half-past 5. Earns sometimes 4s., sometimes more; has got 5s., sometimes; takes it to her mother. Mr Preston pays the wages. There is a female overlooker; she bates 2d. of our earnings if we do not come to time. She never saw any one beaten; never heard any one sworn at. Goes to Sunday School; has a Sunday dress. Her mother does the house work at home. Her father is a labourer at the railway station. Can read, but cannot write, learned at a day-school; has been at several. Goes to Grimshaw-Street Independent Chapel. Has been at this work about half a year; the work agrees with her. The place is never very hot and close."

1. PP 1843 [432] Vol XV, Children's Employment Commission, Reports and Evidence of Sub-Commissioners, Evidence for Preston pp m 58-m 61.



Catherine Clark

"Shall be 15 next Whitsun Monday. Has been at work winding not quite a year. Went to the Catholic School before she came here. Mr West attends the Sunday School; he lives to the Moor. Comes to work at 6 o'clock and leaves at 7 o'clock in the evening. Earned 3s 4d last week, and 5s 2d the week before. The difference is because she had no course work till Monday; was on the fine work before. Goes home to her meals. Her mother stops at home, and takes care of the family. Her father minds Mr Walker's engine. Goes to Sunday School; has a Sunday dress; can sew it with her needle. Has a holiday on Christmas Day and on Whitsun Monday; always reads on her holidays; mother always makes us read. Has 2 sisters, who work at Walker's tobacco mill; they get stuff ready for the tobacco. No brothers. Her little sister gets 2s; she is going 11. Her big sister, going 20, gets 9s 6d. Working at the tobacco does not make them sick, because they have got used to it; it made them sick at first but they could eat their meals."

The next two extracts come from children in tobaccoists.

Ellen Clark

"Is going 12 years. Works for Mr Walker and Mr Pedder, and strips tobacco, i.e., takes the leaves, and lays them smooth in a row; the tobacco is always wet. Has a cold place to work in; never gave her cold; has worked at it going 2 years. When first she began this work it made her feel sick, and after 2 days it made her vomit; she remained at home 2 days, went off a Friday and came Monday again; it never made her ill afterwards; it makes all the children ill at first. Comes to work at 7 o'clock; goes to breakfast at half-past 8; returns at 9; goes to dinner at 12; returns at 1; goes to tea at 4 o'clock, and returns at half-past 4; gets plenty to eat and drink; she goes to meals, but the others do not; her mother lives just opposite. Never gets a walk out in the fields even on Sundays. Goes to Sunday-school; her school always opens at half-past 8 in the morning, and from 2 till 4 in the afternoon also; she is in school in the evening again from 6 to half-past 8. Gets a holiday every new-year's day. Goes to church and to school. Christmas-Day and Good Friday are holidays, and she does the same; no other holidays in the year..... [describes the work further] Can write middling; but her hands are dirty, [from stuff used for colouring] so does not sign her name."

Richard Whiteside

Is 11 years old. Can read and write; learned at Mr Winder's school, in Carlisle-Street. Twists tobacco, i.e. turning a wheel; sometimes it is hard work when the wheel goes hard, but not very. Begins at 7 o'clock in the morning; turns wheel; goes to breakfast at half-past 8; turns wheel till 12; dinner till 1; then turns the wheel; at half-past 3 starts backing it off; is tired sometimes at night. Gets his supper and goes to bed when he goes home. After dinner gets a little play if he has time. Goes to Sunday-School, St Paul's. Had Christmas-day for a holiday and Good Friday; went to school both days and to church. When he first begun (sic) the smell of the tobacco made his head ache a bit; has never been ill since; has been there 7 months, and has not been ill at all. Gets 1s.6d. a-week; takes it to his mother; she lives in Spring-Gardens; makes shirts; father is dead. Has 2 sisters and 1 brother; one sister works at trimming hats, and works until 9 o'clock for a woman who lodges at their house; she is twelve years old; she went to school; one sister, 9 years old, goes to school; the brother works among the hay in summer and goes to school in winter; he is 14 years old. Knows that 5 times 4 is 20; 10 times 10 is 100; repeats the fourth commandment."

Mrs Whiteside, Richard's mother, made the following statement:

"...Her boy has good health; does not think that the working at tobacco makes him ill, is a very healthy employment; he complained of a little head-ache last Saturday, but it was the thundery weather. He brings home 1s.6d. a week. Does not know what holidays he has. When he has not work he goes to Sunday School. Has no time for play. He does not always wash his hands before meals; he ought to do so. Has a clean shirt once a week, and is washed well; his trousers are not changed every week; cannot afford it; he has a clean jacket for Sunday to attend Sunday-School. He is a good boy, and gets up to his work regularly every morning at 7 without any bidding. [Two others of her daughters were employed at home by a maker up of hats who lodged with her; one of the daughters about 11, the other about 14]. She kept them at work in summer from about 6 in the morning till 9 at night; they had no regular time allowed for meals; sometimes they might run out a bit. They went on Sundays to Sunday-school and afterwards to church. The pay was 2s.6d. a-week for the two."

(Square brackets the Commissioner's, not mine.)



These extracts show the great difficulties in acquiring education, but they also show that poor children did receive schooling although it was undoubtedly both fragmented and limited. The Rev James Rigg, Superintendent of St Paul's School, told the Commission that the boys seldom remained beyond the age of eleven, and then went to the factories and to the machine makers. He nevertheless added

"I believe that in this town the number of schools is so great that I expect you will find the children have imbibed some instruction; viz., 6 national schools for boys and 6 for girls, and 4 infants, and 1 which is to be opened, the master and mistress already elected..."

Others, however, painted a less rosy picture. The Reverend William Giles, a Baptist minister, claimed

"There is no day school in this immediate neighbourhood; one is much wanted. There are a great many children, from 4 to 8 years of age, or even some older than that, who cannot get work at factories, running about the streets, their parents being too poor to give them any education and also do not set a sufficient value on education to induce them to make the effort of depriving themselves of the small weekly sum necessary to secure it..."



## BIBLIOGRAPHY

The sources which have been examined in the course of this study are too numerous to mention in their entirety. The following bibliography lists those which have proved most useful.

