

Pressure Groups and Government Policy
on Education, 1800 - 1839

by

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ABBREVIATIONS

Add.Mss.	Additional Manuscripts Collection, British Museum Library
B.P.I.	Birmingham Philosophical Institution
B.F.S.S.	British and Foreign School Society
C.S.E.	Central Society of Education
C C.	Charity Commission
D.N.B.	Dictionary of National Biography
E.R.	Edinburgh Review
J.S. .L.	Journal of the Statistical Society of London
P.P.	Parliamentary Papers
Q.R.	Quarterly Review
. . .K.	Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge
. .L.	Univer ity College London, Brougham Collection
W.R.	We t in ter Review

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the roles of the principal groups and individuals, who, during the years 1800-1839, promoted the education of the poor and pressurised governments with the notion that the state ought to accept responsibility for the formation of a national system. Their motives were primarily religious, philanthropic or political with a degree of self-interest in the desire to preserve order in society.

The religious interests are examined mainly through the work of the British and Foreign School Society, which served the Dissenter traditions, and the National Society which defended the prerogative of the Established Church to superintend the education of the people. The utilitarians and Radicals were important for the practical expression of their philosophical and political ideas led them to make a considerable contribution to the provision of schools. They also had the inspiration and organising ability of James Mill and Francis Place.

The ideas of Robert Owen are considered because he was a pressure figure for a few years, but his work also sowed the seeds of Co-operation and working-class movements, which made an impact during the 1830's. As the population slowly improved in standard of learning, the development of Mechanics' Institutes, the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge and the foundation of University College are viewed as part of a strategy for the general promotion of adult education.

The dominant personality of Henry Brougham is evident in much of this study. He instituted the Charity Commissions in 1819, was spokesman

for education in Parliament for many years, and was a link between the different groups because of his involvement in so many.

During the 1830's the new science of statistics emerged and the Statistical Societies were important for their presentation of data on education. The existence of a National Board of Education in Ireland after 1831 placed the province ahead of England and the influences from this experiment, mediated to Parliament by Thomas Wyse and others, all helped to pressurise the governments of the day, whose policy had been to encourage voluntary effort and to avoid the imposition of central administrative control.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

The Industrial Revolution had caused significant changes to the fabric of life in England. The prospect of new forms of acquiring wealth had challenged the traditional agricultural base of society and placed new demands upon the workforces which were not necessarily beneficial to all sectors of the population. The growth of industrial centres required a re-distribution of the populace, which subsequently altered the demographic characteristics of some localities. In the pursuit of work among the new industries, people had drifted from the countryside towards manufacturing towns and cities such as Leeds, Manchester, Birmingham and parts of London. Instead of prospering, many found themselves in areas unequipped for an expanding population and the social effects of industrialism. There was no administration to deal with massive numbers in overcrowded town areas. The increasing population merely exacerbated existing problems of the destitute, crime, disorder and placed additional burdens upon a Poor Law System which, founded upon a parochial system, could not keep pace with the social maladies which arose.

Internal social pressures were not the only concern. By the end of the 18th Century, England was faced by the worry that the growing numbers of the labouring poor might succumb to the revolutionary influences emanating from the Continent. There was a genuine fear that massive discontent could lead the labouring classes to follow the French example and create an uprising which would overthrow the social order. Therefore, what was needed was control of the people's minds. It was necessary that they should be instilled with certain standards of conduct which would ensure the survival of the established order of society. The

struggling Poor Law System could not combat crime and unrest on its own and, therefore, some turned to education as a possible answer.

There was, however, no national system of education, nor any prospect of one at the turn of the century. In the stable hierarchy of society, with accessibility to power, wealth and privileged facilities dependent upon status, education, in the tradition of Public and Grammar Schools, was mainly the preserve of the upper classes, with some degree of access for the newer middle classes who rose upon the wealth of manufacture. For the remainder of the population, there existed little more than the rudimentary learning for the performance of a job. Such knowledge could be acquired from fathers or senior workmen. Beyond the child-minding quality of dame schools and token efforts based upon the parish church, there was considerable reluctance to provide broad education. This attitude was based upon rigid conservatism which feared that education might provide a man with skills or knowledge which could raise him above his station in society, thereby creating a further disruptive element to traditional mores. Education was not a clear-cut issue. It was treated as an inherited right for some and also as a special commodity, which could be purchased if desired, or if it could be afforded. With the prevailing economic philosophy of laissez-faire, people with power and in influential positions guarded their independence and were generally resentful of government interference. There was a reluctance to part with money without some return upon investment and men were unwilling to pay government levies of that rate was turned to help someone who was apparently not helping himself. People were expected to pay for services, including education. Many of the poorer classes were excluded, therefore, by financial circumstances as much as by lack of interest.

Nevertheless, some efforts had been made to improve the condition of the poor. Their predicament had been a long-term concern but the changes caused by industrialisation had intensified the problem. With the emphasis upon maintaining social order, it was appropriate that early initiatives had stemmed from the understanding that religious Principles, the traditional pillars of society, were absent from the lives of many of the poor and from the belief that a concerted effort to encourage a life-style which adhered to Christian principles would relieve the problems. As early as 1698, the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge had accepted the need to spread knowledge of Christian principles among the poor and had been promoting its work ever since. The 18th Century had seen some interest in the establishment of Charity Schools, yet, as the century had progressed, these institutions had proved less effective in making an impact upon the broader problems. The rise of Methodism brought religion anew to some industrial areas and with it the implied necessity of some educational attainment in order to accommodate reading of the Bible. Hence, in the 1780's there was a popular trend to set up Sunday Schools, which provided useful occupation of the labourer's one free day and did not interfere with the demands of manufacturers. This work was promoted by Robert Raikes and assisted by the establishment of the Society for the Foundation of Sunday Schools in 1785. The Gentleman's Magazine supported the movement with publicity, but, apart from the efforts of religious sects, Sunday Schools were the only educational endeavour to be adopted on any scale. Their basic purpose was to strengthen religious teaching and practice, thereby providing some restraint upon possible unruly social elements.

The Government made no attempt to participate. Similarly, the Established Church, content in her dominant influence over life in

general, showed no inclination to institute radically new developments. The Church's strong power-base in society sympathised, too, with those reluctant to change and, within government circles, expressed a strong preference for the status quo. Yet, within the first forty years of the 19th Century, the subject of education increased in prominence and significant steps were taken towards formalised schooling for the labouring classes. Attempts to acquire stability through legislation were generally defeated, but through the groundwork for these proposals and the constant agitation of educational spokesmen and their supporting groups, society and governments were kept aware of the demand for the provision of schools. Despite frequent rejections and deferments of the issue, education gradually became more accessible to the labouring classes, not through government initiative, but via the philanthropic ideals of groups of men who supported the notion of a national system of education.

The progress of the work and influence of these pressure groups will be traced in subsequent chapters but some consideration of their origins and necessity is essential to appreciate their roles in the framework of the time. While individual personalities could rise to public attention through the promotion of a cause, they were not necessarily ploughing a lone furrow. It simply fell to some to be the public spokesmen for groups who were united, if not as formal associations, by religious, political or philosophical allegiances. In these general terms, members of particular churches, though probably widespread in the country, would constitute a pressure group if the practical expression of their beliefs involved the promotion of certain good works, such as education. Within this category might fall Quakers, Unitarians¹ or other Dissenter groups. While physically the members might be separated

by geographical location, the work within one locality might be united with another by the working towards a similar aim, so that the individual parts, e.g. the founding of local schools, form the common policy, the promotion of education. Similarly, members of the Church of England must be identified as another group despite the size of membership, because, essentially the Established Church worked to maintain her traditional guardianship of the education of the people. The protection of these interests was paramount.

More limited groups might also be identified, even though inspired by Christian principles and general philanthropic motives. One example might have been the emergence of the Clapham Sect in the 1790's. Though not strictly a formal society, these worshippers, led by John Venn, were wealthy men, who perhaps appeased their consciences through social work. William Wilberforce was probably the most famous of this group.

In a more secular union, there were politicians who were united in their promotion of education as one section of their political views. These men were generally recognized as Radicals, as opposed to Whigs or Tories. Although they were probably numerous, it was the prominence of spokesmen such as Francis Place, John Roebuck and Thomas Wyse² which gave the Radicals an effective position in public life. Closely allied with the political image of Radicalism were the philosophically motivated Utilitarians, the followers of James Mill and Jeremy Bentham. Here there was considerable overlap and agreement of purpose and, therefore, for the purpose of this study, the Radicals and Utilitarians are grouped together.

While still considering political opportunism, occasionally there arose an individual who could voice the united interests of educationists and assume the role of figurehead of the education movement, through

whom the diverse groups hoped to achieve success. Probably the most notable would have been Henry Brougham,³ who was actively involved in the promotion of education for much of the period of this study.

In the provinces, it can be understood how there were natural groupings from religious allegiances. Despite distance from the political and administrative centre of London, Dissenters would be expected to uphold the same principles as those in the capital agitating for change. Similarly, members of the Established Church would uphold their rights within their locality. If the essence of Christian or Church community meant anything, there would have been a natural inclination towards some form of grouping. Therefore, it is understandable that people of the same religious persuasion would have come together for security or reassurance. Similarly, Radicals and Utilitarians, in whatever part of the country, would have sought the comfort of fellow sympathisers in order to exchange ideas and to further activities. There was strength in numbers and their impact would have been more influential for the size of the group.

If the transition into industrialisation had proved one thing to the successful manufacturers it was that personal initiative could achieve progress. In their localities, managers of factories would have been part of a small elite, who probably found themselves drawn together by common interests. Hence, intellectual groupings such as the Literary and Philosophical Societies would have provided stimulating diversions for lively minds. From such activities sprang other useful developments such as the Statistical Societies⁴ An exchange of ideas would have stimulated duplicate projects in different areas. The very use of the label "society" implied a joining together. Neither the Statistical Societies, nor any other, would have functioned and completed their tasks without collective effort.

In their experience of managing factories, manufacturers would have appreciated the need to establish some form of bureaucracy to enable the organisation to function, to communicate ideas or to raise finances, essential for any group to branch out and establish itself. Robert Owen⁵ proved how fragile could be the success of an individual who had not the support of a group behind him. Like Robert Owen, however, local manufacturers probably had a better appreciation of the problems of the labouring population than a distant Parliament. Therefore, humanitarian concern, coupled with economic sense, could have inspired an interest in the education of the poor. With the correct education, the labouring class could improve their ability as workers, problems of discontent, with work and society, could be alleviated and, inspired to fend for themselves, the educated poor could ease the strain upon the Poor Law Rate. Eventually the labouring classes were able to demonstrate their own sense of initiative, once they had been given the ideas and a start. The Working Men's Associations and Mechanics Institutes assisted the promotion of education from the 1820's.

In the meantime, with the Government usually unwilling to initiate, the onus of promoting a worthwhile cause fell upon other eminent personalities. This provided opportunity for local dignitaries to rise in the esteem of their communities. In the absence of Government involvement, any local groups could act like a substitute government body to whom the populace could appeal for assistance.

Philanthropic concern had already driven some to unite for the assistance of the weaker members of society. The Sunday School Society has already been mentioned, even though there was some religious self-interest involved. Sir Thomas Bernard's Society for Bettering the Condition of the Poor was intended to have some practical effect

upon the lives of the less fortunate. In an expanding humanitarian concern, this period was also characterised by the Anti-Slavery Movement, a cause which attracted William Wilberforce and others who also gave concern to the education of the poor. In attracting parliamentary support which crossed religious loyalties, the anti-slavery work exemplified the value of working as a group, for it drew upon the political pressure provided by Members of the House and also used the skills of literary colleagues to promote the cause in print.

The Times contained references to Soup Societies and an edition of 23rd January 1821 even reported the address of Henry Brougham to a meeting of the Educational Clothing Society. This was an example of how groups tried to attract as much assistance as possible, in particular well-known figures for the influence they could bring.

Over the next chapters, the measure of the influence of specifically educational pressure groups will be outlined. Their work was pursued behind a familiar pattern of events in the progress towards national education. Nevertheless, it is essential to review the main features of this history in order to present a contextual framework for the education groups.

The notion of a national system of education had circulated among political and liberal writings, generally foreign in origin. They are famous enough. La Chalotais, a French lawyer, had argued for the state control of education in his Essai d'education nationale.⁷ The French Encyclopaedia, 1751-65, had suggested removing Church control and substituting a state system of education. Helvetius, too, advocated national education. The Scot, Adam Smith, in The Wealth of Nations had also proposed some common level of education in the Three R's for everyone. Such total reform made no impression upon the English

Government, while Rousseauist theories only interested other experimenters. The educational influences from the Continent were probably less of a concern than the potential threats to the stability of the state at the time. The 1790's had experienced the warnings of Edmund Burke upon the dangers of the French Revolution with the counter argument of Tom Paine's The Rights of Man.

The country was largely pre-occupied with war around the turn of the Century but in an early piece of legislation in the 19th Century, there was some acknowledgement of the need for educational provision. It came as a clause in Robert Peel's Factory Act in 1802. His "Health and Morals of Apprentices Act" provided that every apprentice was to receive instruction in writing and arithmetic during the hours of work and on a Sunday in the principles of Christian religion. The Act was passed with so little discussion that the debate was not reported in Hansard or the Annual Register,⁸ but it did receive a brief mention in Woodfall's Parliamentary Register, which translated Peel's aim as "to promote the religious and moral education of children."⁹

As a minor element of legislation of other primary purpose, this was an ineffectual attempt to promote education. If anything, it showed the manufacturers' interest in improving the quality of the workforce, with a slight concession to public order, in its moral intentions. The Act was unsuccessful. The education provision was too limited and was not implemented, allegedly because the Act misjudged the relationship between a child and his employer, compared with that of an apprentice proper. As The Times later put it, the "operation of the Bill was suspended as expectations were not realised in suitability to masters and workmen."¹⁰ The subject was pressed again, buttressed by an application to Parliament by the cotton weavers but it disappeared into committee.

The first purely educational attempt at legislation stemmed from a re-examination of the Poor Law and was led by Samuel Whitbread, who had made several incursions into the legislature on poor relief. In 1796, a year before Sir Frederic Morton Eden's famous exposition of the state of the poor, Whitbread attempted to bring in a bill to regulate the wages of labourers. On the second reading, Mr. Pitt objected on the grounds that "it would be better to make a thorough revision of the Poor Laws, which he then pledged himself to do."¹¹ Whitbread abandoned his original strategy, took up the Prime Minister's promise and rebounded with a "Bill for the total reversion of the Poor Laws." It met considerable opposition and so, in 1800, Whitbread again reverted to an amendment of the wages of the poor. Together with Sir William Young and Messrs. Buxton, Lefevre and Ellison, Pitt again proved an obstacle, on the grounds that insufficient members were present and 'that it attempted to regulate by legislative provision what ought to be left to the influence and operation of other principles."¹²

After those early setbacks, Whitbread had to wait until 1807, when, on 23rd January, he abandoned his intention to produce a scheme for the revision of the Poor Law. Although the initial impression was that he would leave it until after Easter so that it would be carefully examined,¹³ nevertheless, it was on Thursday, 19th February, in a lengthy Commons speech, that he proposed the abrogation of the Poor Laws.¹⁴

"The object of the bill was to modify, to regulate, and in some instances to add to the existing statutes, as in process of time to render the poor laws obsolete. By the operations of his principles, he proposed to exalt the character of the labouring poor, and ultimately to make them ashamed of receiving relief. He proposed to make the burden lighter to the country; to make all relief a matter of degradation and to institute a discrimination between the criminal and the necessitous."¹⁵

Whitbread's primary aim was the "exaltation" of the labouring classes.

"It must be anticipated by the House, that in every plan which had such an object in view, education must form a principle feature."¹⁶

His disclosure to the House tried to convince the Members of the benefits to the stability of society. Drawing upon historical examples, he tried to prove that "in exact proportion as education decreased, vice and the necessity of the poor laws increased! He trusted he has said enough to induce the House to accede to a system of national education."¹⁷

Whitbread proposed the advancement of the dignity of the individual, but with national stability and economic considerations in mind. Even as he introduced his measure, he began to receive recommendations about the division of his bill. Mr. Rose advised against being too comprehensive and suggested he split his proposals into two or more bills.¹⁸ Mr. Spencer Stanhope demonstrated that there was sympathy for Mr. Whitbread's underlying principle even among the opposition. Another erstwhile opponent, Mr. Edward Morris, declared his original intention to obstruct the whole bill, "But if it were divided, he should not object to that part which provided for the education of the poor."¹⁹ Even The Times gave a favourable commentary.

'Should it only be partially adopted, it will do much towards removing the vexations and inconvenience inseparable from the system as it exists at the moment. The general principle of the measure appears to have so fully met the wishes of all sides of the House, that we trust, before the end of the Session, we shall have to Congratulate the Country on one of the greatest Legislative benefits that has been conferred upon it during the last Century."²⁰

By 13th April, Whitbread had announced the results of his deliberations and communications. He planned to divide his proposals into three bills:- (i) the poor's insurance fund; (ii) the equalization of county rates and the third would incorporate the rest.²¹ By Friday of the

same week, he had modified this further and was apparently confident enough to isolate education as a measure on its own. Now four bills were to cover (i) the education of the poor; (ii) the relaxation of laws of settlement, regulating vestries, exemption of cottages for poor rates, power of rewarding poor labourers and repeal of the Poor Law Statute, 9th of George 1st; (iii) parochial funds - building of cottages and (iv) the equalization of county rates.²²

On Thursday, 9th July 1807, Whitbread was able to move his bill to establish parochial schools. "The more he had considered the subject, the more he was convinced that the best boon they could confer upon the people was instruction, which was also the best security for the state."²³ Others had had more time to consider the implications, too, and at this stage Whitbread discovered that some of the goodwill had dissipated. Sir Samuel Romilly expressed his regret at the "different disposition,"²⁴ towards the measures. Arguments were set forth approving the principle again but fearing the expense. Postponement was preferred so that further examination could be made. Some feared the consequences of raising the intellectual ability of the labouring classes while Mr. Sturges Bourne also hedged over the implication of an element of "compulsion."²⁵ Despite Whitbread's assurances on the security of the state, opponents saw the complete opposite effect, the threat of the poor rising above their station and disturbing the balance of society. Mr. Sturges Bourne clearly expressed a typical apprehension at the prospect of government interference.

Messrs. Lushington, Dundas and Lord Milton stood with Whitbread, but even an enlightened man like William Wilberforce, whom Whitbread had supported in anti-slave trade debates, offered only moderate, uncertain support for this revision of the Poor Laws. The bill went

to committee on a vote of 47 for and 13 against. Eighteen petitions were received against the bill - none for. The sympathetic Romilly wrote in his diary that

"the question was carried, but the bill will certainly be lost. Many persons think that the bill requires further consideration and a more matured plan, but I am afraid a much greater proportion of the House think it expedient that the people should be kept in a state of ignorance."

The bill itself was probably lacking in refinement but the real reason for its failure in the Lords, was that education was not yet practical politics.²⁶ The conservatism of the "Establishment" in the Lords was a considerable barrier. The measures were subsequently abandoned on 29th July 1807.²⁷

Although Whitbread remained the main spokesman for education in the House of Commons until his death in 1815, no formal legislation was attempted again until 1820. It might have been that the prevailing prejudices against the diffusion of education among the mass of the population proved too strong, but even sympathisers could have been deterred from supporting Whitbread's bill by the prospect of state intervention.²⁸ This was very much a time which valued and relied upon independent endeavour. Education, too, had to depend upon the commitment of philanthropists and the willingness of people to help themselves. Whatever else Samuel Whitbread had achieved, he had stirred public attention and enlivened the interest of the Established Church, together with dissenter elements, who then channelled energy into the development and promotion of two societies,²⁹ which grew to dominate and divide the provision of education for decades to come. Both societies adopted the monitorial system of school organisation which had been developed by Dr. Andrew Bell (1797) in Madras and Joseph Lancaster (1798) in London.