## ARCHIVE SOURCES

a) Lancashire County Record Office, Preston

- |              |  |
|--------------|--|
| CBP 1/1      | Council Minutes 1836-1915.   |
| CBP 25/33-35 | School Attendance Committee Minutes 1876-1897.   |
| DDHS/75      | Horrocks, Crewdson & Co. Records, Strike Papers 1853, including handbill entitled 'Closing of the Mills', Preston 1853.                          |
| DDHS/77      | Records of Horrocks, Crewdson & Co, Papers of Union of Self-Actor Minders.   |
| DDK 1686     | Earl of Derby Records.   |
| DDPr 18/36   | Financial Report of the Income and Expenditure of the Amalgamated Committee of Trades and Factory Operatives, During the Preston Lock-Out, 1854. |
| DDPr 37/44   | Rules and Regulations of the Preston Institute for the Diffusion of Knowledge, October 1829.   |
| DDPr 37/54   | Rules of the Albert Street Co-operative Society, instituted Christmas 1834.  |
| DDPr 37/57   | Rules of the Temperance Vocal and Instrumental Musical Society, 1835.  |
| DDPr 37/60   | Rules of the Temperance Society, Preston, n.d.   |
| DDPr 37/76   | Regulations of the General Protecting Union of the Hand-Loom Weavers of Great Britain and Ireland, n.d.  |
| DDPr 37/86   | 1841 Address of the Preston Conservative Association and Operative Conservative Society.   |
| DDPr 128/10  | Series of Handbills and Articles including Documents relating to a Dispute Between Joseph Livesey and the Journeyman Printers.                   |
| DDPr 138/22  | Report of the Committee for Establishing a National School at Preston in Lancashire, December 30th, 1814.  |

- DDPr 138/28 Rules for the Government of the Wesleyan Methodist Sunday School, Preston, 1824.
- DDPr 138/30 Rules of Preston Subscription Library.
- DDPr 138/33 Rules & Regulations of the Primitive Methodist Sunday School, Preston, n.d.
- DDPr 138/52 Handbill of the Wesleyan School Committee, Preston, 1847.
- DDPr 138/55 Rules for the Preston Dispensary.
- DDPr 138/87 a & b Ashworth Cuttings (Proceedings having relation to the Strike of the Operative Spinners of Preston in 1853 & 1854).
- DDPr 138/107a The Guild Guide and Hand Book of Preston, 1862.
- DDX/28/299 Diary of John Ward, Weaver of Clitheroe, 1860-1864.
- DDX/433/2-4 Records of Pleasant Retreat Lodge of Oddfellows, Preston (1856-75).
- DDX/433/21-27 Further Records of Preston Oddfellows.
- DDX/636/2 & 3 Diary of John O'Neill (otherwise Ward) of Clitheroe 1856-1860 and 1872-1875.
- DDX 857/1 Minutes of Preston District Independent Order of Oddfellows 1859-1900.
- DDX 1089/1/1-3 Minute Books of Preston & District Power Loom Weavers, Winders and Warpers Association.
- DDX 1089/9/1 Correspondence Book 1860-1868 of the Preston and District Power-Loom Weavers, Winders and Warpers Association.
- DDX 1116/1/2 Master Spinners' Association, Cotton and Flax, Minute Book.
- DDX 1116/3/1 Letter Book of the Preston Master Cotton Spinners and Manufacturers Association, Oct. 1853-Sept. 1897.
- DDX 1269/4/1 & 2 Records of Preston Branch of the Amalgamated Association of Beamers, Twisters and Drawers (from around 1870).
- DP 376/2, 3 & 5 Newspaper Cuttings.
- E.L.E. Addresses from one of the 3730 Electors, January 28th, 1832.
- FRP 1/3 & 4 & 6 Minutes of Meetings of Fylde & Preston Society of Friends, 1814-71.



- MPr 20/1 Marsh Lane Chapel and Croft Street Mission School, Sunday School Teachers' Minute Book, 1851-1866.
- MPr 24/6 St Mary's Street Chapel, Sunday School Committee Minute Book, 1866 onwards.
- PR 1490 Memo Book of Boys' Charity School with Registers and Accounts 1703-1833.
- PR 1493 Archdeacon's Visitation to Churches of Preston Area, 1841.
- PR 2315 Miscellaneous Records of Trinity School.
- PR 2845/18/1 Church of England's Sunday School Superintendent's Minute Book.
- PR 2900/3/1 Vestry Minutes of St Saviour's Church.
- PR 2901/5 Correspondence etc relating to the establishment of St James' Church and Sunday School.
- PR 2973/17 Sunday School Minutes for Teachers' Meetings, St Paul's, 1842-1851.
- QJD files Riot Depositions.
- QGR/2/1-42 Chaplain's Reports from the Preston House of Correction.
- QEC/2/1 Proceedings of the County Constabulary Committee, 1840-1844.
- RCLv Visitations Returns of the Archbishop of Liverpool.
- SMPr 1-55/7 Preston School Log Books.
- Amalgamated Cotton Mills Trust, Concerning Cotton, 1920.
- Catalogue of Books Contained in the Library Collected by Richard Shepherd Esq, M B , Preston, 1839.
- Rev John Clay, 1844 Report on the State of Preston (to the Health of Towns Commission).
- Pedrick Gale, The Story of Horrockses, Preston, 1950.
- The Harris Institute, Preston, 'The Origin and Work of the Institute', Paper given by principal T R Jolly at a Staff Union Meeting, 14th January, 1917, printed in Harris Institute Annual Report, 1917.
- An Illustrated Itinerary of the County of Lancashire, 1842.
- Industries of Lancashire, 1889-90, Historical Publishing Co.
- A Lecture on Capital and Labour, Delivered at the Institution, Preston, on Tuesday December 27th, 1860, by the Reverend Canon Parr, MA.



William Pollard, A Hand Book and Guide to Preston, n d.

Report to the General Board of Health on the Borough of Preston,  
1849.

Report of the Charity Commissioners, 1843, Vol 4, in the 1903 Publication of Reports.

Rev W T Whiteley, The Baptists in Preston, Reprinted from Preston Chronicle, September 26th and October 3rd, 1908.

b) Harris Library, Preston.

P 677. 2                      Assessment of Cotton Mills, c 1844.

Q 352                        Borough of Preston: Proceedings of the Council,  
1847-8.

Horrockses, Crewdson & Co Ltd, History of the Origin and Development of the Firm of Horrockses, Crewdson & Co Ltd, 1936.

Horrockses, Miller & Co, The Cotton Industry of Lancashire, 1942.

c) Public Record Office, Kew

Ed. files                      Department of Education and Science, Includes  
Building Grant Files; Supply Files; Minutes  
and Reports of the Committee of Council on Education.

F.S. files                      Friendly Societies, including Registry of Friendly  
Societies, Lancashire, 1774-1875, with Rules.

H.O. files                      Many papers relating to nineteenth-century disturbances,  
including HO 20/10, Confidential Reports  
on Political Prisoners, 1841.

d) British Museum

BM Francis Place Collections,  
Add Mss 34,245 A & B

Correspondence and Papers of the  
General Convention of the Industrious  
Classes.

DIRECTORIES

Mannex & Co, The History, Topography and Directory of the Borough of Preston and Seven Miles Around, Preston, 1851.

Mannex & Co, History, Topography and Directory of Mid-Lancashire, Preston, 1854.

Pigot & Co, National Commerical Directory (for the Northern Counties), 1834.

Slater, Directory, Lancashire, 1848.

P and H Whittle, The Commercial Directory of Preston and Its Environs, 1841.

#### NEWSPAPERS AND PERIODICALS

Preston Chronicle

Preston Guardian

Preston Pilot

Northern Star

Staunch Teetotaler

The above titles were the source of much useful information; those which follow were referred to more selectively.

The Beacon

The Bookbinders' Trade Circular

The English Chartist Circular and Temperance Record

Household Words

Moral Reformer

School Board Chronicle

Transactions of the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science

The Union

#### PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS

Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education  
1839-1858.

Reports of the Committee of Council on Education 1859 et seq.

PP 1831-2(706) Vol XV

Report from the Select Committee  
on the Bill to Regulate the Labour  
of Children in the Mills and Factories  
of the United Kingdom.

PP 1834(167) Vol XX

Factories, Employment of Children,  
Supplementary Report of Commissioners.

PP 1834(556) Vol X

Report from the Select Committee  
on Hand-Loom Weavers' Petitions.

- PP 1834(559) Vol VII      Select Committee on Inquiry into Drunkenness.
- PP 1835(62) Vol XLI      Abstract of Answers and Returns Relative to the State of Education in England and Wales, Vol 1, Bedford-Lancaster.
- PP 1835(341)(492) Vol XIII      Report of the Select Committee on Hand-Loom Weavers' Petitions.
- PP 1837(73) Vol XXXI      Reports of the Inspectors of Factories, for the Half-Year Ending 31st December 1836.
- PP 1842(31) Vol XXII      Factory Inspectors Reports for the Half-Year Ending 31st December 1841.
- PP 1843[432] Vol XV      Childrens' Employment Commission, Reports and Evidence of Sub-Commissioners.
- PP 1847-48[900] Vol XXVI      Factory Inspectors' Half-Yearly Reports.
- PP 1849(548) Vol XVII      Report from the Select Committee on Public Libraries.
- PP 1852-53[1642] Vol XL      Factory Inspectors' Half-Yearly Reports.
- PP 1852-53[1692] Vol XL      1851 Census Great Britain, Report and Tables on Education England and Wales.
- PP 1854 [1796] Vol XIX      Half-Yearly Factory Inspectors' Reports.
- PP 1856[2031] Vol XVIII      Factory Inspectors' Reports.
- PP 1861 [2794-II] Vol XXI      Popular Education (England): Report of the Assistant Commissioners Appointed to Inquire Into The State Of Popular Education in England (Newcastle Commission).
- PP 1861[2794-VI] Vol XXI      Minutes of the Evidence Taken Before The Commissioners On Popular Education, 1861.
- PP 1867-68 [4010] Vol XVIII      Factory Inspectors' Reports.

#### NINETEENTH-CENTURY BOOKS, ARTICLES AND PAMPHLETS

- W A Abram, 'Social Conditions and Political Prospects of the Lancashire Workman', in Fortnightly Review, October, 1868.



- Richard Allen, History of Methodism in Preston and Its Vicinity, Preston, 1866.
- Henry Ashworth, An Enquiry into the Origin, Progress and Results of the Strike of the Operative Cotton Spinners of Preston, from October 1836 to February 1837, Manchester, 1854.
- 'Atticus' (A Hewitson), Preston Town Council; or Portraits of Local Legislators, Preston, 1870.
- J M Baernreither, English Associations of Working Men, 1889.
- Edward Baines, History of the Cotton Manufacture in Great Britain, 1840.
- Edward Baines, The History of the County Palatine and Duchy of Lancaster, Vol 5, 1893.
- Samuel Bamford, Early Days. Passages in the Life of a Radical, Heywood, 1841.
- Thomas Banks, A Short Sketch of the Cotton Trade of Preston for the Last 67 Years (An Address to the Operative Cotton Spinners of Preston by the Secretary of the Spinners' Institute), Preston, 1894.
- T J Blakewell, History of the Preston Commercial School, Preston, 1892.
- Sir Charles Brown, Origin and Progress of Horrockses, Crewdson & Co, Preston, 1825.
- Henry Cartmell, The Preston Churches and Sunday Schools, Preston, 1892.
- Rev Walter Lowe Clay, The Prison Chaplain: A Memoir of the Rev John Clay BD, Cambridge, 1861.
- Thomas Cooper, The Life of Thomas Cooper Written by Himself, 1872, reprinted Leicester, 1971.
- Frederick Engels, The Condition of the Working Class in England, 1844, new edition, St Albans, 1969.
- C Hardwick, History of the Borough of Preston and Its Environs, Preston, 1856.
- Anthony Hewitson, History of Preston, Preston, 1883.
- J Hole, The History and Management of Literary, Scientific and Mechanics' Institutes, 1853.
- J W Hudson, The History of Adult Education, 1851.
- G R Humphreys, 'On Workmen's and Factory Libraries', in Monthly Notes of the Library Association, Vol II, 1881.
- William Lovett & John Collins, Chartism: A New Organisation of the People, 1840, reprinted Leicester, 1969.

- B Moore, History of Wesleyan Methodism in Burnley and East Lancashire, Burnley, 1899.
- Rev B Nightingale, History of the Congregational Sunday School, Walker Street, Preston, Preston 1897.
- Rev B Nightingale, Lancashire Nonconformity, 6 Vols, Manchester, 1890-1893.
- W Pilkington, Facts about the Origin of the Teetotal Principle and Pledge, Preston, 1894.
- W Pilkington, The Makers of Wesleyan Methodism in Preston, and the Relation of Methodism to the Temperance and Teetotal Movements, Preston, 1890.
- William Shaw, History of the Fishergate Baptist Church, Preston, Preston, 1883.
- W Cooke Taylor, Notes of a Tour in the Manufacturing District of Lancashire, Manchester, 1842.
- Christopher Thomson, The Autobiography of an Artisan, 1847.
- Various Writers, Fortunes Made in Business, Vol III, 1887.
- Thomas Walmsley, Reminiscences of the Preston Cockpit and the Old Teetotallers, Preston, 1892.
- Thomas Whittaker, Life's Battles in Temperance Armour, 1888.

#### TWENTIETH-CENTURY BOOKS, ARTICLES AND PAMPHLETS

- Philip Abrams, 'Sociology and History', in Past and Present, No 52, August 1971.
- Philip Abrams, 'The Sense of the Past and the Origins of Sociology', in Past and Present, No 55, May 1972.
- J W Adamson, English Education 1789-1902, Cambridge, 1902.
- Richard Aldrich, 'Literacy, Illiteracy, Semi-Literacy and Marriage Registers', in History of Education Society Bulletin, No 22, 1978.
- Louis Althusser, For Marx, Harmondsworth, 1969.
- Louis Althusser, Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays, 1971.
- R Altick, The English Common Reader: A Social History of the Mass Reading Public, 1800-1900, Chicago, 1957.
- Michael Anderson, Family Structure in Nineteenth-Century Lancashire, Cambridge, 1971.