This had started to attract attention around the turn of the century because of its cheapness and efficiency. It offered the re-investment of resources by enabling those taught to teach others.

Joseph Lancaster had not the business acumen to match the appeal of his projects. His work was only saved from financial distress by the intervention of Joseph Fox, a rich Baptist dentist, who paid his debts and persuaded William Allen, Joseph Forster and others of the "Saints" to become trustees.³⁰ After this rescue in 1807, Lancaster was able to continue touring and encouraging the adoption of his system. He tended to attract the support of Dissenters and this religious openness prevented others with more traditional loyalty from adding theirs. Despite a steady flow of donations, they fell short of requirements and William Allen found that work to maintain the subscriptions list "requires constant exertion to keep it up."³¹

The trustees turned for advice to Henry Brougham³² as an "old friend," in the autumn of 1810, and he suggested trying to form an organisation, or society to secure public support.³³ Brougham had been active in literary and scientific circles, and was brought to prominence in the public eye through his association with Sydney Smith, Francis Jeffrey and Francis Horner in setting up the Edinburgh Review, in 1802, and his subsequent contributions to the journal. He had also become acquainted with William Allen through mutual involvement in the cause for the abolition of the slave trade.³⁴

There followed two important meetings to take Brougham's suggested step. Brougham chaired the first, on 14th December 1810, at the Thatched House Tavern.³⁵ This was a preliminary meeting when those present undertook to serve as a committee. There was still work to be done to gather suitable resources. The actual meeting to formalise the organisation took place on 11th May 1811, this time at the Freemasons'

Tavern, London. The Royal Lancasterian Institute/Society was established and left William Allen in a good frame of mind.

"Very busy, went with Mill and Ricardo to the Borough Road, thence to the Freemasons' Tavern to the general meeting of Lancaster's subscribers, the Duke of Bedford in the chair; the Dukes of Kent and Sussex present, and a great number of Members of Parliament; a message of approbation from the Prince Regent. Lancaster read his report, and I read the committee's report; many resolutions were put and carried, and on the whole, abating a little for Lancaster himself, the business went off to admiration. A glorious day."³⁶

Among those passed the motion of Henry Brougham was clearly designed to project the work of the organisation into a more secure future with expansion in mind. He proposed -

"That in order to extend the benefits of the Royal British System of Education to all parts of the Empire, and to render it, in the largest sense, a national good, it is requisite that a considerable number of youth of both sexes, be trained in the practice of the Institution for the purpose of undertaking the charge of schools."³⁷

It seemed opportune that the Established Church should choose the same summer to formalise her own aspirations in education and to counter the influence of the Lancasterians. The Church adopted the Madras system of Dr. Bell as the model she would approve. Serious developments stemmed from a meeting of three laymen, two of whom were members of the S.P.C.K. - Joshua Watson, Henry Norris and John Bowles - together with Joshua's brother James, Christopher Wordsworth, Sir James Allen Park, Archdeacon Cambridge, the Earl of Shaftesbury, Mrs. Trimmer's son, James and Charles Abbot, Speaker of the House of Commons. The meeting was held at Joshua Watson's house and he was to become the first treasurer. He lived in Hackney and was a member of the "Hackney Phalanx" along with Norris, who became known as head of the high church party. All were heartily supported by Charles Manners-Sutton, the Archbishop of Canterbury.³⁸

The founding meeting which affirmed the purposes of the Society took place on 16th October, 1811 with the Archbishop of Canterbury as chairman. There was to be little doubt that this National Society was intended to live up to its title in its pursuits. It was determined

"that the National Religion should be made the foundation of National Education and should be the first and chief thing taught to the Poor according to the Liturgy and Catechism provided by our Church..."

"that every man has the right to pursue the plan of education that is best adapted to the religion which he himself possesses. Whatever religious tenets therefore men of other persuasions may think proper to combine with the mechanism of the new (monitorial) system... they are free to use the new system, so combined, without reproach or interruption from the members of the Establishment. On the other hand, the the members of the Establishment are not only warranted but in duty bound to preserve that system as originally practised at Madras in the form of a Church of England Education."³⁹

With its base in the Church of England and thus in one tradition of English society, the National Society was set on secure foundations which were to make its progress more assured than the Lancasterian party because of better finances. Lancaster's followers were not always confident in him. His erratic and independent behaviour was sometimes regarded as indiscreet and, while his personal qualities were not always favourable, neither did he do much to ease the financial struggle of the Royal Lancasterian Institution. In its first four years, the National Society gained £60,000, while the Royal Lancasterian Institution between 1809-1813, could only accumulate £9,000 in subscriptions.⁴⁰ With such an unequal struggle for finances, Lancaster's independent disposition with disregard for expenses, provoked moves to rectify the situation. The Dukes of Bedford, Kent and Sussex wanted to apply to Samuel Whitbread for assistance in arrangements to place the concern on a more independent footing. Whitbread was an old friend of

Lancaster.⁴¹ He had been recommended by the Duke of Kent to handle the violent Lancaster tempter, and accordingly, he attended a meeting at Joseph Fox's home, together with William Allen, Jackson and Corston. Whitbread seemed to "enter heartily into the business."⁴²

The committee wished Lancaster to confine himself to his private school at Tooting as his actions were bewildering all supporters.⁴³ For a time Francis Place,⁴⁴ a Radical and a supporter, tried to arbitrate between Lancaster and his trustees,⁴⁵ but within a month the link was severed and Lancaster was bankrupt.⁴⁶ At a meeting on 10th November, 1813, revisions of a new plan, involving a complete break with the Lancaster name, were shaped in the suggestion for the constitution of "The Institution for Promoting the British System for the Education of the Labouring and Manufacturing Classes of Society of every Religious Persuasion."⁴⁷

The society finalized its transformation and refined its name by the summer of 1814. The Lancasterians met at the Freemasons' Tavern on 21st May, 1814 and decided to continue to provide their form of education to the poor, but, to emphasize their vision of the universal application of their purpose, in the re-constitution of a new and independent society, any actual reference to the poor was omitted. It fell to Samuel Whitbread to propose the title of the new society, The British and Foreign School Society, and, in so doing, he linked the objectives with the existing British and Foreign Bible Society.

"The object of this institution was not merely to give instruction to any particular sect or class within this country, nor even limited to the population of this empire, but aimed at the general diffusion of the light of knowledge all over the world."⁴⁸

The British and Foreign School Society now formed the alternative body to the National Society and both continued as the main agencies

through which schools were established in this country. There was no Government equivalent and so education was established as separate, private, self-financing systems relying upon subscriptions and school fees. The religious background of the societies ensured that they remained independent of each other. The insistence of the National Society that it could not accommodate other than members of the Church of England turned others to the British and Foreign Society. This segregation provided occasions of conflict as each vied for support and possibly robbed the education lobby of some of its strength.

While the work of the societies expanded, the National Society always financially stronger, it soon became apparent that this independent initiative could not provide all the country's needs. Despite their self-proclaimed success, the two societies could not constitute a national system of education. Political measures were required and the person who assumed the mantle of leadership after Whitbread was Henry Brougham. After entering Parliament, then losing his seat and being courted by the Radicals, Brougham returned to the House in 1816 to focus attention upon the poor again through the medium of education. The immediate post-war period was struck by unrest and this may have spurred politicians to investigate the problem of control of the poor. While education might have provided a timely vehicle for establishing Brougham's Parliamentary career, the state of the nation might have made others more receptive to his overtures. When, on 21st May, 1816, he introduced his motion for a committee to inquire into the education of the lower orders in London, Brougham was confident of a favourable response, as The Times reported from the House. "He should not dwell on details, as he understood there would be no opposition to his motion."⁴⁹

He had prepared his ground well and his participation in the work of the British and Foreign School Society probably helped Brougham to produce figures which illustrated the gap between educational provision and full efficiency. In London alone between 83,000 and 90,000 children were declared still uneducated. Areas of the capital were broken down into detail.

"A particular examination had been made, and in a district containing 5,000 houses it was found that 3,380 received education and 4,465 were totally without the means of getting it. It was a remarkable circumstance, that among the poorest people all of them showed great anxiety to procure education for their children. In the schools in St. Giles's there were only 110 children... The benevolent voluntary contributions had been greatly deficient in accomplishing their objectives, though individuals had exerted themselves to the utmost... The British and Foreign School Society had five schools for boys and three for girls, and taught, and were capable of teaching 3,000, but they had only 2,000."⁵⁰

While giving credit to the work of the societies, Brougham demonstrated that schools were not functioning to capacity. The House agreed to a committee to inquire into the state of education in the Metropolis and decreed that it should report from time to time. Brougham headed the committee which included other notable figures; Samuel Romilly, Mr. Bennett, Sir James Mackintosh, Sir Francis Burdett, Lord Ossulston, Sir H. Parnell, Mr. Horner, Mr. Holford, Sir T. Acland plus several others.⁵¹ Romilly, Mackintosh, Burdett and Horner were familiar supporters of reform. Bennett was a congregational minister and one of the secretaries of the London Missionary Society. Sir Thomas Dyke Acland was a philanthropist and, with Parnell, a supporter of Catholic emancipation.⁵²

In obtaining this Committee, Brougham had succeeded, in an indirect manner, in persuading the government to grant some money towards education, if only in the form of an inquiry. After their individual commission

was completed, the committee extended their influence to "all sects and all descriptions in the lower orders."⁵³ The committee was then allowed to examine other areas of the country but, while a comprehensive inquiry seemed acceptable, when Brougham began to overstep his brief and investigate the affairs of endowed schools and their finances, he raised the opposition of traditionalists. Even so, when his committee were concluding their reports, despite having trodden upon privileged sectors, Brougham succeeded in securing a motion to examine more fully the condition of charitable endowments and their possible abuses.⁵⁴

When the anticipated Bill finally appeared in consequence of the inquiries, Brougham hoped that he had uncovered a source of dormant revenue, which would preclude any vast government expenditure. On 22nd June, 1820, he presented a Bill which outlined a scheme for a national system of education. According to the terms, the Government was to establish schools in any parish or chapelry, in which complaints that there were "none" or "no sufficient schools" could be verified by Justices of the Peace. A local school rate would help to support the school⁵⁵ but the Government would only be filling gaps which the major societies had been unable to fill.

Unfortunately, Brougham had to withdraw the Bill because he could not reconcile the differences between vested interests, namely, the Church and Dissenter groups. Without their support the Bill would not have succeeded. After this there ensued another barren period in terms of attempts to achieve a legalised system of education. The Church societies were left to continue their hold on developments, while attention was distracted by expansion in adult education.⁵⁶ Brougham, too, found himself involved in the growth and promotion of Mechanics' Institutes, the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge,⁵⁷ and University College, London.

When Grey's government came to power in 1830, Brougham was given the post of Lord Chancellor. With this elevation, he seemed to relinquish his position of leader of the movement for a national system of education, which, nevertheless, experienced a resurgence during the 1830's.

The passing of the Reform Bill in 1832 superseded other interests for a time and stimulated a feeling of expectation that Grey's administration would produce further liberal measures. The Reform Bill was also partly instrumental in providing the next political spokesman for education. John Arthur Roebuck⁵⁸ had been active in the proceedings which had attended the passing of the Bill and this had made him known to influential figures, in particular Joseph Hume. Hume was subsequently responsible for the selection of Roebuck as Parliamentary representative for the city of Bath, after the passing of the Reform Bill.⁵⁹ Of Radical persuasion, Roebuck gave notice, early in the session, of a motion for a Select Committee to devise a means for the universal and national education of the whole people. This did not come to fruition immediately but on 30th July, 1833, he revived the motion in the House. Taking his inspiration from model systems in Prussia and France, in his preamble he was

"disposed to think that to render any system of education national and general, it must be compulsory. He would propose that Parliament should pass a law to make it an offence to keep from school children between -- years and -- years (leaving the age to be determined by the House)"⁶⁰

Then he came to the main line of his proposal,

"That this house will early in the next session consider the means of establishing a system of national education."⁶¹

This immediately raised apprehension about the dangers of government interference in education, though Members expressed agreement with the

underlying principle. Specific elements such as compulsion, were disliked, however. Mr. O'Connell gave weighty persuasion for the motion to be withdrawn, "until the subject should come before the House by the report of a committee."⁶² Roebuck had not pressed for the immediate application of a government system and, perhaps content with expressions of official approval, for the time being he bowed to the pressure and withdrew his motion.

Therefore, it was rather surprising that on 16th August, at a very late hour in the sitting, among other motions of the Commissioners of Public Charities, Lord Althorp moved a government proposal "that £20,000 should be granted for the present year to afford assistance towards the erection of school houses in different parts of the country."⁶³ Joseph Hume appeared to be the most vociferous opponent of this idea, not that he was against the principle of education but the piecemeal nature of the proposal. He thought that the government should have genuinely brought forward a general system. "If it was meant that a system of national education should be established, this sum was too small, and without such a system no grant ought to be made."⁶⁴ The grant, however, was favoured in the voting, 50 for with 20 against.

It was intended that the grant would only be used where voluntary support proved inadequate and claims for assistance would only be accepted through the auspices of the National Society and British and Foreign School Society. The money was welcomed in varying degrees but it certainly boosted the foundation of schools as the two societies received more applications than they could accede to with the amount available. By taking this measure, before any committee could examine the state of affairs, the government might have hoped to avert any pressure to force its hand.

Roebuck was unrelenting. Not deterred by the £20,000 grant, he returned to the subject of his original motion and again "moved for a select committee to inquire into the means of establishing a system of national education." After an alteration in its terms, made at the behest of Lord Althorp, the proposal was accepted.⁶⁵ Hence the formal terms of reference on 3rd June, 1834, were

"That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the present state of Education of the People in England and Wales, and into the application and effects of the Grant made in the last session of Parliament for the erection of School-houses and to consider the expediency of further Grants in aid of Education, and to report their Observations thereupon to the House."⁶⁶

Representatives from both major societies, plus individual officials of schools were examined. While most opinions approved of the grant and offered further recommendations for government aid, the final witness, the Lord Chancellor, Henry Brougham, argued against government interference and so nothing resulted from the Select Committee. Nevertheless, Roebuck asked for the Select Committee to be renewed in 1835. The Government, obviously content to divert pressure into committee, once more agreed.

This Select Committee used the contemporary interest in statistics⁶⁷ to accumulate and present information. Though there were further calls for a national system of education, again the Select Committee did not see the need to conclude their work with a piece of legislation. "Unable to express their opinion to the House" the Committee contented themselves with laying the evidence before the Commons "with the hope that the House will, early in the next session, direct the further prosecution of the inquiry upon a subject of such national importance."⁶⁸

Roebuck also discovered that educational provision could not be introduced by an indirect route. He took an interest in the Municipal Corporations Reform Bill, which raised the hope that local forms of

government could become more influential and assume control of local education. Although it passed through the House of Commons, the Bill was mauled by the Lords.

Yet another Select Committee on the Education of the Poorer Classes in England and Wales was granted in 1838. The evidence of statistical societies and more directly educational groups, such as the Central Society of Education,⁶⁹ continued to present the need for more school provision and the Committee had to acknowledge the poor state of affairs reported by some witnesses. The Committee approved of the increased expenditure of the two Societies, assisted by the government grant, but by some mathematical calculation they also reached a general conclusion that it would be unnecessary to provide daily school education for more than one eighth of the population of any large town, taking into account those of the working classes who would not attend and the rich and middle classes, who would exclude themselves. Only a few hours a day, either in the morning or afternoon, was deemed adequate, otherwise numbers would be deterred.

Once more, this Select Committee offered no legislative action, only four resolutions:

- 1) That in the Metropolis and the great Towns of England and Wales, there exists a great want of Education among the Children of the Working Classes.
- 2) That it is desirable that there should be means of suitable daily Education (within the reach of the Working Classes) for a proportion of not less than about one-eighth of the population.
- 3) That the amount of assistance afforded by Government should be regulated as heretofore, subject to modification of their rules in cases where the poverty of the district was proved to require it, the special ground being reported in each case.
- 4) That under existing circumstances, and under the difficulties which beset the question, Your Committee are not prepared to propose any means for meeting the deficiency beyond the continuance and extension of the

"grants which are at present made by the Treasury for the promotion of Education, through the medium of the National and the British and Foreign School Societies."⁷⁰

The second resolution acknowledged the need for some system of education but the others seemed to negate any hopes of genuine government action. Since the government grant of 1833, there had been three Select Committees of Inquiry and mounting pressure for the government to take responsibility. Although the government appeared to have ignored suggestions, the cumulative effect of agitation through Parliament, the work of new pressure groups, like the Central Society of Education, and the influence of the Irish experience,⁷¹ eventually caused a change of heart. The step to institute the Committee of Council in 1839 is another aspect of the story beyond the scope of this study, but that essential institution of a central body of superintendence would not have been taken without the efforts of the groups who, although they tried to encourage the foundation of schools, persisted in pointing to the inadequacies of a system based on voluntary effort alone.

Notes to Chapter One

1. See Ch.2, Religious Groups, p.29.
2. See Ch.3, The Utilitarians and The Radicals, p.70.
and Ch.10, Ireland, p.278.
3. See Ch.6, Henry Brougham, p.158.
4. See Ch.9, The Statistical Societies, p.242.
5. See Ch.4, Robert Owen, p.109.
6. See Ch.5, Co-operation and Working-Class Movements, p.137.
and Ch.8, Adult Education, p.214.
7. Thomas L. Jarman, Landmarks in the History of Education, p.209.
8. R.V. Holt, The Unitarian Contribution to Social Progress in England, p.254.
9. The Parliamentary Register, 1801-1802, Vol.III, p.411.
10. The Times, 14th February, 1802, 2a.
11. The Times, 12th February, 1800, 2c.
12. *ibid.*
13. The Times, 24th January, 1807.
14. The Parliamentary Register, 1806-1807, Vol.II, P.99.
15. *ibid*, p.104.
16. *ibid.*
17. *ibid*, p.106.
18. *ibid*, pp.114-115.
19. *ibid*, p.140.
20. The Times, 26th February, 1807.
21. The Parliamentary Register, 1807, Vol.II, pp.592-593.
22. *ibid*, pp.667-668.
23. The Parliamentary Register, 1807, Vol.I, p.241.
24. *ibid*, p.297.
25. *ibid*, p.368.

26. John Cosgrove, "The Educational Aims of Sir Thomas Wyse", p.378.
27. D.N.B., Vol.61, p.26.
28. H.J. Burgess, Enterprise in Education, p.16.
29. See Ch.2, Religious Groups, p.29.
30. Graham Wallas, The Life of Francis Place 1771-1854, p.94.
31. William Allen, The Life of William Allen, Vol.I, p.120, 3rd March, 1801.
32. See Ch.2, Religious Groups, p.36-37. and Ch.6, Henry Brougham, p.158.
33. C.W. New, The Life of Henry Brougham to 1830, pp.230-204.
34. *ibid*, p.203.
35. *ibid*, p.204.
36. William Allen, Life, Vol.I, p.132.
37. Edinburgh Review, Vol.XIX, No.XXXVII, November, 1811-February, 1812, p.16.
38. H.J. Burgess, *op.cit.*, pp.21-22, and DNB., Vol.41, Henry Norris, Vol.60, Joshua Watson.
39. *ibid*, p.23.
40. H.B. Binns, A Century of Education, p.81.
41. *ibid*, pp.61-62.
42. William Allen, Life, Vol.1, p.168.
43. H.B. Binns, *op.cit.*, p.63.
44. See Ch.3, Utilitarians and Radicals, p.73ff.
45. G. Wallas, *op.cit.*, p.95.
46. H.B. Binns, *op.cit.*, p.63.
47. *ibid*, p.64.
48. The Times, 23rd May, 1814, 3e.
49. The Times, 22nd May, 1816, 2b.
50. *ibid*.

51. *ibid.*
52. D.N.B., Vol.I, Sir Thomas Dyke Acland, Vol.4, James Bennett, Vol.43, Sir H. Parnell.
53. The Times, 22nd May, 1816, 2b.
54. See Ch.6, Henry Brougham, p.165f, and Ch.7, p 194.
55. C.W. New, *op.cit.*, p.328.
56. See. Ch.8, Adult Education, p.214.
57. See Ch.6, Henry Brougham, p.173 and Ch.8, p ,222 also criticism in Ch.3, p. 184ff.
58. See Ch.3, Utilitarians and Radicals, p.89ff.
59. J.A. Roebuck, Life and Letters, ed. R.E. Leader, p.30.
60. The Times, 31st July, 1833.
61. *ibid.*
62. *ibid.*
63. The Times, 17th August, 1833, 4d.
64. The Times, 19th August, 1833, 1e.
65. J.A. Roebuck, *op.cit.*, p.62.
66. PP., 1834, (512), IX, p.1, Report of Select Committee on Education.
67. See Ch.9, Statistical Societies, p. 242.
68. PP., 1835, VII, 763, p.iii.
69. See Ch.3, p.97, Ch.9, p.268, ff, Ch.10, Ireland, p. 303.
70. PP., 1837/38, VII, 157, Report of Select Committee pp.X-XI.
71. See Ch.10, Ireland, p.278.

CHAPTER 2

Religious Groups

Among the most numerous supporters of the dissemination of education were men who acted from religious conviction. The education of the masses was a project which seemed to find accord among the different religious traditions in the country and eventually helped to unite them in this work. Their primary motive was to reduce the worrying problem of crime and disorder by promulgating religious standards through schools.

Members of the Unitarian Church had a tradition of performing humanitarian tasks and displaying endeavour for social improvement. Their social philosophy has been equated with that of both John Locke and Jeremy Bentham,¹ which helps to explain why Unitarians found it easy to work alongside Utilitarians,² when their efforts were combined in the British and Foreign School Society. Following Locke's notion of 'enlightened self-interest', the Unitarians held to a practical aspect of religious practice. They performed good works because they were deemed useful and would, in turn bring benefit to themselves. Add to this Bentham's principle of the greatest happiness of the greatest number and the work of the Unitarians fitted in with those who sought to protect the stability of society. By improving the quality of life for the discontented, they would prevent the disruption of the life style of the rest. Like most religious groups, they felt that if the poor understood religious teachings, they would pose less of a threat to the social order.

Although they were relatively few in number, Unitarians nevertheless had the wealth and advantage to be prominent in society. In the campaign to abolish slavery, Wilberforce received the Unitarian support

of Clarkson, Granville Sharp and W. Smith, M.P., regarded as second in command to Wilberforce in Parliament.³ In Manchester, one Thomas Barnes (1747-1810) a Unitarian Divine, had established himself as an educational reformer and distinguished himself in the foundation of the College of Arts and Sciences. He became Principal of the Manchester College from 1784 to 1798.⁴ On a less grand scale Unitarians were also quick to adapt to the idea of Sunday Schools, which, in their hands, were often precursors of day schools. This was so at Hyde, Dukinfield, Dob Lane - Bristol, Monton, Chowbert, Hope St. - Liverpool, and Chorley.⁵ Birmingham even saw a Teachers' Sunday School, founded in 1796 and teachers also benefited from a Brotherly Society, formed in 1798, which brought about the eventual Mechanics Institute in that city.⁶

The Unitarians were proven men of initiative and organisation. Furthermore, their eminent positions in local society gave them the opportunities to influence developments but there was evidence of extension into national concerns. Unitarians were among the leading members of the Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society, which conducted a campaign against the evils of child labour and thereby claimed to have been instrumental in the production of the education elements of Robert Peel's Factory Act of 1802.⁷ A few years later, when Samuel Whitbread tried to introduce educational legislation via a revision of the Poor Law,⁸ Unitarian opinion was to the fore again. During 1807, the Unitarians' periodical The Monthly Reformer, urged that the Poor Laws were so bad that the best thing to do was to repeal them.⁹ It is debatable to what extent Unitarian opinion directly influenced the Whitbread manoeuvre but it would have seemed unusual if he were acting without the confidence of substantial public and political sympathy.

After this, with the rise of the two major education societies, the Unitarians showed their willingness to combine with others to promote education for the greater good and influence of one of these societies. They became members of the British and Foreign School Society, attracted by its undenominational character. Through the British Society, developments sprang up in Exeter, inspired by Lant Carpenter, with others in Manchester, Bristol and, thanks to the Rev. John Montgomery, Chester as well.¹⁰ Although the Unitarians continued to be involved in the promotion of education, their efforts were generally under the broad umbrella of the British Society.

When the topic of national education was revived as a concern for government in the 1830's, there appeared once more, the characteristic Unitarian promotion of the subject. Before Roebuck instigated the matter of a government grant in Parliament, the House felt the weight of mounting public pressure for some government measure on education. On 15th February 1833, five months ahead of Roebuck's motion, petitions were presented to the Commons calling for national education. Richard Potter presented one from Salford Unitarians, who even declared a willingness to pay an education tax if necessary. William Ewart presented a similar one from a Liverpool contingent on 18th February. Later, on 13th May, Henry Brougham presented a batch of petitions including another from the 'Salford Unitarians'.¹¹ Again, the Unitarians had demonstrated their readiness to express support for something which they perceived as being for the good of society. In pressing for national education, they clearly illustrated the absence of mere local interest.

The 1830's seemed to be a particularly active period for Unitarian concern about education. Apart from the petitioning, there was much practical effort involved. In the same year as the education grant, 1833,

John Fielden, M.P., made a notable Unitarian contribution by supporting in Parliament the proposed Factory Act, which, as in 1802, included some provisions for education. Meanwhile, in the North of England, Unitarians were prominent in the formation of the Manchester Statistical Society,¹² which played a very important role in collecting information on the contemporary state of education. Their work was not specifically aimed at education, but at highlighting other social conditions, too. Education, however, proved one of their most valuable areas of research and the Statistical Society, of course, provided their analyses to the Select Committees of the mid-1830's to assist with the national compilation of the state of schools and their provision.

As the Roman Catholic, Thomas Wyse also joined the work of promoting national education, Unitarians were in evidence with their support once more. For example, in Liverpool, at a meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, Wyse headed the formation of an Education Committee, members of which were prominent Unitarians, such as Dr. Lant Carpenter and William Rathbone.¹³ Unitarians had demonstrated a willingness to support education, sometimes independently, through their own positions of local power as at Manchester, or within the framework of other organisations or committees which suited their ideals such as the B.F.S.S.

That the Society of Friends, or Quakers, were involved in education was not surprising. Practical works of philanthropy were also expressions of their religious principles. They were not merely pacifists, but tolerant of other denominations and had a serious devotion to humanitarian work. Although, like the Unitarians, they seemed to aspire to positions of wealth and influence, as manufacturers, they would be expected to show kindly responsibility towards their less-fortunate workers. Therefore, they could easily view education as a means of improving the ability of

the labourers to cope for themselves as well as the more widespread effect of stabilising society.

The work of Joseph Lancaster provided the Quakers with a focus for their interest in the promotion of education. A Quaker himself, Lancaster was one of the most prominent figures in the educational developments of the period. His "British" adaptation of the monitorial system appealed to men of various creeds, or even none as a cheap and efficient means of establishing schools. Lancaster acted independently, at first, to promote his plan for teaching and the administration of schools. He was prolific in his endeavours but sometimes injudicious in their expansion. Only when his affairs brought financial strains did supporters realise that his work was too valuable to lose and take measures to provide organisational strength behind him. Initially, the progression towards a formal society and the attraction of additional Quaker support was almost incidental.

Lancaster had failed to appreciate the practical problem of rising costs. Originally, he had induced people to believe it was possible to cover England with schools at a cost of 5/- per head.¹⁴ His institution soon receded into debt as "it had been founded upon a quite inadequate public support."¹⁵ A sum of £600 in 1804 diminished rapidly in significance as by 1806 he required at least £1500 a year.¹⁶ His continued extravagance and indiscretions aggravated matters, so that by 1807 he owed £4000 and was close to arrest. It was at this point that he was rescued by Joseph Fox, the Baptist dentist, and the Quakers William Allen and Joseph Forster¹⁷ and the formation of a committee of trustees.

The arrangement suited Lancaster, who, as a figurehead, toured the country to lecture on his system and to try to attract further public support. He wrote confidently in 1810 -

"Into the hands of a few friends now constituted my trustees, I have committed my financial concerns for the last three years; and during that time they have conducted all my affairs with the greatest good to the poor, by enabling me to spread the knowledge and practice of the plan in the country. By superintending my financial concerns, public and private, in my absence, with liberal sacrifices, of time and attention, as well as advances of money, everything is now brought to the state of maturity, which will lead to the hope of public support to a more extensive progress... I trust that a generous and enlightened British public will grant them that co-operative assistance, which the benefits of a national education, and their disinterested philanthropy, so really merit."¹⁸

The acquisition of William Allen to the cause was a considerable prize for the many business and political contacts which he could use to encourage support. Furthermore, he was to provide some 30 years of service as treasurer to committees which fostered the Lancasterian system of education. Like the Unitarians, Allen and his colleagues had a history of interest in educational ideas and general philanthropy. He had previously been associated with Joseph Fox in scientific work. In 1796, together with Allen's partner Luke Howard and others, they founded the Askesian Society for scientific study and then, in 1798, joined the committee of the Society for Bettering the Condition of the Poor.¹⁹ Allen was also a keen advocate for the abolition of the slave trade and this subject occupied part of his time even as he was becoming involved in education.

Some of his colleagues who formed the committee of trustees, for instance Henry Thornton, the philanthropist and banker, were sceptical about the reimbursement of their money invested in Lancaster.²⁰ William Allen, too, harboured misgivings about the personal qualities of Joseph Lancaster but was prepared to waive them for the sake of the foreseeable benefits in his plans.

Allen wrote to T.W. Smith -

"... although I thought I had observed in his conduct some things which I could have wished otherwise, yet upon a closer inspection, I am so fully convinced that his great outline is correct, and his intentions were always honest and honourable, that it has excited in me no common degree of interest in the subject."²¹

Notable figures lent their support to the Lancasterian system. Two at the head were the Duke of Bedford and Lord Somerville. It was supposed to have been Somerville who had drawn the attention of George III to the concern and royal patronage was of valuable assistance in the struggle for subscriptions. Meanwhile, Allen continued his policy of the personal approach. For 27th March, 1809, he recorded a visit from the Member for Norwich, W. Smith, who was a Unitarian. "I showed him the minute books, with which he seemed much pleased and promised to assist in getting subscriptions."²²

With the trustees working in the background, Lancaster produced another publication advertising his plan, "The British System of Education, 1810." Its tone was in one sense optimistic in cataloguing his success yet unavoidably sycophantic in its implied appeal for money and support. Lancaster addressed the introduction to two of his leading patrons, the Duke of Bedford and Lord Somerville but mainly promoted his personal sacrifice to his work.²³ He was convinced, however, that he had discovered the most successful formula for promoting his designs. He had found nothing better than public lectures.²⁴

In addition to the foundation of schools, Lancaster also noted the benefits of providing services to augment the work of basic education. A circulating library was advocated. Parallel to the monitorial system, this carried the merit of economy, the ability to reach hundreds of scholars without incurring additional expense. Experience had already demonstrated to Lancaster that the benefits of the library could extend

further than the scholar who borrowed a book, if the book was read by adult relatives in the home. In this manner, Lancaster presaged the diversion into adult education which gained momentum in the 1820's.

With regard to the administration and management of individual schools, Lancaster proposed that all subscribers of one guinea a year, or of ten guineas in one donation, would be entitled to have two children in continual attendance at the school. A higher number would be permitted in similar proportion for any larger sum. These subscribers would also be governors of the branch of the society responsible for the school, with eligibility to be members of the committee, to vote and to be present at general meetings.²⁶ This system bore some resemblance to the organisation of Dissenter churches. The Methodists and most Dissenters operated a system by which committees were elected to administer the chapels or churches. The officials, or elders, came from the local community and so the chapels were managed by the locality. A similar practice would now apply to schools.

Subscription lists were usually published, to display the benevolence of local personalities and entice others into active involvement. Whether individuals actually participated in committee meetings or simply subscribed to the finances of a school, by being connected with the establishment, men could gain prestige in the community. In return for some investment in the enterprise there was the offer of a minor power base in the locality.

Despite a steady flow of donations, however, funds struggled to meet expenditure, which was the reason for the Lancasterians' search for some more advice, in particular from Henry Brougham.²⁷ In 1810, Brougham, a recent entrant to Parliament, had at his disposal the Edinburgh Review, which he had helped to establish and which had given

public support to Lancaster's system of education. At the time, he was already collaborating with William Allen on another prospective journal, The Philanthropist. In a rough draft of his contribution, Allen elucidated the aims of the new publication.

"The sole object of the present work is to stimulate to virtue and active benevolence by pointing out to those who have the disposition and the power, the means of gratifying the best feelings of the heart, and to show that all, even the poorest, may render material assistance in ameliorating the condition of man."²⁸

The journal would not appear until 1811, but it was to provide an additional outlet for the opinions of supporters of the Lancaster system in the constant "propaganda war" for public attention. James Mill,²⁹ whom Brougham knew from his contributions to the Edinburgh Review, was to add his influential theories to the new journal and to take an active part in the support of education for the poor.

As the organisation began to take shape behind Joseph Lancaster's ideas, the man himself began to decline in prestige among his supporters. They grew intolerant of his strain upon the funds and his errant independence. When Brougham chaired the meeting in December 1810 at the Thatched House Tavern,³⁰ to regenerate the work of the trustees, significantly, Lancaster was absent in the Midlands at the time.³¹ Not unexpectedly, he felt bitter about the meeting taking place without him,³² but events were inevitably moving away from the individual towards the formation of a more public society,³³ which was essential if increased support was to be attracted.

William Allen was active soon after the meeting, employing the method of personal contact to persuade. In January, 1811, he took Lancaster's books to Fox and then to William Wilberforce. On 19th January, he had a successful day when he took the same information to

Sir Samuel Romilly and elicited from him an agreement to be on the committee. Wilberforce, however, declined to play an active part³⁴ but, as events were to prove, his support remained and his name did appear among the members of the committee. Allen was supposed to have influenced the participation of the Dukes of Kent and Sussex, either by friendly persuasion or appeal to a sense of obligation. Kent was allegedly indebted to Allen for extricating him from heavy personal debts.³⁵ Several parliamentarians were also drawn into the fold, probably through Brougham but possibly through Romilly and Wilberforce, too, which gave the promise of support in the Houses of Parliament.

When the Royal Lancasterian Institution was formally constituted in 1811,³⁶ Quakers were well represented in the official positions. Fox was to serve as Secretary and Allen as Treasurer. Brougham and Allen brought in a number of men who had been active on behalf of the slaves; Wilberforce (perhaps after a change of mind), Clarkson, Lord Lansdowne, Horner, Romilly, Thornton and William Smith among them. More than half the committee members were, in fact, personal friends of Brougham, and a good majority Anglicans.³⁷ That there should be support from numbers of the Established Church, demonstrated the liberal attitude of some. The Evangelicals, in particular, were prepared to support any system which spread Christian principles among the people.³⁸

To balance against the Lancasterian Dissenter tradition, the Church of England had her own leader in Dr. Andrew Bell, who also propounded a version of the monitorial system. The National Church was very firmly rooted in the government of the country, bound to the Constitution and strongly represented in Parliament, therefore with very powerful influence. The Church was securely in control of the traditional religious principles of the nation, with the responsibility for providing religious instruction

for those who were too poor to pay for it themselves. An established Church was regarded as a means of preserving the continuity of religious teaching, the spreading of morals and standards to the population.³⁹

To some extent, the Church had executed this responsibility through the S.P.C.K., which in turn had sponsored the development of charity schools during the 18th Century. These schools had been supported by donation, the traditional appeal to voluntary initiative. The Church had been liberal in permitting the growth of various religious traditions, some actually within the body of the National Church, e.g. the Evangelicals, while the Methodists eventually broke away. Nevertheless, there was a very conservative High Church element which proved rigid in the guardianship of Church prerogatives, including the domain of education.

Between 1802 and 1806, Sarah Trimmer had issued a magazine, The Guardian of Education which denounced the unsectarian character of Lancaster's system. She regarded it as serious trespass upon the educational preserve of the Established Church and urged Dr. Bell to rouse up and assert his scheme.⁴⁰

Although there were establishment figures who demonstrated concern such as Thomas Bernard and the Bettering Society or Patrick Colquhoun with his writings on indigence,⁴¹ the Church administration was firmly established upon the parochial system and was perhaps not equipped, nor adaptable enough to cope with the changes in the towns and cities. If there were any possibility of a shift of control, the Church clung to her traditional rights of supremacy. There was also a considerable reluctance to change if the balance of society were to be disturbed. When Samuel Whitbread proposed his educational measures in 1807,⁴² the Church was wary of them. There was some limited sympathy with the notion of improving the education of the poor, but this aroused misgivings too.

There can be few better examples of the counter argument to Whitbread's proposals than the views expressed in a letter from the Revd. Mr. Sheepshanks of Wimpole to Lord Hardwicke. The Revd. Mr. Sheepshanks was unable to attend the House to present his opposition to Whitbread's Bill but he obviously felt that an outline of his argument in the letter might enable Lord Hardwicke to express his point on his behalf. He challenged entirely the theory that learning would affect an improvement in the condition of the poor and at the same time reduce the Poor Rates. His arguments were primarily economical.

"I need scarcely observe, that it is here taken for granted, the Poverty of the labouring Poor proceeds in a great Measure from their Ignorance, and that if they were better informed their pecuniary Circumstances would be much amended, and Scotland seems to be referred to as an Instance to prove this - I must own I am of a different opinion as to the general and leading Cause of the Poverty which I speak of, and think, that if the Schools proposed were now established and the children already taught, it would tend but little to reduce the Poor Rates. - I confine my Observation to the Labourers in Husbandry for several reasons because my Experience has been in a great Measure confined to them - because they constitute (as I suppose) the great Map of the Poor in the Kingdom - and because I apprehend it would be found on full Enquiry that there is a very striking Difference between them and the working Manufacturers and Artisans in different Trades - and that their Poverty arises principally from the Scantiness of their wages when compared with the Price of the several Necessities of Life, and that of the other too frequently from their own Profligacy and Extravagance when their wages are quite sufficient."⁴³

In this, Sheepshanks demonstrated the dichotomy of contemporary English society, deeply rooted in an agricultural base yet having to come to terms with problems caused by industrial change. Alterations to the Poor Law would require universal application and from his experience, Sheepshanks could see no escape from a vicious financial circle which would have presented the farmers with only a minimal reduction in Poor Rates. He was suspicious of the benefits achieved in

Scotland as circumstances were different there and the only similar attempt in Northern England of which he was aware, but chose not to name, he criticised for totally disrupting the social pattern.