- Michael Anderson, 'Household Structure and the Industrial Revolution: Mid-Nineteenth Century Preston in Comparative Perspective' in P Laslett and R Wall (eds), Household and Family in Past Time, 1972.
- Michael Anderson, 'Sociological history and the working-class family: Smelser revisited' in Social History, 3, 1976.
- Perry Anderson, 'Origins of the Present Crisis' in New Left Review, 23, 1964.
- Phillipe Aries, Centuries of Childhood, Harmondsworth, 1973.
- A Armstrong, The Church of England, the Methodists and Society, 1700-1850, 1973.
- W A Armstrong, 'The Interpretation of the Census Enumerators' Books for Victorian Towns', in H J Dyos (ed), The Study of Urban History, 1968.
- Christopher Aspin, Lancashire, The First Industrial Society, Helmshore, 1969.
- Peter Bailey, Leisure and Class in Victorian England, 1978.
- Olive Banks, The Sociology of Education, 3rd edition, 1976.
- G Bernbaum, Knowledge and Ideology in the Sociology of Education, 1977.
- Geoffrey Best, Mid-Victorian Britain, 1851-1875, 1971.
- Louis Billington, 'Popular Religion and Social Reform: A Study of Revivalism and Teetotalism 1830-1850', in Journal of Religious History, Vol 10, No 3, 1979.
- Marc Bloch, The Historian's Craft, Manchester, 1954.
- W S Bramwell, Reminiscences of a Public Librarian, Preston, 1916.
- Asa Briggs, 'The Language of Class in Early Nineteenth-Century England' in M W Flinn and T C Smout (eds), Essays in Social History, Oxford, 1974.
- Asa Briggs, 'The Study of the History of Education', in History of Education, Vol 1, No 1, 1972.
- Colin M Brown, 'Industrialists and their Factory Schools', in History of Education, Vol 9, No 2, 1980.
- Martin Bulmer, 'Sociology and History: Some Recent Trends', in Sociology, Vol 8, 1974.
- Duncan Bythell, The Handloom Weavers: a Study in the English Cotton Industry During the Industrial Revolution, Cambridge, 1969.
- G Carnall, 'Dickens, Mrs Gaskell and the Preston Strike', in Victorian Studies, Vol VIII, 1964.



- E H Carr, What is History?, Harmondsworth, 1964.
- G Kitson Clark, Churchmen and the Condition of England, 1832-1885, 1973.
- G Kitson Clark, 'Hunger and Politics in 1842' in Journal of Modern History, XXV, 1953.
- John Clarke, Chas Critcher and Richard Johnson (eds), Working Class Culture: Studies in History and Theory, 1979.
- H W Clemesha, A Bibliography of the History of Preston, 1923.
- H W Clemesha, A History of Preston in Amounderness, Manchester, 1912.
- G D H Cole and A W Filson, British Working-class Movements (Selected Documents 1789-1875), 1965.
- G D H Cole, Studies in Class Structure, 1955.
- J M Cousins and R L Davis, 'Working-class Incorporation - A Historical Approach with Reference to the Mining Communities of S E Northumberland 1840-1890', in Frank Parkin (ed), The Social Analysis of Class Structure, 1974.
- Geoffrey Crossick, An Artisan Elite in Victorian Society: Kentish London 1840-1880, 1978.
- Marjorie Cruikshank, Children and Industry, Manchester, 1981.
- A F Davie, 'The Administration of Lancashire 1838-1889', in S P Bell, Victorian Lancashire, Newton Abbot, 1974.
- M Dick, 'The Myth of the Working-Class Sunday School', in History of Education, Vol 9, No 1, 1980.
- A E Dobbs, Education and Social Movements 1700-1850, 1919.
- Anthony Donajgrodzki (ed), Social Control in Nineteenth-Century Britain, 1977.
- F K Donnelly, 'Ideology and Early English Working-class History - Edward Thompson and his Critics', in Social History, 2, 1976.
- Francis Duke, 'Pauper Education', in Derek Fraser (ed), The New Poor Law in the Nineteenth Century, 1976.
- H I Dutton and J E King, 'The Limits of Paternalism: The Cotton Tyrants of North Lancashire, 1836-54', in Social History, Vol 7, No 1, 1982.
- H J Dyos, The Study of Urban History, 1968.
- Nicholas C Edsall, The Anti-Poor Law Movement, 1834-44, Manchester, 1971.

- M M Edwards and R Lloyd-Jones, 'N J Smelser and the Cotton Factory Family: a reassessment', in N B Harte and K G Ponting (eds), Textile History and Economic History, Manchester, 1973.
- Elizabeth L Eisenstein, 'Some Conjectures About the Impact of Printing on Western Society and Thought', in Journal of Modern History, Vol 40, No 1, 1968.
- Geoff Eley and Keith Nield, 'Why Does Social History Ignore Politics?' in Social History, Vol 5, No 2, 1980.
- James Ellison, Dawn of Teetotalism, Preston, 1932.
- J A Epstein, 'Feargus O'Connor and the Northern Star', in International Review of Social History, Vol XXI, 1976.
- Michael Erben and Denis Gleeson, 'Education as Reproduction', in Michael Young and Geoff Whitty, Society, State and Schooling, 1977.
- Geoffrey C Fidler, 'The Liverpool Labour Movement and the School Board: an Aspect of Education and the Working Class', in History of Education, Vol 9, No 1, 1980.
- John Foster, Class Struggle and the Industrial Revolution, 1977.
- John Foster, 'Imperialism and the Labour Aristocracy', in J Skelley (ed), The General Strike, 1976.
- John Foster, 'Nineteenth-Century Towns - A Class Dimension', in H J Dyos (ed), The Study of Urban History, 1968.
- John Foster, Some Comments on 'Class Struggle and the labour aristocracy, 1830-60' (A Reply to Musson), in Social History, 3, 1976.
- Derek Fraser, 'Education and Urban Politics, c1832-1885', in David Reeder (ed), Urban Education in the Nineteenth Century, 1977.
- Derek Fraser, 'Politics and the Victorian City', in Urban History Year-book, Leicester, 1979.
- Derek Fraser (ed), The New Poor Law in the Nineteenth Century, 1976.
- L C Freeman et al, 'Locating leaders in local communities: a comparison of some alternative approaches', in American Sociological Review, 28, 1963.
- Simon Frith, 'Socialisation and rational schooling: Elementary Education in Leeds before 1870', in Phillip McCann (ed), Popular Education and Socialisation in the Nineteenth Century, 1977.
- Simon Frith and Paul Corrigan, 'Politics of Education', in Michael Young and Geoff Whitty, Society, State and Schooling, 1977.
- D S Gadian, 'Class Consciousness in Oldham and Other New Industrial Towns 1830-1850', in Historical Journal, xxi, 1978.



- R C Gammage, History of the Chartist Movement 1837-1854, Facsimile of 1894 edition, 1969.
- P W Gardner, The Lost Elementary Schools of Victorian England, 1984.
- K W S Garwood, 'Towards Literacy: Elementary Schools of the 1840s', in The Educational Review, Vol 13, No 1, 1960.
- Alan D Gilbert, 'Methodism, Dissent and Political Stability in Early Industrial England', in Journal of Religious History, Vol 10, No 4, 1979.
- A D Gilbert, Religion and Society in Industrial England: Church, Chapel and Social Change, 1740-1914, 1976.
- F Gillespie, Labour and Politics in England 1850-1867, 1966.
- John R Gillis, Review of Bailey's 'Leisure and Class in Victorian England', in Victorian Studies, Vol 23, No 1, 1979.
- Albert Goodwin, The Friends of Liberty, 1979.
- P H J H Gosden, The Friendly Societies in England 1815-67, Manchester, 1961.
- P H J H Gosden, Self-Help: Voluntary Associations in Nineteenth-Century Britain, 1973.
- L Gottschalk et al, The Use of the Personal Document in History, Anthropology and Sociology, Bulletin No 53, New York, Social Science Research Council, 1945.
- Antonio Gramsci, Selections from Prison Notebooks, 1971.
- Robert Gray, 'Politics, Ideology and Class Struggle Under Early Industrial Capitalism: a Critique of John Foster', in Marxism Today, December 1977.
- Robert Q Gray, The Labour Aristocracy in Victorian Edinburgh, Oxford, 1976.
- Olive Griffiths, Religion and Learning, Cambridge, 1935.
- Stuart Hall, 'Theory and Experience', in New Statesman, May 30th, 1980.
- J L Hammond and Barbara Hammond, The Skilled Labourer 1760-1832, 1919.
- J L Hammond and Barbara Hammond, The Town Labourer, 1916, new edition 1978.
- Brian Harrison, Drink and the Victorians: The Temperance Question in England 1815-1872, 1971.
- Brian Harrison, 'Philanthropy and the Victorians', in Victorian Studies, IX, 1966.