Sheepshanks predicted an additional burden on the Poor Rates to meet the expense of putting up rooms for schoolmasters and he envisaged considerable difficulty in providing and regulating proper teachers. Assuming that the educational facilities were established and the benefits in learning passed on, he still could not foresee any relief to the poor rates. He concluded that the expectations and claims of the labouring poor would rise accordingly, so that, armed with their new information, they would be unwilling to continue to work for their current wages. Therefore, he questioned whether or not his agricultural community would be willing to pay or to afford better wages.⁴⁴

Not entirely anti-school, Sheepshanks indicated that he would "be happy if (for his own sake) every Boy were taught to read so that he could read the Scriptures to his Family when he grew to have one." Furthermore, he favoured the traditional idea of small schools based on individual parishes and thought it would be "better to give some parochial Encouragement to them than to incur so serious an Expense as must attend Mr. Whitbread's Plan."⁴⁵

The Revd. Mr. Sheepshanks represented one aspect of vested interest in opposition to Whitbread's proposals. When the measure was debated in Parliament, other objections were raised and apparently tactical delays instituted. By August of 1807, it had passed the House, with various alterations, but, on Lord Holland moving for the Bill to be read a second time in the Lords, (11th August), Lord Hawkesbury moved and carried "That it be read a second time this day, three months."

He objected to the measure because -

"it did not place the education of the people under the footing of religious principle sufficiently, nor under the control of the clergy to that degree which their station in the State, as he conceived, demanded. There was farther, no discrimination of rank or property in regard to the right of voting for the adoption of the schools proposed, the numerical majority of parishioners was to decide; which he thought might be in many cases highly objectionable."⁴⁶

This could have disturbed the balance of influence in localities, possibly even removing traditional Church dominance.

Lord Eldon, a conservative in Church matters, concurred with these views while the Archbishop of Canterbury "stated that he had what he should trust, would be found a less objectionable plan for the education of the poor in contemplation."⁴⁷ So Whitbread's Bill was out-manoeuvred in the Lords, that bastion of Church power, but Whitbread had caused the Church to arouse herself to protect her interests. The Archbishop of Canterbury was certainly examining the state of education in his parishes, though the plan alluded to was by no means settled. In November 1807, The Times reported that he was still in the process of investigation.⁴⁸

It took a couple more years before this information produced practical results in the formation of the National Society,⁴⁹ to respond to the Church's need to protect her interests from the educational promotion of the Dissenters. The committee of the National Society was rather a High Church preserve but, as with the Royal Lancasterian Institution, their aims appealed to a broad band of philanthropists who were simply keen to see the promotion of Christian principles. Well-known Evangelicals, Zachary Macaulay, Wilberforce, Simeon, Hannah More and Lord Teignmouth made immediate donations of 10 guineas, Dean Milner 15 guineas, and the banker Henry Thornton £20. Most became regular subscribers, but, to guarantee no interference with the projection of Established Church

principles, none was ever put forward for election to the committee.⁵⁰ Like Wilberforce and Thornton, some supported both education societies with subscriptions. The Church was not a monolithic institution and many schools chose to reject union with the National Society. Different interests were tolerated within the fold, exemplified by the internal conflicts between high churchmen and Evangelicals.

With foundations in the Established Church, the National Society was possibly relieved of some of the struggle to find financial support. Although there were to be occasions when appeals would be made for money, this was largely due to successful expansion and was always one important extra resource. Resort could always be made to the monarch, who, as titular head of the Church, could authorise special collections in the parishes. This occurred in 1823 and a further letter was requested in 1832, prior to the Government grant. For some years thence, letters were issued regularly at intervals of three years. .

Perhaps learning from the financial struggles of the Lancasterians, the National Society were careful about whom they assisted. The Society instituted a policy which was to become familiar. They would only assist with a proportion of the sum required to build a school while the stimulus and main support had to come from the locality. To ensure that the school was established on a sound foundation, it had to be free of debt before it could open. The guarantee of continuance was to be governed by the condition of tenure of the land. The committee preferred freehold but would accept a suitable length of tenure on leasehold. To assist with these matters, the Society offered legal advice to local supporters who wished to embark upon the foundation of a school. Of paramount importance to the religious basis of the endeavour, the school had to be "in union" before assistance of any kind would be

considered.⁵¹ That is, its religious teaching would be strictly in accordance with the principles of the Established Church, admitting no variation in the use of the Scriptures or catechism.

This final, exclusive clause, ensured a continuing division both within the Church and between Church and Dissenter aspirations as each society worked to protect the interests of its supporters. While the possibility of a national system of education was inferred, the emphasis of the National Society was primarily on religion. The first annual report firmly stated -

"The sole object in view being to communicate to the poor generally, by means of a summary mode of education lately brought into practice, such knowledge and habits as are sufficient to guide them through life in their proper stations, especially to teach them the doctrine of Religion according to the principles of the Established Church, and to train them to the performance of their religious duties by an early discipline."⁵²

The policy of the Church was given some legal credence and logical justification by important figures like Dr. Herbert Marsh of Cambridge University. He wrote about the constitutional strength behind the National Society.

"The religion by law established - must always be regarded as the national religion. But in every country the national education must be conducted on the principles of the national religion."⁵³

In the clamour for public credibility and support, the National and Lancasterian parties engaged in open criticism of each other through the Quarterly Review and the Edinburgh Review respectively. Dr. Bell was accused of plagiarism in the Edinburgh Review while the Quarterly Review attacked the character of Joseph Lancaster and his aids. Lancaster's image had waned even among his followers and it was difficult to ignore the cynical insinuations in a reference to "Mr. Joseph Lancaster, who has -- rendered himself so conspicuous."⁵⁴

In a more direct slur, the particular activities of Joseph Fox were allegedly typified by "violence and vulgarity."⁵⁵ The main target, however, was Lancaster, his public image and his educational ideas.

Ignoring the fact that Dr. Bell also found the lecture tour an expedient method of disseminating his ideas, the Quarterly Review criticised Lancaster for his travelling and soliciting subscriptions and the mingling of practices with his system, which "whether they decorated or disfigured it, served to affect notice."⁵⁶ The educational point was made concerning the disparity between Bell's more positive system of rewards and the "mischievous and abominable practices"⁵⁷ of Lancaster's punishments. The severity of punishment was alleged to have increased in proportion with the good qualities of an offender. So absurd were some peculiarities of the system that they were compared dramatically with the conditions of prison.⁵⁸

The Edinburgh Review broadened the argument to challenge the right of the National Society to assume the prerogative for education in the country. It was resentful of the authority given by the National Society's influence in Parliament when, at this time, the Government spent not a penny towards the education of the people. The Edinburgh Review asked for the Dissenters' appeal at least, to be considered, to be treated fairly and not abused as an alleged threat to normal Christian standards.⁵⁹

In these early, turbulent years, it could not be anticipated that the National Society would develop into the stronger of the two societies. The battle was waged for the minds of the public but, for the Lancasterians, the foil to avert the assault from the National Society was the possession of royal patronage.⁶⁰ As head of the Church, however, the King could not avoid giving his approbation and patronage to the National Society, too. As events were to prove, the criticism of Lancaster also struck a

chord with his erstwhile supporters, who regarded his character with some distaste. Only when the union with the Lancaster name was severed in 1814, and the committee reformed as the British and Foreign School Society,⁶¹ did they seem to advance with confidence.

From then, the two societies expanded their spheres of influence to dominate the development of education in England. Reports from both societies recorded continued success, but the intention was still to attract the attention of government. In 1816, the Committee of the National Society, with closest links with the legislature, resolved to send a confidential communication to the Government, to present an impression of the scope of work they were attempting.⁶² In the same year, they planned to forward a memorial to the Government, to the First Lord of the Treasury, and a petition for Charter to the Secretary of State.⁶³ At the same time, the Society continued to appeal to the "liberality of the Public" because "the sum total of the benefactions has already been expended in prosecuting the important objects of the Society; and that portion of its funds is now wholly exhausted."⁶⁴

The National Society's policy of exclusivity prevented the forging of stronger links in the foundation of schools. The optimism of the renewed British Society ("The present times are big with events calculated to promote the happiness of mankind")⁶⁵ was tempered with an attitude of practical conciliation should the circumstances warrant it. This was expressed at the first annual meeting of the B.F.S.S. by the Marquis of Lansdowne, who proposed -

"That we have seen with deepest regret those feelings of jealousy and distrust, which have produced a party spirit, and caused a partial separation between friends of different systems of education, all of which, according to their respective merits, are entitled to our approbation; that we will cordially embrace every opportunity of co-operating with others who are embarked in the same cause, to the ultimate

"success of which we conceive harmony to be indispensable - and of applying our means to a common object; that of communicating with increased facility the benefits of knowledge to every class and description of youth in this country, and supplying the means of instructing them in the duties of civil life, and in the principles of Christianity, as professed by their parents."⁶⁶

Where there were insufficient local funds to support schools under both systems, the British Society was prepared to combine with the National Society for the sake of providing at least one school. When an opportunity arose for such an alliance in Canterbury, the National Society declined to co-operate and insisted upon the exclusivity clause. The National Society was not prepared to compromise its position of maintaining the Established religion in education and therefore, the B.F.S.S. maintained its independent attitude. Despite misgivings about funds in some regions, the B.F.S.S. found its estimates flouted by events as schools were established alongside National Society institutions. While protecting its own religious traditions in the promotion of education, the B.F.S.S. also appealed for government attention to the general benefits to society.

"...we hope that the day is not far distant, when Statesmen and Legislators of all countries will open their eyes to the awfully important truth, and beholding in a sound and moral education, the grand secret of national strength, will co-operate for the prevention rather than the punishment of crime."⁶⁷

When Henry Brougham obtained the Select Committee of Inquiry in 1816, the British Society welcomed the interest of the Government in a detailed investigation of the intellectual wants of the people and the means of supplying them. With the prospect of legislation at the conclusion of the Inquiry, the mood of the societies and the public was enthusiastic and co-operative.⁶⁸ The British Society was pleased that the Inquiry offered proof of the success of its efforts, although

the composition of the Select Committee showed a contingent with a favourable disposition towards the B.F.S.S. J. Butterworth, Samuel Romilly, Sir James Mackintosh, Sir F. Burdett, Mr. Horner⁶⁹ and not forgetting the chairman, Henry Brougham, all had connections with the B.F.S.S. Joseph Butterworth, M.P. for Dover, perhaps not as well-known as his colleagues, was prominent in philanthropic circles. Originally a law bookseller in Fleet Street, his house was available to men such as Lords Liverpool and Teignmouth, Wilberforce and the elder Macaulay to meet and discuss benevolent schemes. The British and Foreign Bible Society held its first meetings in Butterworth's house.⁷⁰ William Allen was invited to be examined but witnesses were also drawn from the National Society. Both societies had the opportunity to present statistics on the state of education from their experiences.

When Brougham produced the expected legislation after his inquiries, it was the British Society and Dissenters in general who were disappointed and who caused the Bill to fail. The Bill was introduced in 1820 and proposed a national scheme which would have allowed the Government to establish schools where the two societies had failed to provide any.⁷¹ Brougham conceded too much control of these prospective schools to the Established Church and alienated the Dissenters. The Times carried individual letters of complaint from Dissenters and even the British Society carried a motion against Brougham's Bill.⁷² A pamphlet, Essay on the Evils of Popular Ignorance by John Foster, expressed for many the misgivings of Dissenters about the prospects which were contained in the Education Bill. Considering the history of criticism from the Established Church, there was astonishment that the proposals had come from a man, who, by his work on the Select Committee, had done much to expose the inadequacies of the establishment. Brougham's years of alliance with

the Dissenter tradition in education made the proposals seem totally contradictory.

"It must have been from some widely different quarter that we could have expected a scheme framed in conformity to those very prejudices, those insidious distinctions in the community, those principles of exclusive privilege and unequal advantage of which it had not been supposed there could be a more determined enemy."⁷³

Although the Church was supposed to have made concessions, too, there was still a considerable amount of power conceded to the established clergy, to the exclusion of Dissenters. Masters of the proposed government schools had to be members of the Church of England. Although ratepayers could select the master, the local clergymen would hold the right of veto, would exercise some superintendence over his work and was required to report to the bishop. The bishops in person or through their diocesan officials were to exercise a right of visitation and might dismiss the master. The catechism of the National Church was to be taught one half of one day of the week and also "at a school meeting on Sunday evening, not exceeding three hours," if the officiating clergyman desired such a meeting. Children might absent themselves from the teaching of the catechism with the permission of their parents or guardians. All pupils were to attend the parish church except those who at the desire of their parents or guardians attended some other place of Christian worship.⁷⁴

The measure was an attempt to secure inter-denominational schools, with a "conscience clause" to enable Dissenters to withdraw their children from religious lessons, but the Church retained such a disproportionate share of power under this system that it was unacceptable.

Another pamphlet, Observations on Mr. Brougham's Bill was more objective and took a broader perspective on the possible impact of the Bill, with less emphasis upon the disappointment in Brougham, but more concern with the practicality of it. While the object of the Bill was commended,

the pamphlet declared that the Bill would be oppressive to a section of the populace. The author regretted that in a national and universal measure Sunday Schools were overlooked and offered the advice that the government could have done no better than to finance the systems already in operation through the British and National Societies,⁷⁵ a policy eventually adopted in 1833.

The pamphlet recalled that the management record of the Church was less than exemplary and challenged the additional financial strain which the proposals would place on the existing poor rate. The excessive freedom of management presented to the Church without any structure of accountability was a major concern, however. The pamphlet raised the criticism which appeared at every occasion of suggested legislative provision even in 1807 and later in the 1830's. The author feared the discouragement of public exertions, even those of the poor themselves, the voluntary spirit essential for the success of such educational endeavours. Thus, the Bill could have had the effect of retarding developments instead of expanding them. The imposition of a tax was thought oppressive, in particular because it would not benefit all sections of society, since Dissenters would have to withdraw from the schools and those who only received instruction through Sunday Schools had been omitted from benefit. The final insult was that after excluding Dissenters from the management of schools, the Bill would be injurious to religious liberty by presenting Dissenters with civil disabilities.⁷⁶

Brougham apparently misjudged the reaction of his Dissenter friends and the Bill was lost because the differences could not be reconciled. The British Society henceforth preferred a policy of independence as a consequence of events surrounding the Bill, which was a complete change from the intention to attract and capture Government action. At their

anniversary meeting in 1820, although the hope was declared

"that the day is not far distant when by some legislative measure the accomplishment of so desirable an object (the presentation of knowledge to all Christian men as members of a free nation) will be hastened, it is at the same time evident that no measure will produce the desired effect, which rests upon exclusive or illiberal principles, or which would take the superintendence of Schools, for the education of the people out of the hands of public Committees, of those who are likely to show the greatest and most disinterested zeal in the 'execution' of duties in which they engage. To confine the management of public Schools for the education of the poor to official superintendence would weaken the interest of the Public in these institutions, and thus check those feelings which ought to be cherished, strengthened and universally diffused."⁷⁷

At the same time, the B.F.S.S. members expressed awareness that they were falling behind the National Society, but boldly proclaimed that the number of schools did not matter and that they were satisfied to be able to claim some share in advancing the liberal views of education.⁷⁸ There seemed to be a mood of growing self-confidence, so that as they moved into the 1820's they could still exhort their members to continue with the work of expansion. The 1821 meeting affirmed the Society's steadfastness in the pursuit of their original objective, and recorded the establishment of twenty-two new schools in London alone over the previous five years. With other developments throughout the country, this caused the British Society to "conclude that the benevolence of this country, will in a short time render the means of instructing the whole body of the rising generation, by voluntary contributions complete."⁷⁹ This represented a distinct change of policy for the B.F.S.S. Although the necessity of voluntary effort had always been recognised, this had usually been accompanied by the long-term aim of acquiring the support of government. As a consequence of their treatment in the 1820 Education Bill, the B.F.S.S. now rejected the need for legislative involvement and were prepared to remain independent in their work.

This shift in policy must have been partly responsible for the lull in activities aimed at legislation or inquiry during the 1820's. The two societies found themselves in command of the expansion of education and so continued to secure further influence. The National Society would have been sure of their position, with developments always in greater number than the B.F.S.S. The National Society came away from the 1820 Bill, assured of taking control of any national system. Since the National Society was virtually linked to the constitution of the country, through the Established Church, their future seemed secure. Their funds were boosted by the instruction of a King's Letter from 1823 which helped to maintain the pecuniary advantage over the British Society. In the years between 1820 and 1830, the National Society increased their number of schools from 1,614 to 3,670.⁸⁰

By the end of the decade, the two societies were firmly in control of any expansion towards a national system of education. So, even in the few years prior to the government grant of £20,000, there appeared to be no direct pressure from the societies for the government to introduce any legislation. In 1832, the National Society asked for and received a further increase to their finances by the issue of another King's letter.⁸¹ They seemed to be aware, however, that an increasing population was testing their ability to extend their provision of schools. In 1833, the B.F.S.S. were in a similar mood of determination that their efforts must continue. The Reverends John Burnett and George Marsden reflected with satisfaction upon the progress in scriptural education both at home and abroad but still appealed to the "liberality of the public" to "sustain the society in every effort to enlarge the sphere of its operations."⁸² Similarly, the B.F.S.S. was aware that much work still needed to be done. As a result of correspondence received, the general

conclusion was re-affirmed "that ENGLAND IS YET UNEDUCATED."⁸³ Therefore the Committee was "again urging upon their friends the importance and NECESSITY OF INCREASED EXERTION."⁸⁴ They rested their claim to public support upon the success of 25 years' work and the improvement in intellectual and moral standards which had been achieved to some extent, the moral impact being more valued.

"The elements of change are abroad in the earth and the time is rapidly approaching when the safety of this and of every other country will be found to consist, not in the amount of its wealth, the extent of its commerce, or value of its foreign possessions, but in the degree of intelligence, morality and sound religious principles which may prevail among the mass of its population."⁸⁵

There was an unexpected element of unity with some Anglicans among the B.F.S.S. proceedings of 1833, which recalled the very early hopes of co-operation between the two societies.⁸⁶ In its early life, the B.F.S.S. had attracted some Anglican support, people had subscribed to both societies, but it was perhaps unusual for a National Society member to participate in the proceedings of the society. Yet in 1833, the Rev. J.W. Cunningham, Vicar of Harrow, a prominent Evangelical and former curate to John Venn, moved the first resolution at the annual meeting.

"He had often wished to advocate that Society, but he had been deterred by the fear that, as a member of the National Education Society, to which he was sincerely attached, and the benefits of which he was daily perceiving in his own parish, he might by his advocacy of this be in some way detracting from the merits of the National System. -- he was disposed to hold out the hand of fellowship to this, and would join it as a parallel column of the same great army which had lifted up the banner of the Cross, not to let it down till all had been brought to a knowledge of the kingdom of Christ. He hoped the two Societies would go on without any rivalry."⁸⁷

While the B.F.S.S. was open to all sects, the insistence of union with the Church of England by the National Society appeared to dissolve potential for unity. The societies still seemed intent on relying upon their own resources and urged continued public support, so that,

when the grant was made by the Government, it caused some surprise but was no less welcome. The formal proceedings of the societies gave no indication of tackling the government for assistance and so any pressure was applied independently, as with the Unitarian petitions.⁸⁷

When the £20,000 was donated, it then stirred the societies to focus pressure upon the administration in ensuing years, though this was mainly to influence the distribution of the money.

The National Society welcomed the additional finance from the government for the continuous need for expansion of education still burdened their resources.

"The COMMITTEE of the NATIONAL SOCIETY, in rendering an account of their labours for the past year, are anxious, in the first place, to acknowledge with thankfulness a considerable increase in these labours which is owing to the impulse given to the desire of establishing Schools by the Parliamentary Grant of the last Session."⁸⁹

Despite 374 applications for grants and the greater share of the government money, the National Society was not completely satisfied and wanted more. The Society regretted the Treasury could not apply more than the £11,187 received for the 66 cases the society had recommended. This inevitably meant that applicants were disappointed and further plans for the education of the poor were deferred for at least another year.⁹⁰

With another £20,000 grant the following year, £13,610 was assigned to National Society applicants, again a higher share than the B.F.S.S. The "succour of Parliament" greatly eased the strain upon the Society's own funds so that grants from the Committee were maintained at their normal level.⁹¹ With the pattern established for the distribution of the grant, the National Society instituted a subtle change in policy which switched the onus for expansion over to the Government. "The extent of the Treasury grants not the Society's should now become the

criterion for the progress of National Schools."⁹² The pressure of responsibility was applied to the Government, but the National Society would retain control of future developments.

On the other hand, their "partners" in education, the B.F.S.S. had not been confident of receiving a fair share of the grant. They had been conducting inquiries into the state of British Schools in the country;⁹³ and once they realised that the scheme for distribution was to be based upon the criteria of the National system, they knew that some areas would have difficulty in raising their portion of funds in order to qualify for a Treasury grant. Applications had been received but the Committee wished to defer them until they had received official communications upon the procedure. Advertisements were placed in newspapers and the Committee rightly conceded that the public would need little encouragement to avail themselves of the opportunities thus presented by government. To try to help matters, at a Special Meeting at Society House, 16th December, 1833, the secretary stated that Mr. Spring-Rice, Secretary to the Treasury, had informed him that if, in order to raise the required half, a portion should be borrowed, there would be no government objection provided neither the school house nor the land were mortgaged. In addition, if a British School could not be established, an application for an infant school could be substituted.⁹⁴ This information was circularised by private letter.

The B.F.S.S. also decided to present a memorial to the government to point out the difficulties which existed in areas where schools were needed of raising the required half of the total sum. They wanted the distribution of the £20,000 to be delayed.⁹⁵ Once composed, these points were elaborated upon in the following presentation.

"That your Memorialists were, ---, fully sensible that considerable difficulty would be found in some places in raising such a proportion of the sum required for

"the erection of a School House, as would bring the portion (within) the range of your Lordships' Minute, and could not fear that owing to the wealth possessed by the Advocates of the Exclusive System generally, as well as to the large funds recently obtained by the same parties from Government through a King's Letter, much greater facilities would be possessed by the National Society for meeting that portion of your Lordship's Minute, than could possibly be at the command of your Memorialists."⁹⁶

The Government was presented with the opinion that the nation favoured a system of schools on a broad and comprehensive base but the memorial asked for a delay in the appropriation of the money to give more time for some areas to make the required effort and so that the British Society would have full opportunity to present a number of applications equal in amount to that portion of the grant which they thought was intended for their system.⁹⁷ Presumably, the B.F.S.S. expected an equal half share of the £20,000.

The reply from J. Stewart at the Treasury indicated no preference between the parties but simply stated that their Lordships would use their judgement to take such measures as would be most just and equitable to ensure to the public the establishment of the greatest number of efficient schools.⁹⁸ The B.F.S.S. still received the smaller portion of the grant but nevertheless welcomed the government initiative with "unfeigned pleasure" and passed a resolution to that effect.⁹⁹

Unlike the alignment of the National Society with the government's policy of distribution, the B.F.S.S. preferred to assert their independence and disapprobation of any government control. Lord John Russell framed the Society's attitude, for, while promoting the Government and the Society,

"at the same time he must declare that it was his conviction that, although they might have parliamentary support (and it ought to be liberally extended), yet nothing should induce the Society in the least degree to relax the voluntary principle. -- He should be sorry

"indeed if any one hoped to substitute for it the mechanical principle of Government interference."¹⁰⁰

Although there were obvious advantages to the rapid diffusion of education with legislative involvement, the society still feared that central direction would deter many from offering their voluntary support. While government interference was not welcomed in their affairs, the B.F.S.S. felt obliged to "interfere" with government to try to effect a fairer treatment in the Treasury grant. In the first few months of 1834, the committee determined that it was their duty to their supporters to try to influence public monetary provision so that it would "benefit all classes of the Community without distinction of sect or party."¹⁰¹ They were constantly aware of the great deficiencies in manufacturing and agricultural areas and so the committee organised a deputation to deliver a memorial¹⁰² to Lord Grey in order to present their views. Grey received the party, consisting of William Allen, Corn. (Cornelius) Hawling, Robert Bousefield, Rev. Thomas Binney, G.F. Angus, Thomas Norton Jr., Robert Forster and the Secretary (Henry Dunn) on Monday 17th March, 1834 and "expressed his anxiety to pay every attention to the topics contained in the Memorial."¹⁰³

This step was taken in an attempt to counteract the strength of the National Society and stemmed from a resolution of the B.F.S.S. at the beginning of the year. Moved by G.F. Angus, seconded by Robert Forster and carried unanimously, the B.F.S.S. had committed themselves to the policy that any general system of education of the poor ought to be completely unbiased, equally available to all without any regard or favour to the religious opinions of any section of the public body. If any measure were brought before Parliament at variance with these principles, the committee were to consider the propriety of making direct representation of their views to the legislature and call upon the support of all their friends in the country.¹⁰⁴

The committee took their views to the government when they were aware of the larger share of the £20,000 going to the National Society. Their promotions did not show much reward for the following year showed a further decline against the favour for the National Society. The 30th Report of the B.F.S.S. in 1835 stated -

"Since the presentation of the last Report, a second grant of £20,000 has been made by Parliament towards the erection of school houses, which your Committee regret to state has been accompanied by a material change in the mode of distribution. Schools on your system have obtained only £6,800."¹⁰⁵

The plea was transmitted again that while the committee welcomed the extension of instruction through the grants, they were not sufficient to meet the country's needs. The good effected was only partial and usually accompanied by serious inconveniences.¹⁰⁶ The exertions of "the enlightened, intelligent and charitable,"¹⁰⁷ were still needed.

The B.F.S.S. tried to present the image of the inadequacy of educational provision at the time, to encourage the introduction of more government money. They took some consolation in the evidence presented to the Select Committee of the 1830's¹⁰⁸ which examined the effects of the grants in relation to the general state of education. Officers of both the National and British Societies were called to give evidence; William Allen and Henry Dunn from the B.F.S.S., the Rev. Joseph Cotton Wigram and William Cotton from the National Society,¹⁰⁹ plus representatives of individual school establishments. Naturally, the grant was recorded as effecting an increase in the foundation of schools but the evidence also brought out the inadequacies which still persisted. This satisfied the British Society.

"The tenor of the whole abundantly proves what your Committee have so often asserted, that a most fearful deficiency still exists as to the means of elementary instruction, and that this deficiency can only be supplied on the truly national principles advocated by your Society."¹¹⁰

They were even more impressed with the second Select Committee in 1835, regarding the evidence as a vindication of their struggle over the years.

"The views, which from year to year, your Committee have promulgated regarding the lamentable extent to which popular ignorance still prevails in England (and which have more than once been called into question) have received strong confirmation from the evidence given, during the past year, before the Parliamentary Committee."¹¹¹

What made a particular impact was the "most important and trustworthy" Report of the Manchester Statistical Society.¹¹²

"This document, unexceptionable as it is in all respects, will, it is to be hoped, effectually silence those who, without due consideration, have accused your Committee of exaggerating the amount of popular ignorance."¹¹³

This seemed to be the theme which the society forwarded over the final few years of this period. The British Society reiterated policy and attitudes which emanated from the earliest years of the Society's work. The report of 1837 opened with the publicly despondent tone -

"It is impossible to take even a cursory glance at the present state of elementary education in England without finding abundant cause for national humiliation. The spread of knowledge has been by no means commensurate either with the increase of wealth, the advancement of the population, or the enlargement of political privileges. A frightful amount of ignorance still envelopes and deforms some of the fairest portions of our land."¹¹⁴

The reports devoted some considerable space to the evidence gathered by the Society from various parts of the country. This was only used to continue the lament over the extent of popular ignorance and caused the committee to express renewed anxiety for some means to be devised to supply the deficiency of education, to "all classes of society."¹¹⁵

The share of the government grant to the B.F.S.S. continued to be a minor one and the funds of the society in general unsatisfactory for their ambitions. Yet there was optimism that the work had not been

in vain and there was the hope of improvement as the public's awareness at least had increased. In 1838, the report seemed to imply that prospects in the near future held promise.

The public mind was declared

"now fully alive to the dangers which have gathered around us in consequence of past neglect, and is, without doubt already preparing to give utterance to its convictions in a voice which cannot be disregarded, and which will eventually compel the nation to take measures for the instruction of the people, of a kind far more commensurate with the magnitude of the interests involved in their moral and intellectual condition, than any that have yet come under the discussion of Parliament."¹¹⁶

This may well have alluded to plans which the government would implement in 1839. The Society's Report for that year finally seemed to show willingness to relinquish the long-cherished independence and to advocate a plan similar to the one Lord John Russell would introduce, which would commence direct government control of education.

The religious groups had struggled for over thirty years to influence the development of education, and in fact, were the national system of education. They offered readily available organisations to which, from 1833, the government granted financial sponsorship. The British and National Societies had provided channels through which the religious traditions could work to promote the furtherance of Christian principles and a better society. Both societies proclaimed the independence of their principles and the necessity for the voluntary spirit to inspire expansion. Simultaneously, there was a desire for some government initiative during the first half of this era. Supporters of the Established Church and Dissenter traditions in turn exhibited political strength to defeat the education proposals of Whitbread in 1807 and then Brougham in 1820.

The National Society was possibly offering a tardy response to demand for increased educational provision, but one which was essential to maintain the prerogative of the Church to govern the teaching of the people. As the National Society was closely related to the traditional echelons of power in the country, there was probably less need for outspokenness and it gradually expanded its work to be the dominant society at the end of the 1830's.

The British and Foreign School Society, representing the various Dissenter Churches, while initially keen to encourage a government initiative, experienced a change in policy following 1820 and the proposed system under Brougham's Bill. The B.F.S.S. struggled to maintain independence from government interference. There was some modification required when the struggle turned to seeking a fair deal over government grants. The problem of the exclusivity of and bias towards the National Society could not be alleviated even after thirty years.

Although the two societies proclaimed the success of their work, it became evident during the 1830's that even their major investment in education was insufficient to meet expanding needs. The B.F.S.S. probably presented most evidence on this behalf and in 1839, their report declared

"The amount of popular ignorance in England is still fearfully great -- it is not at all an unusual thing to have certificates (of the attendance of the children at school) presented, subscribed by the teacher with his or her mark! This generally happens in the case of female teachers."¹¹⁷

It is understandable that the work of both societies was being assessed realistically when the B.F.S.S. could proclaim - "ENGLAND IS STILL AN UNEDUCATED COUNTRY."¹¹⁸

A group of politicians within the National Society encouraged a renewal of the values of the Established Church in the expansion of

education. The repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts removed the principle of Anglican monopoly in offices of State and municipalities. Catholic Emancipation and the Reform Bill admitted the prospect of stronger political opposition to the Establishment. The Church was under threat from reform and could no longer rely upon the traditional support of government. W.E. Gladstone served on Roebuck's Select Committee on Education and, concerned at the threats to religious education, prepared to reassert the Church's rights.¹¹⁹

In late 1837 and 1838, Gladstone, with G.F. Mathison, an office-holder at the Mint and a devout Churchman, and Thomas Dyke Acland, head of the religious party in the Commons, began to discuss proposals to found diocesan boards of education, middle-class schools and training colleges, all connected with the National Society. These points were discussed with the Bishop of London and, in April, with the Archbishop of Canterbury. Acland, S.F. Wood, Gladstone and Sir Walter Farquhar, an Evangelical but a supporter, met the Archbishop and discussed a seven-point memorandum which proposed to expand the curriculum and improve teaching in National Schools, to modify the textbook policy to admit books other than those published by the S.P.C.K., and thereby secular subjects, to improve the quality of rural schools and to enter the field of middle-class education. A network of diocesan training colleges was recommended, with support from diocesan boards of education and linked with cathedral chapters. They hoped to improve teacher training and methodology, the status and emoluments of schoolmasters. In effect, they would be creating a national system of education on its own, based upon the principles of the Established Church.¹²⁰

The more active the societies were, the more difficult it became for the government to hold the reins of education because what pleased

one group displeased another. To help the National Society led to Dissenting opposition and vice versa. After 1839 no national system was created for a whole generation really as a result of these tensions.

Notes to Chapter Two

1. R.V. Holt, op.cit., "The social philosophy of Unitarians was first that of John Locke, and then that of Jeremy Bentham. Jeremy Bentham was a Unitarian in theology -- Bentham's principle of the greatest happiness of the greatest number was suggested to him by a passage in Joseph Priestly." Pages 26-27.
2. See Ch.3, Utilitarians and Radicals, p.70.
3. R.V. Holt, op.cit., pp.17-18.
4. D.N.B., Vol.III, p.257, Thomas Barnes.
5. R.V. Holt, op.cit., pp.250-252.
6. *ibid.*
7. See Ch.1, p.9,
8. See Ch.1, p.10.
9. R.V. Holt, op.cit., p.160.
10. *ibid*, p.257.
11. J. Alexander and D.G. Paz, "The Treasury Grants", pp.78-79.
12. R.V. Holt, op.cit., p.27.
See also Ch.8, The Statistical Societies, p.248ff.
13. J. Cosgrove, "The Educational Aims of Sir Thomas Wyse", p.358.
14. Graham Wallas, The Life of Francis Place 1771-1854, p.93.
15. H.B. Binns, op.cit., p.20.
16. *ibid.*
17. Graham Wallas, op.cit., p.94.
See also Ch.1, p.14.
18. William Allen, Life, Vol.1, p.100.
19. H.B. Binns, op.cit., p.35.
20. G.F. Bartle, "Early Finances of the B.F.S.S. 1808-1830", p.13.
21. William Allen, Life, Vol.1, p.109.
22. *ibid.*, p.112.

23. Joseph Lancaster, The British System of Education, Introduction. "You know that I have not only had everything to form, but much to do, and much to suffer. The love of my country has been superior to the love of health, personal comfort, or even life itself, and I trust I shall carry on the work and that it will prosper, let the cost to me, as an individual, be what it may."
24. *ibid.*, p.vi.
25. *ibid.*, p.49.
26. Instructions for Forming and Conducting a Society for the Education of the Lower Classes of the People, pp.10-11.
27. See Ch.1, p.14.
also Ch.6, p.159.
28. William Allen, Life, Vol.I, p.123.
29. See Ch.3, Utilitarians and Radicals, p.71ff.
30. See Ch.1, p.14.
31. H.B. Binns, *op.cit.*, p.51.
32. *ibid.*, p.52.
33. *ibid.*
34. William Allen, Life, Vol.1, p.130.
35. G.F. Bartle, *op.cit.*, p.14.
36. See Ch.1, p.14-15.
37. C.W. New, *op.cit.*, p.204.
38. G.F.A. Best, "The Evangelicals and the Established Church in Early Nineteenth Century", p.72.
39. *ibid.* pp.68-69.
40. H.B. Binns, *op.cit.*, p.13.
41. A Treatise on Indigence, (1806). See Ch.11, p.310.
42. See Ch.1, p10.
43. Add. Mss., 35646 f247, Hardwicke Papers, Vol.CCXCVIII, Rev. Mr. Sheepshanks, Letter to Lord Hardwicke, Wimpole, April 24th, 1807.
44. *ibid.*
45. *ibid.*
46. Robert Banks Jenkinson, 2nd Earl of Liverpool, Memoirs, p.294.

47. *ibid.*
48. The Times, 25th November, 1807, 2c, "In consequence of Whitbread presuming in the preamble to the Bill for the better management of the Poor on a general neglect of their Education in England, The Archbishop of Canterbury, has, through the medium of the clergy taken the means necessary for obtaining information on that subject."
49. See Ch.1, p.15.
50. H.J. Burgess, *op.cit.*, p.22.
51. *ibid*, pp.27-29.
52. *ibid.* p.23.
53. Quarterly Review, Vol.VI, no.XI, 1811, p.289.
54. *ibid.*, p.270.
55. *ibid.*, p.276.
56. *ibid.*, p.275.
57. *ibid.*, p.294.
58. *ibid.*, p.285, Mr. Coleridge stated in a lecture to the Royal Institution - "No boy who has been subject to punishments like these will stand in fear of Newgate, or feel any horror at the thought of a slaveship."
59. E.R., Vol.XIX, No.XXXVII, p.31, "What then shall we say, who know full well that the Government of the people of England pay not a penny for the education of the people - when arrogating to their order a right, which for a while they alone not explicitly define, of interfering with the general education of youth throughout the realm? Have we got a right to say, at the least, this - Found a system of national instruction - adopt some plan for facilitating the path of knowledge to the poor - entertain with candour such measures as Mr. Whitbread (for example) proposed to you - avoid branding with the name of levellers and atheists, such as recommend schemes for putting ignorance to flight; and then you will acquire some right, not, indeed to control the whole system of education, or to prescribe the mode and manner in which all children shall be taught, but to be heard upon the subject with respect and to superintend the system of education patronized and supported by yourself..."
60. E.R., Vol.XIX, No.XXXVIII, p.22, "The press and the pulpit in vain sounded the alarm with which those revered personages were willing to inspire the Church and State. The patronage of the King was a tower of strength; Mr. Lancaster was not overwhelmed by a city; and time was given to the good sense of the country, which speedily, and with authority, extinguished the rising flame..."

61. See Ch.1, p.17.
62. Report of the General Committee of the National Society, May 24th, 1816, p.5.
63. *ibid.*, June 12th, 1816, p.9.
64. The Times, 15th January, 1816, 2a
65. B.F.S.S. Report, 1814, p.9.
66. B.F.S.S. Report, 1814, p.19.
67. B.F.F.S. Report, 1815, November 25th, p.3.
68. B.F.S.S. Report 1816, December 12th, p.1, "While the wisdom of the British Legislature has been directed to a minute investigation of the intellectual wants of the people, and the best means of supplying them, the public spirit appears everywhere to advance towards a perfect readiness for a zealous co-operation in such measures, as are likely to accomplish so momentous an object."
69. The Times, 22nd May, 1816, 2b, and Q.R. Vol.XIX, No.XVIII, July 1818, p.509.
70. D.N.B., Vol.8, Joseph Butterworth.
71. See Ch.1, p.20.
also Ch.6, p.171.
72. William Allen, Life, Vol.II, p.176, 15th July, 1820, "We had a special meeting of the B.F.S.S., on the subject of Brougham's Education Bill, against which a strong resolution was passed."
73. C.W. New, *op.cit.*, p.328.
74. E.R., Vol.XXXIV, No.LXVII, p.214.
75. C.W. New, *op.cit.*, p.328, Quoting pamphlet, Observations on Mr. Brougham's Bill - "In most countries, the difficulty is in raising such a power for carrying into execution legislative plans of moral improvement; here it is already in full action, perfectly available and requires only the pecuniary support of Parliament to give it complete effect."
76. Observations on Mr. Brougham's Bill, p.9.
77. B.F.S.S. Report, Anniversary Meeting, 1820, pp.23-24.
78. *ibid.*, p.2.
79. B.F.S.S. Report, 7th May, 1821, p.xii.
80. 19th Annual Report, National Society, 1830, p.12.