- Brian Harrison, 'Religion and Recreation in Nineteenth-Century England', in Past and Present, 38, 1967.
- Brian Harrison, 'Teetotal Chartism', in History, Vol LVIII, June 1973.
- Brian Harrison, 'Temperance Societies: Some Questions for the Local Historian', in The Local Historian, Vol 8, No 5, 1968.
- B Harrison and P Hollis, 'Chartism, Liberalism and the Life of Robert Lowery', in The English Historical Review, Vol LXXXII, 1967.
- J F C Harrison, Learning and Living, 1961.
- J F C Harrison, Underground Education in the Nineteenth Century, Eighth Mansbridge Memorial Lecture, Leeds, 1971.
- J F C Harrison (ed), Utopianism and Education; Robert Owen and the Owenites, New York, 1968.
- Royden Harrison, Before the Socialists: Studies in Labour and Politics 1861-1881, 1965.
- S A Harrop, 'Adult Education and Literacy: the importance of post-school education for literacy levels in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries', in History of Education, XIII, 1984.
- David N Hempton, 'Wesleyan Methodism and Educational Politics in Early Nineteenth-Century England', in History of Education, Vol 8, No 3, 1979.
- M Hewitt, Wives and Mothers in Victorian Industry, 1958.
- Paul Q Hirst, 'Althusser and the Theory of Ideology', in Economy and Society, Vol 5, 1976.
- History of Education Society, History, Sociology and Education, Leicester, 1971.
- History of Education Society, Local Studies and the History of Education, Leicester, 1972.
- History of Education Society, Studies in the Local History of Education, Leicester, 1977.
- E J Hobsbawm, Industry and Empire, Harmondsworth, 1977.
- E J Hobsbawm, 'The Labour Aristocracy in Nineteenth-Century Britain', in idem, Labouring Men, 1972.
- E J Hobsbawm, 'Methodism and the Threat of Revolution in Britain', in idem, Labouring Men, 1972.
- E J Hobsbawm, 'The Social Functions of the Past', in Past and Present, No 55, 1972.

Anthony Holden, History of the Church and Parish of St Ignatius, Preston, 1833-1933, Preston, 1933.

Patricia Hollis, Class and Conflict in Nineteenth-Century England, 1973.

Eric Hopkins, 'Working Class Attitudes to Education in the Black Country in the Mid-Nineteenth Century', in Bulletin of the History of Education Society, 14, 1974.

E Hopwood, A History of the Lancashire Cotton Industry and the Amalgamated Weavers' Association, Manchester, 1969.

Mark Hovell, The Chartist Movement, Manchester, 1918, reprinted 1950.

Ernest Hudson, Sketches of the History of the Parish of St. Paul, Preston, 1826-1926, Preston, 1927.

Stephen Humphries, Hooligans or Rebels?, Oxford, 1981.

Alan Hunt (ed), Class and Class Structure, 1977.

J S Hurt, 'Board School or Voluntary School: Some Determinants', in New Approaches to the Study of Popular Education, History of Education Society Occasional Publication, No 4, Spring 1979.

John Hurt, Education in Evolution, 1971.

John Hurt, Elementary Schooling and the Working Classes 1860-1918, 1979.

J S Hurt, 'Professor West on Early Nineteenth Century Education', in Economic History Review, XXIV, 1971.

John Jackson, The Irish in Britain, 1963.

J B Jefferys, Labour's Formative Years, 1948.

Mick Jenkins, The General Strike of 1842, 1980.

Richard Johnson, The Blue Books and Education, 1816-1896 : The Critical Reading of Official Sources, CCCS Occasional Paper, Birmingham, n d.

Richard Johnson, 'Educational Policy and Social Control in Early Victorian England', in Past and Present, 49, 1970.

Richard Johnson, Peculiarities of the English Route: Barrington Moore, Perry Anderson and English Social Development, CCCS Occasional Paper, Birmingham, 1975.

Richard Johnson, 'Really Useful Knowledge', in Radical Education, No 7, Winter 1976.



- Richard Johnson, 'Really Useful Knowledge: Radical Education and Working Class Culture, 1790-1848', in John Clarke, Chas Critcher and Richard Johnson (eds), Working Class Culture: Studies in History and Theory, 1979.
- Richard Johnson, 'Three Problematics: Elements of a Theory of Working-Class Culture', in John Clarke, Chas Critcher and Richard Johnson (eds), Working Class Culture: Studies in History and Theory, 1979.
- Joint Committee on the Lancashire Bibliography, The Lancashire Bibliography Part 3, Business Histories, Manchester, 1971.
- Gareth Stedman Jones, 'Class Struggle and the Industrial Revolution', in New Left Review, 90, 1975.
- Gareth Stedman Jones, 'From Historical Sociology to Theoretical History', in British Journal of Sociology, Vol 27, No 3, 1976.
- Gareth Stedman Jones, 'History: the poverty of empiricism', in Robin Blackburn (ed), Ideology in Social Science, 1972.
- Gareth Stedman Jones, Languages of class, Cambridge, 1983.
- Patrick Joyce, 'The Factory Politics of Lancashire in the later Nineteenth Century', in The Historical Journal, XVIII, 3, 1975.
- Patrick Joyce, Work, Society and Politics: the Culture of the Factory in later Victorian England, Brighton, 1980.
- Thomas Kelly, Early Public Libraries, 1966.
- Thomas Kelly, A History of Adult Education in Great Britain, Liverpool, 1962.
- J E King, Richard Marsden and the Preston Chartists, 1837-1848, Centre for North-West Regional Studies, Occasional Paper No 10, Lancaster, 1981.
- Neville Kirk, 'Cotton Workers and Deference', in Society for the Study of Labour History Bulletin, No 42, 1981.
- David Kynaston, King Labour: The British Working Class, 1850-1914, 1976.
- T W Laqueur, 'Literacy and Social Mobility During the Industrial Revolution in England', in Past and Present, No 64, 1974.
- T W Laqueur, Religion and Respectability: Sunday Schools and Working-class Culture 1780-1850, 1976.
- T W Laqueur, 'Working-class Demand and the Growth of Elementary Education 1750-1850', in Lawrence Stone (ed) Schooling and Society, Baltimore, 1976.
- J Lea, 'Baptists and the Working Classes in Mid-Victorian Lancashire', in S P Bell, Victorian Lancashire, Newton Abbot, 1974.