81. 22nd Annual Report, National Society, 1833, p.52 - from the memorial to the King: "The President and Governors of the NATIONAL SOCIETY humbly trust, that the foregoing statement of the charitable designs and extensive usefulness of the Society may induce HIS MAJESTY to comply with the prayer of their Petition. The continuance of their exertions is more than ever necessary to meet the demands of a rapidly increasing population."
82. B.F.S.S., 28th Report 1833, 6th May, p.xi.
83. *ibid.*, p.18.
84. *ibid.*
85. *ibid.*, p.19.
86. B.F.S.S. 28th Report, 1833, 6th May, p.19.
87. Quarterly Extracts from the Correspondence of the B.F.S.S. No.26, 30th June, 1833, p.107.
88. See this Chapter, p.31.
89. 23rd Annual Report, National Society 1834, p.9.
90. *ibid.*, p.11.
91. 24th Annual Report, National Society, 1835, p.14.
92. *ibid.*,
93. B.F.S.S. Minute Book, 4th March, 1833, p.158 ff.
94. B.F.S.S. General Minutes, 16th December, 1833, p.225.
95. *ibid.*
96. B.F.S.S. General Minutes, 20th December, 1833, pp.231-232.
97. *ibid.*
98. B.F.S.S. General Minutes, 17th January, 1834, p.235.
99. B.F.S.S. Quarterly Extracts, 30th June, 1834, p.143 - "That this meeting having heard with much satisfaction, of the assistance rendered by his Majesty's Government, through this Society, towards the erection of Schools, is desirous of respectfully acknowledging this act of confidence on the part of Government, and trusts that the day is not far distant when schools for Scriptural instructions on just and comprehensive principles will be opened to every child in the British Empire."
100. B.F.S.S. Quarterly Extracts, 30th June, 1834, p.150.
101. B.F.S.S. Minutes, 14th February, 1834, p.247.

102. See Appendix II, p.335,
103. B.F.S.S. Minutes, 21st March, 1834, p.257.
104. *ibid.*, p.242.
105. B.F.S.S. 30th Report, 11th May, 1835, p.11.
106. *ibid.*, p.16.
107. B.F.S.S. Quarterly Extracts, 30th June, 1835, p.176.
108. See Ch.1., p.23.
and Ch.6., p.179.
109. PP., 1834 (572), Vol.9, p.1ff, Report of the Select Committee of Inquiry into the present state of Education of the People in England and Wales.
110. B.F.S.S., 30th Report, 11th May, 1835, p.17.
111. B.F.S.S. 31st Report, 9th May, 1836, p.12.
112. See Ch.9., The Statistical Societies, p-248ff.
113. B.F.S.S. 31st Report, 9th May, 1836, p.15.
114. B.F.S.S. 32nd Report, 8th May, 1837, p.1.
115. B.F.S.S. 33rd Report, 7th May, 1838, p.xi, The Committee in light of "... the evidence which has been afforded of the extent to which Popular Ignorance still overspreads England, and deeply sensible of the many evils which flow from neglecting the instruction of the labouring classes, cannot refrain from expressing its anxiety that some means may be devised which, in connexion with renewed and increased exertion on the part of the friends of this and kindred societies, the fearful deficiency which at present exists as to the means of Education may be supplied, and the blessings of sound and scriptural instruction be speedily imparted to all classes of society both in our own and other lands."
116. *ibid.*, p.1.
117. B.F.S.S. 34th Report, 6th May, 1839, pp.12-13.
118. B.F.S.S., 33rd Report, 7th May, 1839, pp.8-9.
119. Norman Gash, Reaction and Reconstruction in English Politics, 1832-1852, pp.61-62.
120. D.G. Paz, The Politics of Working-Class Education in Britain 1830-1850, pp.62-64.

CHAPTER 3

The Utilitarians and Radicals

Similar to the way that religious principles helped to categorise some supporters of national education, the labels of "Utilitarian" and "Radical" described other groups. The pursuit of philosophical or political aims motivated men as much as religion. In a simple interpretation, the ideas of utilitarian philosophy spread like a secular faith but the development of political aspirations created a close relationship with Radical activists.

Utilitarian philosophy evolved during the 18th Century and was generally identified by the central tenet of "the happiness of the greatest number". There was an implied concern for the improvement of the quality of life but it was by no means completely egalitarian. Utilitarians were not committed to the overthrow of the order of society but were conscious that the amelioration of the conditions of the less fortunate held potential benefits for all sections of society. The acquisition of "happiness" by the poor would ultimately create happy circumstances for their superiors because they would be more stable in life-style, less prone to disturbance. Utilitarians required a morality of restraint and consideration. The poor had to be taught to restrain their instinctive desires and impulses. Minds needed to be trained to reflect upon the effects that actions would have upon other men. How to effect this moderation of behaviour caused Utilitarians to expound upon the state of the poor, economics and liberty and justice in general. The philosophy incorporated many shades of opinion, freely expressed by literary men of the period.

Utilitarians favoured the expansion of education because of their theories upon the development of the person. A man was said to consist

of a collection of sense impressions, received from his immediate environment. While those impressions could be infinitely variable, the Utilitarians believed that, by controlling those impressions, man was also infinitely educable. One method of improving the sensory responses of the poor was to train them through the schools.

The father-figure of English Utilitarianism was probably Jeremy Bentham. His followers were referred to as Benthamites, but Bentham himself indicated that he did not relish this label but preferred identification with the broader philosophy.

"Benthamite? What sort of animal is that? - I can't find any such word in Boyer's Dictionary. As to religion - to be sure a new religion would be an odd thing without a name; accordingly there ought to be one for it - at least for the professors of it. Utilitarian (Angl.) Utilitarien (Gall.) would be more propre."¹

Bentham had developed his philosophical position as a disciple of the Frenchman, Helvetius, an advocate of national education. The Helvetian utilitarian acknowledged the influence of the social environment upon man and his behavioural responses but held that education could improve his attitude towards his circumstances.² Hence, when Bentham published his Administration of the Poor in 1797, he included the outline of a programme for proper education which would use Dr. Bell's method.³ He confirmed his interest in education during the 19th Century although his attention was centred upon the construction of a scheme of instruction which would transmit utilitarian ideas. Bentham focused upon the "Chrestomathic" institution, which would provide "useful" knowledge. Some of his associates had broader aims for the establishing of education in the social scheme of the nation. Among these was James Mill, one of Bentham's close associates in the early 19th Century.

The more political opinions of Utilitarians led to affinity with another growing faction in society, those known as Radicals. The term

"Radical" was generally applied to anyone who was an active supporter of political reform, but could have incorporated any who sought change in society. Tait's Edinburgh Magazine in 1833, gave a broad definition of the Radical label. It "indicates no class of politicians; it vaguely comprehends every man who goes a step beyond"⁴ - a step beyond the Whig establishment in the context of time. Radicalism was at the heart of the undercurrent theme of Parliamentary reform and the extension of the franchise which recurred throughout the early decades of the century.

Utilitarian thought came close to that of the Radical when, for example, William Godwin stated that education and civil liberty only would reduce poverty by presenting the individual with an enhanced feeling of responsibility, a more developed power of reflection together with a greater wisdom.⁵ James Mill was more inclined towards radicalism because he thought that the country's rulers protected themselves by keeping the mass of the population in a state of servitude. This was achieved by ensuring that they remained ignorant of the causes of their misfortune. He felt that if men could be educated to be aware of these causes, the failings of governments would be exposed and they would be more obliged to grant arrangements to serve the general good.⁶ The basic utilitarian aim was for education to be useful to the majority by producing better social attitudes. The Radical intention was to increase man's knowledge of his rights. When knowledge of his civil liberties proved useful to the general good, the Utilitarian and Radical interests overlapped. They had a certain amount of common ground and because of their circle of acquaintances, particularly the alliances among leading figures, they frequently found themselves working in collaboration.

Rather like the Unitarians⁷ and Quakers, the Utilitarians and Radicals were prepared to adopt existing schemes and work with people of different

principles in order to achieve their purpose. Therefore, they could be found working alongside Whigs like Henry Brougham and the variety of interests in the British and Foreign School Society. With so many followers of utilitarian philosophy and Radical aims in the country, together with the span of four decades in this study, it would be difficult to specify isolated groups. The best method of examining their contribution to the spread of education is to follow the directions taken by national figures (leaders) such as Bentham and James Mill, Francis Place and later, John Arthur Roebuck and Thomas Wyse.⁸

James Mill came to London from Scotland and met Jeremy Bentham in 1808. This led to a long association. Apart from spending at least half of each year at Bentham's country retreat at Ford Abbey, Somerset, over a four year period,⁹ Mill frequently dined at his London residence in Queen Square.¹⁰

Francis Place was an established Radical figure who had already fallen foul of the government. During the 1790's, Place was a leading light of the London Corresponding Society for the exchange of ideas. The Society was suspected of seditious activities, and in the wake of the French Revolution, the British government banned their meetings. By the 1800's, Place had retired from his occupation as a tailor in Charing Cross, but he had gained a reputation as an authority on social problems, such as drunkenness and crime. His concern with reform and social inequalities, his knowledge and contacts made him an influential figure who was sought for advice and direction by fellow Radicals.

Place was acquainted with Edward Wakefield, a farmer from Romford, Essex, with an interest in education, becoming a strong supporter of the Lancasterian system. Wakefield was employed under the naval arsenal but was better known as an authority on agriculture and a statistician.

In 1812, he published Ireland, Statistical and Political and later became a land agent.¹¹ Wakefield knew James Mill and subsequently introduced Place to him.¹² In the course of 1812, Mill presented Place to Bentham¹³ and thus an interconnected circle of friends and followers was created, so that Radical mixed with Utilitarian and the unity of the two was cemented. The attraction to the Lancasterian system of education did much to bring them together.

James Mill had been a contemporary of Henry Brougham and Francis Jeffrey in Edinburgh and was engaged to contribute to the Edinburgh Review, which those two had established. This was a useful medium for promoting the cause of education, usually from the Lancasterian viewpoint, together with other liberal themes such as the reform of the Poor Law and the abolition of the slave trade. Francis Place had been attracted to Joseph Lancaster's system of education from as early as 1804, when he noticed an appeal for public funds. He visited Lancaster's school and "having examined the teacher and seen the mode of teaching practiced" became a subscriber of half a guinea monthly.¹⁴ In 1809, Mill joined the Royal Lancasterian Association and both he and Place became active on the committee. The British system appealed to the practicality of Utilitarians for the undenominational feature made it available almost to everyone. The burden upon limited finances for additional Church schools deprived education of its immediate appeal of cheapness.

Henry Brougham, of course, was drawn into this scheme in 1810¹⁵ and, while Utilitarians and Radicals joined other interested groups in support of Lancaster's scheme, the project provided opportunities for the formation of new alliances among men of influence. Brougham and William Allen established a new periodical to promote their social themes. This was The Philanthropist: or Repository for Hints and Suggestions

Calculated to Promote the Comfort and Happiness of Mankind. Allen wrote to Brougham in October, 1810, "Our little work has appeared - but needs patronages of 'Friends' to keep it going."¹⁶ James Mill agreed to contribute articles as he believed that The Philanthropist gave more freedom to the expression of his ideas than the Edinburgh Review permitted. Mill's writing began to add weight to the Lancasterian group when he produced a pamphlet in support of their enterprise in 1812, entitled Schools for All, and an article in the Edinburgh Review in 1813.¹⁷

In the early, traumatic years of the Lancasterian Society, James Mill and Francis Place provided a more business-like attitude to counter-balance the simple philanthropy of the Quaker financiers and Lancaster's drain on the resources. There existed a somewhat uneasy alliance among supporters, however, perhaps because among so many religious groups, neither Mill nor Place had any religious affiliations. The attitude of both Unitarians and Quakers was one of tolerance¹⁸ and, for the common good, they were able to co-operate with most Utilitarians and Radicals. Place was to have most difficulty in accepting the dominance of Joseph Fox, who insisted on some scriptural teaching in the schools. Nevertheless, both men were on the committee and Place even tried to mediate between Lancaster and his trustees when a split appeared inevitable.¹⁹

With the dismissal of Joseph Lancaster, Edward Wakefield wrote to Francis Place²⁰ with recommendations for the advancement of the work. He had perceived shortcomings in the provision of masters and it was his opinion that the Borough Road School ought to confine its operations to the training of teachers and that the managing committee of the school ought to become "a sort of national board for the promotion of schools everywhere." Wakefield gave hints on how his ideas would be

funded by subscription and demonstrated awareness of the psychology which could be employed to raise support. By limiting the numbers on the committee, while giving their names public prominence, he envisaged keen competition to be elected which would attract more zealous subscribers. Wakefield also appreciated the notion of using endowments as a further source of finance.²¹ He suggested that grammar or superior schools could provide funds for elementary schooling. For guidance on the practice of schools, he recommended Bentham's Panopticon and Edgeworth's²² Practical Education. To crown his national system of education, there would be a "cheap university", thereby spanning the whole range of the ages of development.

Such was their enthusiasm for the spread of the Lancasterian system that Place, Mill and Wakefield combined to instigate a branch development which they called the West London Lancasterian Association. Their intentions were to survey London west of Temple Bar and north of the river to ascertain how many schools were needed to provide elementary education for everyone and to work from that basis. Wakefield enthused about the prospect of further regional associations, whose activities would help to foster the spirit of "Schools for all".²³

After preliminary meetings in private, a public meeting to launch the Association was held on 2nd August, 1813. The address to the public, according to Place, had been selected beforehand by the triumvirate of Mill, Wakefield and himself, though it was strongly characteristic of James Mill's utilitarianism and expressed the following main points.

"In whatever degree happiness depends upon good conduct and in whatever degree good conduct depends upon good understanding and good habits, in that same degree do happiness and good conduct depend upon training or education.

"That the happiness of the great majority is not the second but the first of national objects no Englishman will controvert.

"That the happiness of the nation, all orders included, depends upon the good conduct of the majority, all men are forward to proclaim."

"It is impossible to train the young to good habits and good inclinations by leaving them in idleness. The groundwork of our training must be employment..."²⁴

The full title of the association was the "West London Lancastrian Association for teaching Reading, Writing, Arithmetic and Good Morals." Place recorded that the committee again attracted supporters from varied backgrounds, including Unitarians, Methodists, several Churchmen, Scotch Presbyterians, Baptists, Roman Catholics and four "Infidels", two of whom were himself and James Mill.²⁵ Mill stayed mainly behind the scenes playing a consultative role, because of the time he was spending at Ford Abbey with Bentham. He was more actively involved on important occasions but was particularly influential in gathering supporters to the project. Joseph Hume, another leading Radical acknowledged that his participation was primarily at the suggestion of "Mr. Mill".²⁶ Hume became a subscriber, a committee member and, in addition, was employed as an auditor.

Francis Place industriously divided his labour between the West London Association and the central Lancastrian committee. In January, 1814 he wrote to Wakefield -- "Indeed, I never was so intensely occupied in my life as I have been lately with the two (school) committees."²⁷ The relationship with the parent-body, however, became strained and the antagonism between Place and the powerful presence of Joseph Fox eventually brought about a parting. Place's services as Secretary were dispensed with and Fox seemed prepared to assume the extra responsibility himself. It happened during a summer committee meeting in 1814 while Mill was absent at Ford Abbey. Mill was displeased about Place's demise, not simply because he had been missing but because of the work his

colleague had devoted to the committee. He also felt dismay that a worthwhile cause was in danger from internal divisions so soon after its commencement. He wrote to Place to console him.

The meeting... "Had I been there, should not have gone as it did. If your services had been such as to deserve a vote of thanks, it was a misfortune to be deprived of them. The conduct of the committee, therefore appears to me with a brand upon it of absurdity."²⁸

Mill appreciated that there were obstacles to overcome, that they faced a period of hard labour with the prospect of little profit but, amid the pessimism, he tried to lift Place's spirit by declaring his own determination to continue with the necessary reform of education and the diffusion of its benefits.

The internal tensions of the Lancasterian group might have retarded the initial progress of the British and Foreign School Society, constituted in 1814.²⁹ The British Society, despite the support of wealthy Quakers and Unitarians could not equal the assured progress of the National Society with its intrinsic financial and organisational strength. The dispute between Place and Fox broadened to affect the prospects of the West London Lancasterian Association, a state of affairs which created apprehension among supporters. Joseph Hume told Place,

"I am sorry indeed that an institution which was commenced under such flattering auspices should be threatened with ruin so unexpectedly and so likely to do mischief to the great cause."³⁰

A more tactful handling of Fox was urged, but the strident personality of Francis Place would not yield to it. Fox insisted that the Bible should be the only book read in Lancasterian schools and this was allied with a demand that children who did not attend a place of worship on Sundays should be banned from the schools. The West London Association refused to enforce either condition and seceded from the parent body. This virtually sealed its fate because, despite the efforts to encourage

subscriptions, its finances remained below expectations. The Association never succeeded in raising enough capital to establish any schools, only partially completed the survey work and from 1816 was virtually extinct.³¹

Place had another difference of opinion, this time with William Allen, concerning a critical reference to Place's "infidel" status. This matter they were able to settle without major upheaval. Place suggested that he could criticise Allen because his Christian principles did not accord with those of Place. An exchange of letters and some explanation of opposing views led to an understanding of each other's position and an apology from Allen.³²

Meanwhile, Mill and Place had been industrious in another educational project which was independent of any other authority, more peculiarly of their own making. It was an attempt to adapt the monitorial system to a secondary or superior day school and was based in Westminster. Other principal sponsors of this endeavour included Jeremy Bentham, Edward Wakefield and David Ricardo,³³ a stockbroker, political economist, friend of Mill and another member of the B.F.S.S.. Mill was more closely involved in this venture, regularly attending meetings, raising funds and, even while he was away at Ford Abbey, acting as liaison between Bentham and the London-based promoters. He and Place collaborated on the proposed basis of the appeal to the public. Bentham contributed his books Elements of Tuition and Chrestomathia which set out a syllabus together with methods of instruction. The traditional grammar school classics were abandoned in favour of a more "useful" scientific curriculum. Mill and Place helped to prepare the books for the press, advised upon free distribution in the most influential quarters and even provided estimates of financial return.³⁴

Despite his guiding hand, Bentham proved unreliable in one important respect, the provision of a site for the school. All the work was to founder upon this. Bentham originally offered his garden as a location, but, as early as 1814, Mill had expressed doubts that this would be suitable. He wrote to Place -

"Mr. Bentham's eagerness to have it in his garden was originally very great... he is still quite keen... but Mr. Koe who knows him and all his circumstances better than anybody, says that he is persuaded that Mr. Bentham will not continue to like it, that there are a multitude of disagreeables connected with it of which he will not at present allow himself to think, but which will swell into great objections hereafter."³⁵

It was hoped to attract the sons of tradesmen to the school and that they would appreciate the broader education offered. Money was raised but, following the fate of the West London Association, the school was not built. Mill had advised that alternative sites for the school should be sought as a precaution against the loss of Bentham's offer. Bentham reacted as predicted. Ricardo tried to obtain a site in Leicester Square, but was driven off by threatened legal action. Bentham's alternative then became available again but the project did not settle easily and was abandoned in 1822.³⁶

The efforts of the Radical-Utilitarian partnership seemed plagued by disunity. Their Chrestomathic School and West London Lancastrian Association foundered. Even the main chance of their educational interests, the B.F.S.S., experienced internal strains. As well as the fussiness and indecision of Bentham, exhibited above, Francis Place, centre of previous B.F.S.S. disputes, seemed to fall out with another close colleague, Edward Wakefield. Certainly, at one point, he wrote to Mr. James Gray in Edinburgh - "I take no interest in what concerns Ewd. Wakefield. I really do not think him worthy the trouble of thinking of."³⁷ Yet, from their work, at least one worthwhile contribution

remained for the promotion of education in general. Although incomplete, the survey work of the West London Association, carried out by small groups, proved useful to Henry Brougham's Select Committee of Inquiry in 1816, which required information on the state of education in London. This specific contribution was acknowledged when information on the progress of the inquiries was disseminated by the Philanthropist.³⁸

James Mill continued to be influential through his writing. From 1814 to 1823, he provided articles for the Encyclopaedia Britannica and his "Essay on Education" (1818) was taken as the intellectual inspiration which maintained the activities of the Philosophic Radicals. In the Essay, Mill defined the aims of education as the "best employment of all the means which can be made use of, by man for rendering the human mind to the greatest possible degree the cause of human happiness."³⁹

Mill acknowledged that the process of education in its broadest sense began from birth. All sensory experiences educated the individual so that character and the pattern of behaviour began before the child approached school age. He recognised the impact of the indisciplined environment upon the poor and hoped that

"Education -- or the care of forming the habits, ought to commence, as much as possible, with the period of sensation itself; and at no period is its utmost vigilance of greater importance, than the first."⁴⁰

Bad practices and attitudes were imprinted in the character of the child from the earliest stages of development by the natural contact with its family and home experiences. Early family education was important but if the poor did not possess the requisite standards in the first instance, then there were obvious problems. In this respect, despite his trust in education and its influence for change, the greater force upon people's lives came from the state and society.

Mill theorised that the priorities which governed learning were limited to custom or pleasure and pain. The repetition of patterns of behaviour meant that they grew as part of the personality, while the pursuit of pleasure and the avoidance of pain expanded character development. The part that education could play was to try to instil an attitude which took into account the needs of others, so that an element of temperance would prevent unbridled lust for increased wealth and power. Men had to be taught to see beyond the immediate gratification of their senses to appreciate those affairs which affected their long-term happiness.⁴¹ For the poor, this meant a curb upon crime and drunkenness which threatened the middle and upper classes who controlled the nation.

In his article on Education, Mill also proclaimed that the great mass of mankind was "equally susceptible to mental excellence."⁴² This was not a totally egalitarian concept and contained no threat to the balance of society. While accepting that all men were capable of intellectual development, Mill appreciated that the labouring classes would be limited in the time and energy which they could devote to its pursuit. Nevertheless, the poor could enjoy stimulation beyond the basic education for responsibility.⁴³ In return, the middle and upper classes were expected to develop their own levels of intelligence to retain the differentials in status. Like the Radicals, Mill believed that it was essential for the middle classes to expand their educational capabilities. A national, economic consideration operated in this respect, because it was acknowledged that the inspiration for manufacturing and scientific development would come primarily from the middle class. Therefore, it was essential to promote education beyond the elementary level. For this reason, in the 1820's, when the labouring classes

themselves exhibited an interest in advancing their capabilities, the Radicals and Utilitarians latched onto the promotion of adult education and Mechanics' Institutes.

With regard to the provision of education for the poor, Mill was aware that their financial difficulties could necessitate the introduction of assistance from the government to encourage developments. He advocated this step with reluctance, fearing misuse of education by the state in order to maintain a docile population. One measure would prevent this abuse of power, the freedom of the press. The removal of restrictions on the dissemination of information would attract much Radical agitation later. In the meantime, Mill was prepared to take a risk with the government for the sake of acquiring known benefits from education.

"It is still so very great a good to have the whole facility of reading and writing diffused through the whole body of the people, that we should be willing to run considerable risks for its acquirement."⁴⁴

When he had finished writing for the Encyclopaedia Britannica, James Mill was appointed to India House, a promotion which prevented him from taking a fuller role in the institution of a new Radical-Utilitarian periodical the Westminster Review, the first edition of which appeared in 1824. Bentham had nurtured this project and had hoped that Mill would be the editor. When Mill could not fulfil this role, Bentham still provided the financial backing but his secretary, John Bowring M.P., assumed the editorship. Nevertheless, both James Mill and his son John Stuart Mill wrote for the new periodical. In the first number, James presented an article on existing reviews, during the course of which he attacked the Edinburgh Review.⁴⁵ Despite the former association, Mill had grown dissatisfied as the Edinburgh Review had become mainly a Whig mouthpiece. By his own logic, since the readership was largely Whig,

of landowning status, from financial necessity, the material had to pander to the interests of that group rather than the broader mass of the population. By 1826, Mill and his sons had broken with the Westminster Review after a dispute with Bowring, yet returned to write again when the periodical merged with the London Review, four years later.

As the Radicals and Utilitarians, together with most other educationists, became pre-occupied with adult education, the Westminster Review promoted the broader, scientific and political curriculum and called for more attention to the education of the middle class. The middle class was important because it contained

"beyond all comparison, the greatest proportion of the intelligence, industry, and wealth of the state. In it are the heads that invent, and the hands that execute; the enterprise that projects, and the capability with which these projects are carried into operation.,, In this country at least, it is this class which gives to the nation its character. The proper education of this portion of the people is therefore of the greatest possible importance to the well-being of the State."⁴⁶

Therefore, during the 1820's, the Radical-Utilitarian leadership sought different avenues along which to promote educational provision in the country.

Francis Place caught the interest of the skilled working classes in the movement to establish Mechanics Institutes.⁴⁷ He was a prominent figure in drawing up the constitution of the London Mechanics' Institution in 1823. James Mill joined with Henry Brougham in the establishment of University College, London, then known as the University of London and was a member of the Council of the University in the latter years of the 1820's. To supplement the work of the established institutions and to fit a mood for a more informal acquisition of knowledge, the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge was created.

The S.D.U.K. was inspired mainly by Henry Brougham, following the

publication in 1825 of his pamphlet Practical Observations on the Education of the People.⁴⁸ The formal foundations of the Society were sealed in 1827, based upon the supposition that, by that time, the B.F.S.S. and the National Society had helped to create an interest in education among the adult population. It was hoped that the adult appetite for knowledge would stimulate a demand for the education of the younger generations, thus approaching the subject of national education from a new angle. The Society was equally attractive to Radical and Utilitarian for it offered satisfaction to their reform aspirations as well as their demand for more scientific education. It was anticipated that "useful knowledge" would include tracts on political education. Brougham's Practical Observations had hinted at such -

"Why then may not every topic of politics, party as well as general, be treated of in cheap publications? It is highly useful to the community that the true principles of the constitution, ecclesiastical and civil, should be well understood by every man who lives under it."⁴⁹

The Society was determined to have a non-sectarian religious policy similar to that professed by the B.F.S.S. James Mill joined the committee⁵⁰ and the S.D.U.K. stirred the interest of provincial Radicals who began to organise within their localities. Charles Knight, the selected publisher of the literary works, helped with the promotion of the Society in various parts of the country. Representatives were appointed for the most important provincial towns. In 1828, Knight went on tour to organise local committees. In Birmingham, he contacted Joseph Parkes, who became one of the secretaries.⁵¹ Parkes, who was a Dissenter and also son-in-law of Francis Place, was an active provincial Radical. He was involved in the movement for Reform and felt that other groups, such as the Society of Friends of the People and the Constitutional Association, never achieved their aims and frequently did themselves a disservice by drifting into illegal activities. He thought that their purpose would be better

served by a steady pressure on public opinion by means of public meetings, petitions, and a use of the press; furthermore by extending everywhere the means of public education in the true principles of government, trade, capital and labour.⁵² With this attitude, Parkes and other Radicals held high expectations of the S.D.U.K. In December, 1830, he wrote to Francis Place; "Education is the grand mark now, every ultimate public object will follow as a certain consequence..."⁵³

Initially, the S.D.U.K. and the subsequent Library of Useful Knowledge received the approbation of Radicals and Utilitarians. The Westminster Review promoted the new initiative almost immediately. In April 1827, the Westminster Review attempted to dispel fears of knowledge creating upheaval. The acquisition of knowledge was associated with wealth and power. Those who had already possessed these were reluctant to permit similar benefits for the working population. The Westminster Review's argument was that "a diffused education is economy."⁵⁴ The reader was encouraged to accept the benefits to the nation of a more advanced and creative work-force. Apart from the potential for industry, the general "influence of education on the political relations of man in society"⁵⁵ was another crucial point for the nation to consider. Following James Mill's earlier theory, a further article in 1828 called for the replacement of Greek and Latin with scientific education for the upper classes, too.⁵⁶ The Edinburgh Review also agreed to carry articles to promote the S.D.U.K.

The S.D.U.K. probably originated one of the major Radical campaigns during the 1830's and an important side issue to the advancement of education. In order to succeed, the Society relied upon the easy circulation of reading material but Henry Brougham was aware from the start that there was an obvious obstacle. In Practical Observations he had criticised

the tax upon paper as a principal hindrance to providing cheaper and more varied reading material to meet demand. He had called for a repeal of this tax "which is truly a tax upon knowledge, and falls heaviest upon those who most want instruction."⁵⁷

The Radicals adopted this theme so that the repeal of "taxes on knowledge" became a cause celebre for them. The Westminster Review was used to appeal for the removal of these taxes, which were alleged to place public journals beyond the reach of a large proportion of the middle classes as well as almost the entire labouring class.⁵⁸ With yet another French revolutionary episode in 1830 a recent memory, there was a sense of urgency about the Westminster Review's call for the dissemination of moral and political knowledge for the sake of social stability. Complaints were noted from manufacturers throughout the country that the most ignorant of the workmen were not only the most dangerous, but were also becoming the most unprofitable. For the dual purpose of stability and economy, it was thought essential to have access to their minds for the purpose of instructing them and reasoning with them should an incident occur.⁵⁹

By the 1830's, the Radicals had gained in political prominence while the Utilitarian leadership was ageing. Bentham died in 1832. With supporters in Parliament, the Radical political voice began to dominate over the theoretical expression of Utilitarian ideas. They realised that effective change could only be achieved through the legislature.

A Parliamentary Radical, Joseph Hume, maintained the campaign against the taxes on knowledge in 1831. He presented a petition in the Commons from the North West Metropolitan Union and in his speech drew a parallel with the Poor Law. He thought that if parishes were obliged

to find food for pauper children it was equally important that they should also provide them with knowledge.⁶⁰ His opponents made reference to the "sedicious papers" which circulated in contravention of the laws and the harm which they caused. Mr. Trevor blamed "these despicable, these diabolical papers" for many of the faults of the poor.⁶¹ The limited education of the readers of such material made them easy prey to any misleading ideas contained therein. Sir Francis Burdett informed the House that there were men who were prepared to devote their talents to counter the dubious publications and to diffuse better opinions among the people. Their sense of propriety, however, or fear of penalties, prevented them from infringing the Stamp Laws, and therefore, they remained unanswered.⁶²

Hume and Burdett were among the spokesmen in Parliament, but behind the scenes, Francis Place still orchestrated tactics. In 1831, as part of the campaign against the taxes, he organised a deputation to petition Viscount Althorp and used John Arthur Roebuck as figurehead. Roebuck, though not yet in Parliament, mixed in Radical circles and was an acquaintance of Hume. Place wrote to Roebuck in February, 1831 -

"I am not quite at ease respecting the deputation to Lord Althorp on Taxes on Knowledge. You are to propose: 1) Abolition of Stamp duty on Newspapers;
2) Abolition of Stamp duty on Advertisements;
3) Abolition of Excise duty on Paper.

All this should be done at once, and would be done at once by a wise and valiant administration, ours is neither the one nor the other, and no one of these proposals will be attended to. It is therefore the more necessary that the deputation should make no concession but insist upon having the whole of the duties repealed. You have put yourselves forward as the representatives of all who desire to have the taxes repealed and they must not be compromised."⁶³

The deputation made little impression with their demands but the successful passage of the Reform Bill in 1832 brought expectation of improvements. The Westminster Review called for learning to be made

radical and proclaimed that freedom could be fought for both in the Commons and in schools or lecture rooms. Again scientific subjects were emphasized but, in addition, the Westminster Review urged the correction of erroneous knowledge.⁶⁴

The Reform Parliament introduced more Radicals to the House of Commons, including John Roebuck,⁶⁵ who immediately assumed the position of spokesman on education when he made his intentions known. In 1833, he moved for a Select Committee to investigate the best means of establishing a national system of education. Although subsequently withdrawn, it was this proposal which was indirectly responsible for the £20,000 Government grant of 1833. Someone in the Government, generally taken to be Henry Brougham, picked up the notion and pressed the Cabinet into making the grant.⁶⁶

Outside Parliament, the Radicals succeeded in maintaining a high level of activity to keep aspects of education in the attention of the nation. Despite expectations, pamphlets on political knowledge had not been published by the S.D.U.K., which led to the build-up of frustration and disillusionment in Radical circles. Roebuck had written a critical article in the Westminster Review,⁶⁷ before he entered Parliament. Harriet Martineau, whom James Mill had engaged to write articles or stories on the Poor Law for the S.D.U.K., later expressed opinions to Lord Henley and Lord Dundas that the Whig management of the Society guaranteed that it was not the way to reach the people.⁶⁸ The Radicals moved to compensate for the deficiency themselves. In 1833, Roebuck, Hume, Grote, Warburton and Francis Place decided to establish a Society for the Diffusion of Political and Moral Knowledge.⁶⁹ Place had written to Roebuck in late December, 1832, to disclose a long-term ambition of "editing a paper for the people" and to say that he had "conversed on

the subject with some of our friends and most particularly with Mr. Mill."⁷⁰ He relished the idea of becoming editor of a Penny Political Magazine but, after further consultation with Mill, he was dissuaded as he would present too welcome a target for the Whigs to prosecute under the very laws the Society intended to challenge.⁷¹

With pre-occupations at India House, Mill was becoming more withdrawn from practical involvement, but, until his death in 1836, he remained a figure for consultation. Francis Place maintained continuity of action and was the guiding force behind Radical organisations. He drew up a list of supporters who could be approached for subscriptions to the Society for the Diffusion of Political and Moral Knowledge, together with the contacts who should approach them. He also recommended the first set of officers:- Hume, President; Warburton, Vice-President; and Grote, Treasurer. As well as a number of men to be drawn into the Society, Place had apparently secured the literary services of a selection of Utilitarian and Radical writers:- James Mill, John Mill, Mr. A. Roebuck, G. Grote, Mrs. Grote, Wm. Drescott, Mr. G. Graham, Chas. Buller, Southwood Smith, M. Fox, Dr. Arnot, A. Fonblanque, Edwin Chadwick, J. Parkes, Mich Doane, D. Bingham, Mr. Bowring, Coln Thompson - London - E. Parry, Bailey, H. Daniel, McCrawford and McMelville.⁷²

Apart from Dr. Arnot, a preacher and theological writer, there were some politically active members of the Bentham-Mill circle. Grote and his wife were both writers, George a historian who became interested in philosophy after meeting James Mill in 1818. He supported the foundation of the University of London and entered Parliament after the passing of the Reform Bill. Warburton was a philosopher, a friend of Ricardo. When he became a Member of Parliament in 1826, he identified himself as a Radical. Warburton was also a member of the first Council of the

University of London. Charles Buller had a background in law, was a strong reformer and entered Parliament in 1830. Southwood Smith was a Unitarian, assisted in the foundation of the Scottish Unitarian Association, but was also a Benthamite and one of the contributors to the Westminster Review. Another contributor was Albany Fonblanque, a London journalist and friend of the Utilitarian leaders. He was to manage and eventually own the Examiner, an organ of high-class intellectual radicalism.⁷³

Roebuck wrote a circular calling for a meeting on Monday 7th January, 1833, in which the aims of the group were elucidated. The objects of the society were threefold:-

"1st. The publication of itself, and under its own legal responsibility, of works fitted by their price and matter for the purposes of popular instruction on politics and morals.

2nd. The sanctioning, by their approval, works possessing the same qualities published by others.

3rd. and lastly, The adopting all possible means of inducing the legislature to remove any obstruction to the diffusion of knowledge among the people; as well as to adopt measures for a general or national education of the whole population."⁷⁴

The life of this Society was nipped in the bud, for Warburton was despatched to obtain an assurance from Lord Althorp⁷⁵ and to make it clear to him that the object was the repeal of taxes on knowledge not the annoyance of ministers. That assurance must have been given because the Society was disbanded almost immediately, on the understanding that Althorp would introduce the repeal measure in the House, thus negating the need for the Society. Althorp, however, failed to do so.

Roebuck decided to revive his idea of a Parliamentary Select Committee and was successful in obtaining one in 1834, but only to examine the effects of the £20,000 grant. Some of the force of his proposal was reduced because Lord Althorp succeeded in altering the terms of reference from Roebuck's original intention "to inquire into the means of

establishing a system of national education."⁷⁶ So it became a muted exercise in gathering information but with the prospect of further government grants if the Select Committee concluded that it would be expedient. He was successful in obtaining a renewal of the Select Committee in the new Parliament of 1835 and took an active part in the proceedings, although Lord John Russell was mainly in command. Apart from representatives from schools and the main education societies this 1835 Select Committee offered Francis Place the opportunity to be examined.

In his evidence, Place called upon his awareness of broader social issues to remark upon an effective decline in the figures for crime and drunkenness among the working population.⁷⁷ This improvement in society he accredited to education and the spread of knowledge. He presented the results of inquiries conducted by himself and colleagues, together with some of his own writing to illustrate a favourable trend.

"From an Essay on the Improvement of the Working People; EDUCATION - DRUNKENNESS" by Francis Place.⁷⁸

(Commissioners of Police)

	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Total</u>
1831	19,748	11,593	31,341
1832	20,304	12,332	32,636
1833	18,268	11,612	29,880
1834	12,679	7,100	19,779

These statistics were intended to prove the correlation between the increase in educational provision in 1833 and the reduction of offences related to drunkenness. When compared with the population as a whole, these numbers were not large, but Place reckoned the significance lay in the small number of genuine working men. The diffusion of knowledge, he argued, was an effective deterrent against social disorder.

On the development of schools in general, while he advocated the benefits of one system, he also revived old animosity towards the National

Society Schools, their exclusivity, religious education, narrowness and imperfection of the education therein. Even the British Society fell within the bounds of criticism for basing school lessons exclusively on the Scriptures.⁷⁹ To suit his idea of a single non-exclusive system, he preferred that religion should not be taught at all. Place promised to send a list of his proposals for national education to the Select Committee,⁸⁰ but, whether he forgot, or the committee chose to ignore them, is uncertain. Neither the report nor the appendices made any further reference to them. On the other hand, the committee chose to append to their report, without comment, the evidence of Mr. James Simpson, taken before the Select Committee on Education in Ireland,⁸¹ also during the 1835 session. Simpson, the author of The Necessity of Popular Education as a National Object, presented a strong case for a national system and how it should be organised.⁸² Although neither the 1834 nor the 1835 Select Committee produced any subsequent legislation, the inclusion of Simpson's evidence by the latter was probably a gesture as to where their sentiments lay.

Roebuck had created a stir with his political proposals for education and had given the subject a prominence in Parliament which it had not enjoyed for some considerable time. To capitalise upon his position and to ensure the further advance of purely Radical ideas, Roebuck revived the Society for the Diffusion of Moral and Political Knowledge. In the preparatory organisation, Francis Place once again proposed arrangements. To ensure that the publications of the Society reached the appropriate readership, he wrote to Joseph Parkes to recommend a publisher who would not be confused with the S.D.U.K.