- Lynn Hollen Lees, 'The Study of Social Conflict in English Industrial Towns', in Urban History Yearbook, 1980.
- V I Lenin, What Is To Be Done?, Peking, 1975.
- S M Lipset and R Hofstadter, Sociology and History : Methods, New York, 1968.
- W J Lowe, 'The Lancashire Irish and the Catholic Church 1846-71: the social dimension', in Irish Historical Studies, Vol 20, 1976-7.
- G Lukacs, History and Class Consciousness, 1971.
- T Mackay, History of the English Poor Law, Vol III, 1834-1898, 1904.
- A Macfarlane, 'History, anthropology and the study of communities', in Social History, 5; 1977.
- W E Marsden, 'Census Enumerators' Returns, Schooling and Social Areas in the Late Victorian Town: A Case Study of Bootle', in New Approaches to the Study of Popular Education, History of Education Society Occasional Publication No 4, 1979.
- J D Marshall, 'Colonisation as a Factor in the Planting of Towns in North-West England', in H J Dyos (ed), The Study of Urban History, 1968.
- David E Martin and David Rubinstein (eds), Ideology and the Labour Movement, 1979.
- H F Matthews, Methodism and the Education of the People 1791-1851, 1949.
- H W McCready, 'The Cotton Famine in Lancashire, 1863', in Transactions of the Historical Society of Lancashire and Cheshire, Vol 106, 1954.
- Gregor McLennan, 'The Labour Aristocracy' and 'Incorporation' : notes on some terms in the social history of the working class, in Social History, Vol 6, No 1, 1981.
- Istvan Meszaros (ed), Aspects of History and Class Consciousness, 1971.
- E C Midwinter, Social Administration in Lancashire 1830-1860, Manchester, 1969.
- C Wright Mills, The Sociological Imagination, New York, 1959.
- D C Moore, The Politics of Deference: a study of the mid-Nineteenth Century English Political System, Brighton, 1976.
- R S Moore, 'Religion as a Source of Variation in Working-Class Images of Society', in M Bulmer (ed), Working-Class Images of Society, 1975.
- H F Moorhouse, 'History, Sociology and the Quiescence of the British

- Working Class: a reply to Reid', in Social History, Vol 4, No 3, 1979.
- H F Moorhouse, 'The Marxist Theory of the Labour Aristocracy', in Social History, Vol 3, No 1, 1978.
- R J Morris, Class and Class Consciousness in the Industrial Revolution, 1780-1850, 1979.
- W E Moss, Joseph Livesey - Friend of the People, 3rd Memorial Lecture at the 101st Conference of the British Temperance League, 1935.
- James Murphy, The Religious Problem in English Education: the Crucial Experiment, Liverpool, 1959.
- P W Musgrave, 'The Decline of the Educative Family', in Universities Quarterly, Vol 14, 1959-60.
- A E Musson, 'Class Struggle and the Labour Aristocracy, 1830-60' (Critique of Foster), in Social History, 3, 1976.
- A E Musson, 'The Ideology of Early Co-operation in Lancashire and Cheshire', in Transactions of the Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society, LXVIII, 1958.
- Tom Nairn, 'Anatomy of the Labour Party', Parts 1 and 2, in New Left Review, 27 and 28, 1964.
- R S Neale, 'Class and Class-Consciousness in Early Nineteenth Century England: Three Classes or Five?', in Victorian Studies, XII, No 1, 1968.
- Rev B Nightingale, History of the Parent Sunday School, now meeting in Bairstow-Street, Preston, 1812-1912, Preston, 1912.
- Rachel O'Higgins, 'Irish Influence in the Chartist Movement', in Past and Present, No 20, 1961.
- B K O'Neill, A History of St Joseph's Parish, Preston, Centenary 1860-1960, 1960.
- D G Paz, The Politics of Working-Class Education in Britain 1830-1950, Manchester, 1980.
- Henry Pelling, 'The Concept of the Labour Aristocracy', in idem, Popular Politics and Society in Later Victorian Britain, 1968.
- Henry Pelling, 'Religion and the Nineteenth-Century Working Class', in Past and Present, 27, 1964.
- William Pilkington, Then and Now: Preston's Progress for Seventy Years, 1841-1911, Preston, 1911.
- Ivy Pinchbeck, Women Workers and the Industrial Revolution, 1750-1850, 1930.



- Ivy Pinchbeck and Margaret Hewitt, Children in English Society, Vol 2, 1973.
- Jennifer Platt, 'Evidence and Proof in Documentary Research', Parts 1 and 2, in Sociological Review, Vol 29, No 1, 1981.
- Sidney Pollard, 'Factory Discipline in the Industrial Revolution', in Economic History Review, 2nd Series, Vol 16, 1963-4.
- Nicos Poulantzas, 'Marxist Political Theory in Great Britain', in New Left Review, 43, 1967.
- R N Price, 'The Working Men's Club Movement and Victorian Social Reform Ideology', in Victorian Studies, Vol XV, No 2, 1971.
- Winifred Proctor, 'Poor Law Administration in Preston Union, 1838-1848', in Transactions of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire, Vol 117, 1965.
- I Prothero, 'Chartism in the North West', in North West Labour History Bulletin, 1974.
- June Purvis, 'Working-class Women and Adult Education in Nineteenth-Century Britain', in History of Education, Vol 9, No 3, 1980.
- Donald Read, 'North of England Newspapers c 1700-c 1900 and their value to Historians', in Proceedings of the Leeds Philosophical and Literary Society, viii, 1957.
- Donald Read and Eric Glasgow, Feargus O'Connor: Irishman and Chartist, 1961.
- Arthur Redford, Labour Migration in England, 1800-1850, Manchester, 1926.
- David Reeder (ed), Urban Education in the Nineteenth Century, 1977.
- Alastair Reid, 'Politics and Economics in the Formation of the British Working Class', in Social History, Vol 3, 1978.
- Alastair Reid, 'Response' (to Moorhouse), in Social History, Vol 4, 1979.
- Douglas A Reid, 'The Decline of St Monday 1766-1876', in Past and Present, 71, 1976.
- T W Reid and Naomi Reid, 'The 1842 "Plug Plot" in Stockport', in International Review of Social History, Vol XXIV, 1979.
- Edward R Reid-Smith, Parliament and Popular Culture in the Early Nineteenth Century: some strands in the history of libraries and adult education, Oldham, 1969.
- R W Rich, The Training of Teachers in England and Wales During the Nineteenth Century, Cambridge, 1933.
- W F Richardson, Preston Methodism's Two Hundred Fascinating Years, Preston, 1975.



- W Gordon Rimmer, British Factory Towns During the First Industrial Revolution, 1970.
- E Roberts, 'Living and Learning - Socialisation Outside School', in Oral History, Vol III, No 2, 1975.
- A H Robson, The Education of Children Engaged in Industry in England, 1833-1876, 1931.
- Paul Rock, 'Some Problems of Interpretative Historiography, in British Journal of Sociology, Vol 27, 1976.
- H B Rodgers, 'The Lancashire Cotton Industry in 1840', in Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers, 28, 1960.
- Sheila Rowbotham, Hidden from History, 3rd edition, 1977.
- Sheila Rowbotham, Woman's Consciousness, Man's World, Harmondsworth, 1973.
- Sheila Rowbotham, Women, Resistance and Revolution, Harmondsworth, 1972.
- D Rubinstein (ed), People for the People, 1973.
- David Rubinstein, School Attendance in London 1870-1904: A Social History, Hull, 1969.
- W D Rubinstein, 'The Victorian Middle Classes: Wealth, Occupation and Geography', in Economic History Review, 2nd Series, XXX, 4, 1977.
- W D Rubinstein, 'Wealth, Elites, and the Class Structure of Modern Britain', in Past and Present, 76, 1977.
- George Rude, The Crowd in History: A Study of Popular Disturbances in France and England, 1730-1848, 1981.
- Raphael Samuel, 'Local History and Oral History', in History Workshop Journal, Vol 1, 1976.
- Michael Sanderson, 'Education and the Factory in Industrial Lancashire 1780-1840', in Economic History Review, XX, 1967.
- Michael Sanderson, 'The Grammar School and the Education of the Poor', in British Journal of Educational Studies, xi, 1962-3.
- Michael Sanderson, 'Literacy and Social Mobility in the Industrial Revolution in England', in Past and Present, 56, 1972.
- Michael Sanderson, 'A Rejoinder' to Laqueur's 'Literacy and Social Mobility During the Industrial Revolution in England', in Past and Present, 64, 1974.
- Michael Sanderson, 'Social Change and Elementary Education in Industrial Lancashire 1780-1840', in Northern History, Vol 3, 1968.

John Saville, 'Class Struggle and the Industrial Revolution' in R Miliband and J Saville (eds), The Socialist Register, 1974.

John Saville, Ernest Jones, Chartist, 1952.

M Seaborne, The English School, its Architecture and Organisation, 1370-1870, 1971.

Ian Sellers, Nineteenth-Century Nonconformity, 1977.

William H Sewell Jr, Work and Revolution in France, Cambridge, 1980.

Michael A Shepherd, 'The Origins and Incidence of the term "Labour Aristocracy"', in Bulletin of the Society for the Study of Labour History, No 37, 1978.

Harold Silver, 'Aspects of Neglect: The Strange Case of Victorian Popular Education', in Oxford Review of Education, Vol 3, No 1, 1977.

Harold Silver, The Concept of Popular Education, 1965.

Harold Silver, Education and the Social Condition, 1980.

Harold Silver, English Education and the Radicals, 1780-1850, 1975.

Harold Silver, 'Ideology and the Factory Child: Attitudes to Half-Time Education', in Phillip McCann (ed), Popular Education and Socialisation in the Nineteenth Century, 1977.

Pamela and Harold Silver, The Education of the Poor, the History of a National School 1824-1974, 1974.

Brian Simon, Education and the Labour Movement 1870-1920, 1974.

Brian Simon (ed), The Radical Tradition in Education in Britain, 1972.

Brian Simon, The Two Nations and the Educational Structure 1780-1870, 1974.

Joan Simon, 'The History of Education in Past and Present', in Oxford Review of Education, Vol 3, No 1, 1977.

Roger Simon, 'Gramsci's Concept of Hegemony', in Marxism Today, March 1977.

N J Smelser, Social Change and the Industrial Revolution, 1959.

A Smith, The Established Church and Popular Religion, 1750-1850, 1971.

F B Smith, The Making of the Second Reform Bill, Cambridge, 1966.

R J Smith, 'Education, Society and Literacy: Nottinghamshire in the mid-Nineteenth Century', in University of Birmingham Historical Journal, Vol XII, 1969-70.



Society for the Study of Labour History Bulletin, Spring 1980, Conference Report on the 'Labour Aristocracy'.

Society for the Study of Labour History Bulletin, Spring 1976, Conference Report on 'Working-Class Leisure: Class Expression and/or Social Control'.

W B Stephens, 'Early Victorian Coventry: Education in an Industrial Community 1830-1851', in A Everitt (ed), Perspectives in English Urban History, 1973.

W B Stephens, 'Illiteracy and Schooling in the Provincial Towns, 1640-1870: A Comparative Approach', in David Reeder (ed), Urban Education in the Nineteenth Century, 1977.

W B Stephens, Regional Variations in Education During the Industrial Revolution 1780-1870, Leeds, 1973.

P Stignant, 'Wesleyan Methodism and Working-Class Radicalism in the North, 1792-1821', in Northern History, Vol 6, 1971.

Arthur L Stinchcombe, Theoretical Methods in Social History, 1980.

Lawrence Stone, 'Literacy and Education in England 1640-1900', in Past and Present, 42, 1969.

Mary Sturt, The Education of the People, 1967.

Gillian Sutherland, Policy-Making in Elementary Education 1870-1895, Oxford, 1973.

Gillian Sutherland, 'The Local History of Education: a Review of Some Recent Work', in Local Historian, 10, 1972.

R H Tawney, The Radical Tradition, Harmondsworth, 1964.

Barbara Taylor, Eve and the New Jerusalem, 1983.

H A Taylor, 'Politics in Famine - Stricken Preston: An Examination of Liberal Party Management, 1861-65', in Transactions of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire, Vol 107, 1955.

Trygve R Tholfsen, 'Moral Education in the Victorian Sunday School', in History of Education Quarterly, Vol 20, 1980.

Trygve Tholfsen, Working-class Radicalism in mid-Victorian England, 1976.

Keith Thomas, 'History and Anthropology', in Past and Present, 24, 1963.

Dorothy Thompson, 'Chartism, Success or Failure', in D Rubinstein (ed), People for the People, 1973.

Dorothy Thompson (ed), The Early Chartists, 1971.



- Dorothy Thompson, 'Women and Nineteenth-Century Radical Politics: A Lost Dimension', in Juliet Mitchell and Ann Oakley (eds), The Rights and Wrongs of Women, Harmondsworth, 1976.
- E P Thompson, 'Anthropology and the Discipline of Historical Context', in Midland History, Vol 1, No 3, 1972.
- E P Thompson, 'Folklore, Anthropology and Social History', in Indian Historical Review, Vol 3, No 2, 1977.
- E P Thompson, 'On History, Sociology and Historical Relevance', in British Journal of Sociology, 27, 1976.
- E P Thompson, 'The Long Revolution', parts 1 and 2, in New Left Review, 9 and 10, 1961.
- E P Thompson, The Making of the English Working Class, Harmondsworth, 1968.
- E P Thompson, 'The Peculiarities of the English', in R Miliband and J Saville (ed), The Socialist Register, 1965.
- E P Thompson, 'Testing Class Struggle', in Times Higher Education Supplement, March 8th, 1974.
- E P Thompson, 'Time, Work-Discipline and Industrial Capitalism', in Past and Present, No 38, 1967.
- Kenneth Thompson, Bureaucracy and Church Reform: the Organisational Response of the Church of England to Social Change 1800-1965, Oxford, 1970.
- J H Treble, 'The attitude of the Roman Catholic Church towards Trade Unionism in the North of England', in Northern History, V, 1970.
- J H Treble, 'O'Connor, O'Connell and the Attitudes of Irish Immigrants towards Chartism in the North of England 1838-48', in J Butt and I F Clarke (eds), The Victorians and Social Protest, Newton Abbot, 1973.
- J H Treble, 'The Reaction of Chartism in the North of England to the Factory Education Bill of 1843', in Journal of Educational Administration and History, Vol VI, No 2, 1974.
- Asher Tropp, The School Teachers: the growth of the teaching profession in England and Wales from 1800 to the present day, 1957.
- C M Turner, 'Political, Religious and Occupational Support in the Early Mechanics' Institutes', in The Vocational Aspect of Education, XX, 45, 1968.
- H A Turner, Trade Union Growth, Structure and Policy, A Comparative Study of the Cotton Unions, 1962.
- Victor Turner, The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure, New York, 1977.

Mabel Tylecote, The Mechanics' Institutes of Lancashire and Yorkshire before 1851, Manchester, 1957.

Victoria County History, Lancashire, Vol II, 1908.

Victoria County History, Lancashire, Vol VII, 1912.

David Vincent, Bread, Knowledge and Freedom: A Study of Nineteenth-Century Working Class Autobiography, 1981.

David Vincent (ed), Testaments of Radicalism: Memoirs of Working Class Politicians 1790-1885, 1977.

A P Wadsworth, 'Early Sunday Schools in Manchester', in M W Flinn and T C Smout (eds), Essays in Social History, Oxford, 1974.

A P Wadsworth and Julia de Lacy Mann, The Cotton Trade and Industrial Lancashire 1600-1780, Manchester, 1931.

Gertrude Ward, 'The Education of Factory Child Workers, 1833-1850: a study of the effects of the educational clauses in the Factory Act of 1833', in Economic History, February 1935.

J T Ward, Chartism, 1973.

J T Ward, 'The Factory Movement in Lancashire, 1830-1855', in Transactions of the Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society, Vols 75 and 76, 1965-66.

J T Ward, The Factory Movement 1830-1855, 1962.

J T Ward and J H Treble, 'Religion and Education in 1843: Reaction to the Factory Education Bill', in Journal of Ecclesiastical History, 20, 1969.

W R Ward, 'The Religion of the People and the Problem of Control, 1790-1830', in G J Cuming and D Baker (eds), Popular Belief and Practice, Cambridge, 1972.

David Wardle, Education and Society in Nineteenth-Century Nottingham, 1971.

David Wardle, The Rise of the Schooled Society, 1974.

Dennis Warwick and John Williams, 'History and the Sociology of Education', in British Journal of the Sociology of Education, Vol 1, No 3, 1980.

R K Webb, The British Working Class Reader, 1790-1848: Literacy and Social Tension, 1955.

H Weinroth, 'Foster's Class Struggle and the Industrial Revolution', in North West Group for the Study of Labour History Bulletin, 5, 1978.

E G West, Education and the Industrial Revolution, 1975.



E G West, 'Resource Allocation and Growth in Early Nineteenth Century British Education', in Economic History Review, xxii, 1970.

E G West, 'The Role of Education in Nineteenth-Century Doctrines of Political Economy', in British Journal of Educational Studies, XII, 1964.

Raymond Williams, Culture and Society 1780-1950, Harmondsworth, 1977.

Raymond Williams, The Long Revolution, Harmondsworth, 1975.

L S Wood and A Wilmore, The Romance of the Cotton Industry in England, Oxford, 1927.

E Yeo, 'Christianity in Chartist Struggle, 1838-1842', in Past and Present, 91, 1981.

Michael F D Young (ed), Knowledge and Control: New Directions for the Sociology of Education, 1971.

#### THESES AND DISSERTATIONS

Winifred Therese Baldwin, The Development of Elementary Education in Preston from 1814-1902, M Ed, Liverpool University, 1970.

Richard Paul Bradshaw, The Preston Lock-Out: A Case Study of a mid-Nineteenth Century Lancashire Cotton Strike and its Role in the Development of Trade Union Organisation Amongst the Textile Workers, MA, Lancaster University, 1972.

Craig Jackson Calhoun, Community, Class and Collective Action: Popular Protest in Industrialising England and the Theory of Working-class Radicalism, D Phil, Oxford University, 1980.

Malcolm McKinnon Dick, English Conservatives and Schools for the Poor c1780-1833, PhD, Leicester University, 1979.

Peter James Dixon, Urban Environment, Socio-Economic Condition and School Attendance in a Lancashire Borough, 1850-1876, M Ed, Liverpool University, 1977.

Simon W Frith, Education, Industrialisation and Social Change: The Development of Elementary Schooling in Nineteenth-Century Leeds, A Case Study in Historical Sociology, PhD, University of California, Berkeley, 1976.

D S Gadian, A Comparative Study of Popular Movements in North West Industrial Towns 1830-1850, PhD, Lancaster University, 1976.

Anne Lynn Gallagher, The Social Control of Working-Class Leisure in Preston, c1850-1875, MA, Lancaster University, 1975.

J M Goldstrom, The Changing Social Content of Elementary Education as reflected in School Books in use in England, 1800-1870, PhD, Birmingham University, 1963.



- A Granath, The Irish in Mid-Nineteenth Century Lancashire 1830-71, MA, Lancaster University, 1975.
- M Greenwood, Education and Politics in Leicester 1828-1850, M Ed, Leicester University, 1973.
- A F Hooper, Mid-Victorian Radicalism: Community and Class in Birmingham, 1850-1880, PhD, London University, 1978.
- Patrick Joyce, Popular Toryism in Lancashire 1860-90, D Phil, Oxford University, 1975.
- Neville Kirk, Class and Fragmentation: Some Aspects of Working-Class Life in South-East Lancashire and North-East Cheshire 1850-1870, PhD, University of Pittsburgh, 1974.
- W J Lowe, The Irish in Lancashire 1846-71, A Social History, PhD, Dublin University, 1974.
- William Phillip McCann, Trade Unionist, Co-operative and Socialist Organisations in Relation to Popular Education 1870-1902, PhD, Manchester University, 1960.
- Stephen H Mayor, The Relation Between Organised Religion and English Working-Class Movements 1850-1914, PhD, Manchester University, 1960.
- H N B Morgan, Social and Political Leadership in Preston, 1820-1860, M Litt, Lancaster University, 1980.
- F Musgrove, The Family as an Educational Institution 1760-1860, PhD, Nottingham University, 1958.
- Caroline Reid, Middle Class Values and Working Class Culture in Nineteenth Century Sheffield, PhD, Sheffield University, 1976.
- G T Rimmington, Education, Politics and Society in Leicester, 1833-1940, PhD, Nottingham University, 1975.
- M B Smith, The Growth and Development of Popular Entertainments and Pastimes in the Lancashire Cotton Towns, 1830-1870, M Litt, Lancaster University, 1970.
- Kenneth M Spencer, A Social and Economic Geography of Preston, 1800-1865, MA, Liverpool University, 1968.
- Arthur John Taylor, Concentration and Localisation of the British Cotton Industry 1825-1850, MA, Manchester University, 1947.
- F A Todd, The Condition of the Working Class in Preston 1790-1855, M Litt, Lancaster University, 1972.
- S W Urbanski, Parliamentary Politics, 1796-1832, in an Industrialising Borough: Preston, Lancashire, PhD, Emory University, 1976.
- Mildred E Young, (A Study in Public Administration) The Lancashire School Boards 1870-1902, PhD, Manchester University, 1977.