"Dear Parkes,
Charles Knight must be the publisher of the Tracts,
they must be published by Hetherington, Hill and Weston

"They are intended for the deluded workmen, not for their masters and their calumniators. The Unionists will read nothing which the Diffusion Society meddles with. They call the members of it Whigs, and the word whig with them, means a treacherous rascal, a bitter, implacable enemy."⁸³

This letter illustrated how disillusioned the Radicals and their supporters had become with the S.D.U.K. and how determined they were that their independent opinions should be expressed. Roebuck, however, seemed to take an independent line himself. He eventually had the pamphlets published by Charles Ely. Perhaps lacking the contacts of Francis Place, most of the important essays were written either by Roebuck himself or H.S. Chapman, not the wide array of writers which Place had engaged in 1833. The first of the Pamphlets for the People appeared in 1835. The first edition, appropriately entitled "On the means of Conveying Information to the People" explained Roebuck's intentions.

"The object we have in view is to instruct the people in their relative duties as citizens; to point out to them the rights which they ought to seek to obtain. We believe that no people can be well governed that does not govern itself; but also, that the mere possession of power by the people is not sufficient to insure a right of employment of it. To this end knowledge, and a sound morality are necessary..."⁸⁴

The Pamphlets were used to attack political opponents with little reservation, and to promote Roebuck's Radical opinions. Subjects included politics in general, attitudes to certain factions, trades unions and the working classes, religious attitudes and the Poor Law. The campaign against the Taxes on Knowledge also figured prominently. H.S. Chapman attacked Mr. Spring-Rice as the "arch knowledge-hater of the day" when the taxes were not repealed in the budget.

Mr. Spring-Rice was accused of being afraid of the diffusion of political knowledge among the people lest his position of power be

threatened.⁸⁵ Roebuck railed against the wealthier groups in society, expressing similar sentiments. He proclaimed that the rich were fearful of the changes knowledge could bring. They were alleged to be happy to keep the working population ignorant and dependent rather than instructed, content and independent in spirit.⁸⁶ If sections of the establishment obstructed any of his ideals, Roebuck used the pamphlets to denounce them. An example of this arose when the Municipal Corporations Reform Bill was passing through Parliament.

Presented to the Commons in June 1835, the Bill attempted to remove the old corporations, abolished the freemen, remodelled town governments as elected Councils, each presided over by a Mayor, gave these Councils power to appoint auditors, grant ale-house licenses, appoint charitable trustees and nominate to the Commission of the Peace. The new Municipal electorate was not large, being limited by the conditions of three years' consecutive payment of rates. Voting was by list, not by ballot. Elections were annual but only a third of the Council stood for re-election each year.⁸⁷ Magistrates would be appointed by the Crown.

Roebuck supported the principle of corporation reform which he hoped would remove power from self-interested parties or small bodies of employers and transfer responsibility to corporation governments, which would have more of the interests of the great body of inhabitants at heart. He also advocated that all the public charities, together with all institutions of education should be under their immediate and direct control⁸⁸ thereby reducing the influence of central government. Spring-Rice, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, even considered adding a borough rate for elementary education to the Bill.⁸⁹

When the Bill was considerably altered by the Lords, this prompted

a series of vicious attacks upon the Upper House as an institution of dubious value and vested interest. In "Of What Use is the House of Lords?" Roebuck tried to increase public awareness of the machinations of their lordships, whose position had only been maintained by people's traditional deference to their superiors. This attitude had been eroded by the Lords' resistance to the progress of reform, from Catholic Emancipation, the abolition of the Test and Corporation Acts to the Reform Bill itself. Roebuck maintained that their practices respecting the Municipal Corporation reform Bill should also be held against them.⁹⁰ In another pamphlet, "Evils of a House of Lords", he put forward his interpretation of the political motives of the House of Lords. The

"Lords see well that if the corporations are changed and made subservient to the People, they (the Lords) will lose very useful instruments. - My Lord A has power in the corporation of B. This corporation returns a member to the House of Commons, who is, in fact, the mouthpiece of Lord A. Thus Lord A has control over the Commons, and doubly influences the destiny of the People.

"Lord A keeps the interest of the corporation by acquiring good things for them. The loss of these is feared by the close corporations, and the loss of influence over the House of Commons is what the Lords fear."⁹¹

The pamphlets became more than simply educational, rather a propaganda outlet for Radical thought on current issues, sometimes almost revolutionary in Roebuck's attacks on the Establishment. The attempt to fill the gap in political education was appreciated by some. A.W. Hawkes-Smith wrote from Birmingham, Joseph Parkes' area, in October 1835, to commend Roebuck for his enterprise and practical information provided on the state of political science. Hawkes-Smith preferred the pamphlets to Cobbett's Register because they had more to do with the people.⁹² The campaign ended shortly, however; the series could not be maintained beyond a year after its inauguration and concluded in 1836. Primarily, the financial burden proved too great, but there

was also disappointment that Radical/Utilitarian writers did not give practical support. John Mill, for example, found time to write for Fox but not for the Pamphlets.⁹³ Roebuck lost his seat in Parliament shortly afterwards and thus lost his prominence as spokesman for education. He seemed to lose favour with fellow Radicals, which added to his demise and which could explain why the Pamphlets were not better supported.

Thomas Creevey was able to comment in 1837:-

"I am happy to say that the mischievous crew - Sir W. Molesworth, Roebuck, Mr. Napier and Co. - are becoming quite blown upon by their brother Radicals, which will be a monstrous relief to the Government in the approaching session..."⁹⁴

Almost as Roebuck's influence declined, the Radicals found another public figure to organise and lead the promotion of education. This was Thomas Wyse, M.P.,⁹⁵ who had had several years' experience in promoting education in Ireland and had been instrumental in formulating Lord Stanley's plan for a National Board of Education in that country in 1831. Wyse had also been engaged in the Select Committee of Inquiry into Education in Ireland, from which Mr. Simpson's evidence was taken and added to the report of Roebuck's 1835 Select Committee. In 1836, with the support of some fifty Radical and Whig M.P.'s he led the foundation of the Central Society of Education.⁹⁶ This was a soundly-organised Society, which drew upon the experiences of others in the past to unite separate factions and which published articles on a broad range of educational topics. In addition, Wyse had also published his own tome on the subject, Education Reform (1836), which provided suggestions on the aims of his activities.

Educational Reform was proclaimed the third great reform in succession to those which had overtaken Parliament and the Church. Wyse thought that it would be the natural sequence of events and education would crown the process of National Regeneration.⁹⁷

The Central Society, therefore, possessed a determined, purposeful tone in its publications and hoped that its work, if not immediately effective, would at least lay the foundations for future beneficial developments. The responsibility of making a start was accepted by the C.S.E. and each member was made conscious of his ability to contribute in his own time and way. The C.S.E., in considering the state of education, was aware of not only the indifference, but the despair which existed in the minds of many.⁹⁸ The Society tried to engender a spirit of unity and appealed to a national community strength as opposed to the interests of individuals or the few, which was clearly a challenge to the restrictive practices of the wealthy classes.

It was resolved

"to endeavour to combat some of the many difficulties by which this great question is surrounded, with a sanguine hope that all the good, the learned, and the noble-minded in the land, will lend a helping hand towards the accomplishment of its design."⁹⁹

The Society was aware of the frail, temporary nature of previous efforts and that most energy was directed towards the erection of schools, in some ways a limited perspective. The C.S.E. approach would be more scientific and well thought out. "It is conceived -- that if the Central Society would render any aid to the cause it has undertaken, it must commence by ascertaining the objects of education." Then, after thorough investigation, it would heap "fact upon fact, argument upon argument, classifying and opposing, and, in the instances in which it can be done with safety, draw a conclusion."¹⁰⁰

In character, the Central Society was an extension of other statistical groups which were active in the 1830's,¹⁰¹ though the scope of investigation was wider. Articles drew upon educational ideas from abroad as well as familiar theories of learning. The relationship between crime and education in France was used to illuminate the value

of education in assisting with the remedy of social ills. This was already a theme of English activists and, of course, had been presented by Francis Place to a Parliamentary Select Committee. Prussia was held up as an example of a state possessing a fully-organised educational system. It was popular among proponents of education to use examples of more advanced, established Continental systems to demonstrate the benefits of national education and possibly, by appeal to national pride, embarrass the British Government into action. In among articles of general interest, the C.S.E. examined Mechanics' Institutions and Libraries, very much familiar ground, and also analysed the returns of the Manchester Statistical Society.¹⁰² With reference to the Kerry Returns, the unreliable nature of some statistical exercises was highlighted. Criticism was aimed at the government's inactivity and lack of commitment to education. The achievement of private initiative was pronounced insignificant compared with the government provision in Prussia, for example, while the statistical exercises revealed a miserable state of affairs in domestic cities and larger towns.

The C.S.E. even suggested schemes to induce an interest in education, in a style which could have provided the government with tangible returns. Among these, there was some recourse to the Radical policy for the diffusion of knowledge but then the government was also advised to improve the quality of schoolmasters by overseeing their certification. With these basic improvements, a policy towards a proper system could be instituted.

"The people may gradually be led to a due appreciation of the value of education, and, as soon as this is the case, all who neglect their children in this particular will be regarded with little favour by their neighbours; the Government may foster this feeling by holding out civil advantages to those who have been educated, and imposing disabilities upon those who have not. The uneducated would gradually cease to be the mass; they

"would be the few. A law might then be passed without difficulty, which would lay the foundation of the sterling and lasting prosperity of the nation."¹⁰³

The advent of the C.S.E. presented the Government with a most competent and united advocacy for a national system of education, led by the experienced Thomas Wyse. The Society carried more influence than former pressure groups because of the various levels of expertise which it could draw upon, plus the sheer weight of the number of M.P.s among its members. This guaranteed a political impact which the Government found difficult to ignore. In the late 1830's, the C.S.E. continued to publish articles to keep education prominent in the minds of the administration. The Government acknowledged the mounting pressure on education by granting a further Select Committee to examine the education of the poor in 1837-38.¹⁰⁴ While this committee accepted the statistical evidence presented, they still calculated that there was no need for major intervention. The ministers maintained their indifference and no legislation resulted. On 14th May, 1838, Lord John Russell was definite that the Whigs were "not prepared to propose any plan for the efficient interference on the part of parliament in the field of education."¹⁰⁵ The following month, Wyse persisted in presenting to Parliament the Central Society's recommendation for a central administrative board.¹⁰⁶ Faced with this determination and unrelenting evidence, but no doubt aware of events surrounding the birth of Chartism in 1838/39, the Government finally conceded. In 1839, the Committee of Council on Education was instituted, which represented the first measure for direct control by a government department.

In achieving this much, the Radicals can claim to have played a noteworthy part. Although there had been a partnership with the Utilitarians for a long time, by the 1830's, the Radicals had come to

dominate activity. With the deaths of Bentham and James Mill, the Utilitarians lost influence and Mill had been more in the background during his later years. From about 1824, the younger generation of Utilitarians, including John Stuart Mill, John Austin, Eyton Tooke, and G.J. Graham, formed the real centre of the movement. They were more concerned with the speculative questions of philosophy than with practical social work or politics.¹⁰⁷

Utilitarians still promoted the theory of what education should achieve with the individual, whereas the Radicals set about effecting change where it would be really noticed, at the political level. The Radicals and Utilitarians worked together under the umbrella of the British and Foreign School Society because it suited their aims for the expansion of education. The Radicals, however, realising that education per se represented a very slow process of change, appreciated that the political arena was where more immediate and permanent change occurred. In the early years of the century, though, there was no significant representation in the Commons during the Napoleonic War, and there probably existed a legacy of suspicion concerning the activities of Radicals. By the 1830's, a considerable Radical presence had been established in Parliament, in particular after the Reform Bill in 1832. With representatives in the House, it was easier to bring causes to the notice of government and public.

The successful support of adult education did not require formal legislation. To facilitate self-improvement in the loosest sense of having ready access to information, legislation to remove the restrictive stamp duty was required. The campaign against "taxes on knowledge" was sustained in the public consciousness and was successful to the extent that it became an election issue for at least one candidate in

1834. A poster for John Crawford, addressed the inhabitants of Marylebone on the subject.

"The more widely Education is diffused among the people, and the greater the amount of their knowledge on every subject which affects their interests, the better for Society. Knowledge is the best means of assuring the comfort, the happiness and the respectability of the People; the most certain preventure of anarchy and disorder, and the only solid support of good government."

Mr. Crawford duly pledged himself to vote for the abolition of every Tax on Knowledge.¹⁰⁸

There were public meetings to promote the campaign and Radical figures addressed them. On 28th April, 1835, the National Union of Working Classes organised a meeting addressed by Feargus O'Connor, Wakley and Roebuck. George Birkbeck and Francis Place held a meeting at the Crown and Anchor, London on 18th July, with Henry Brougham in the Chair. The speakers here included Birkbeck, Hume, Roebuck, O'Connell and Wakley.¹⁰⁹

Deputations took the message to the new Chancellor, Mr. Spring-Rice. A large group of over thirty obtained an interview on 7th May, 1835 and were politely received. Headed by Mr. Hume, M.P. Mr. Grote, M.P. and Dr. Birkbeck, among those present were Dr. Southwood-Smith, Dr. Fellowes, Dr. Bowring, J.A. Roebuck, F. Place, R. Hill, Mr. Hill, E. Wilson, the publisher, the Rev. E. Wordsworth, Charles Knight (the publisher to the S.D.U.K.), W. Hickson and G.L. Craik.¹¹⁰

The pressure against the stamp duty eventually reaped dividends. Some changes were made. In 1832, the advertisement tax had been reduced but the revived campaign in the mid-thirties targeted the tax on newspapers. Eventually, on 13th August, 1836, a bill to reduce the stamp duty became law. Its immediate effect, however, was to obliterate the cheap press of the working men¹¹¹ because the new law was more stringently enforced than previous legislation.

With regard to education, John Roebuck, without ever acquiring an addition to permanent legislation, managed to derive some commitment from the Government. The £20,000 grant for the erection of schools might never have been made if Roebuck had not attempted to raise the question of national education in the Commons. The successive Select Committees involved Parliamentary time and expense. He created an impetus, which was carried on by Wyse and the Central Society. The Radicals were such a widespread group throughout the country that they were difficult to ignore. With so many supporters at different levels of society, whose work was spread across the entire period of this study, it was difficult to establish a united policy and it was not surprising if signs of disharmony occasionally appeared. Francis Place was probably the anchor, who provided a consistent link over the years. When the Central Society of Education was formed, however, the diverse members seemed channelled into a more productive, directed policy, with a greater effect on the Government.

Notes to Chapter Three

1. J.W. Flood, "The Benthamites and Their Use of the Press 1810-1840", p.5.
2. E. Halevy, The Growth of Philosophic Radicalism, p.79.
3. *ibid.*, p.282.
4. J.W. Flood, *op.cit.*, p.90
5. E. Halevy, *op.cit.*, p.243.
6. William Thomas, The Philosophic Radicals, p.120.
7. See Ch.2, Religious Groups, p.29.
8. See Ch.10, Ireland, p.291.
9. W.H. Burston, James Mill on Philosophy and Education, p.1.
10. Graham Wallas, The Life of Francis Place 1771-1854, p.65.
11. D.N.B., Vol.58., Edward Wakefield.
12. Graham Wallas, *op.cit.*, pp.65-66.
13. *ibid.*, p.72.
14. *ibid.*, p.94.
15. See Ch.1, Introduction, p.14.
and Ch.6, Henry Brougham, p.159.
16. J.W. Flood, *op.cit.*, pp.15-16, William Allen to Henry Brougham, 2nd October, 1810.
17. C.W. New, The Life of Henry Brougham to 1830, p.204.
18. See Ch.2, Religious Groups, p.p.32.
19. See. Ch.1, p.16f.
20. Add Mss. Place Papers. 35152 f6, Edward Wakefield to Place, 26th October, 1813.
21. See Ch.6, Henry Brougham, p.162ff.
22. See Ch.10, Ireland. p.280.
23. Add. Mss. Place Papers, 35152 f6.
- 24.. W.H. Burston, *op.cit.*, p.68.

25. *ibid.*, pp.67-68.
26. Add.Mss. 37949 f23, Hume to Place, 23rd November, 1814.
27. Graham Wallas, *op.cit.*, p.95.
28. Add. Mss. 37949 f 18, Mill to Place, 30th July, 1814.
29. See Ch.1, p.17.
and Ch.2, Religious Groups, p.46.
30. Add.Mss. 37949 f23.
31. W.H. Burston, *op.cit.*, p.68-69.
32. Add.Mss. 37949 f35, 15th October, 1815.
33. W.H. Burston, *op.cit.*, p.69.
34. *ibid.*, p.70.
35. *ibid.*, p.72, Add.Mss. 27823, Mill to Place, 14th October, 1814.
36. *ibid.*, p.72.
37. Add.Mss., 37949, f44, Place to Mr. James Gray, Edinburgh, London, 29th November, 1816.
38. The Philanthropist, Vol.VI, 1816, p.211.
39. E. Halevy, *op.cit.*, p.288.
40. W.H. Burston, *op.cit.*, p.175.
41. William Thomas, *op.cit.*, p.121.
42. *ibid.*
43. G.H. Bantock, Studies in the History of Educational Theory, Vol.2, p.178.
44. *ibid.*, p.180.
45. W.H. Burston, *op.cit.*, p.52.
46. E. Halevy, *op.cit.*, p.286, Quoting W.R., Vol.1, Art.iv.
47. See Ch.8, p.214.
48. See Ch.8, p. 216.
49. H. Brougham, Practical Observations Upon the Education of the People, p.5.
50. W.H. Burston, *op.cit.*, p.51.

51. Jessie, K. Buckley, Joseph Parkes of Birmingham, p.41.
52. *ibid.*, p.272.
53. *ibid.*, p.55, also Add.Mss., 35148, f77, Parkes to Place, 5th December, 1830.
54. W.R., Vol.VII, April, 1827, "The Education of the People", p.292.
55. *ibid.*, p.272.
56. W.R., Vol.IX, April, 1828.
57. H. Brougham, *op.cit.*, p.13.
58. W.R., Vol.XV, No.XXIX, July, 1831, p.246.
59. *ibid.*, p.244.
60. Hansard 3rd Series, Vol.IX, 1831-32, 103, 7-12-1831, Wednesday.
61. *ibid.*
62. *ibid.*, col.104.
63. Add.Mss., 35149, F31, 22nd February, 1831.
64. W.R., Vol.XV, No.XXX, p.496.
65. See Ch.1, p.21.
66. See Ch.6, p. 176.
67. W.R., Vol. 14th April, 1831, "Useful Knowledge".
68. H. Martineau, Autobiography, Vol.1, 1877, p.312.
69. J.A. Roebuck, Life and Letters, pp.59-60
J.W. Flood, (*op.cit.*, p.42) gives a date of 1832 and a larger group of Place, Grote, Hume, Romilly, Warburton, W.J. Fox, John Mill and Roebuck meeting as the Society for the Diffusion of Moral and Political Knowledge with the aim of bringing out a paper, the Penny Political Magazine designed for working people.
70. Add.Mss., 35154, f162, Thursday, 27th December, 1832.
71. Add.Mss., 35154, f172, Saturday 13th January, 1833.
"A long conversation with Mill, in the course of which I said, I thought I should not become Editor, since under the old stamp act, the Attorney General was bound Ex Officio to prosecute in the Exchequer, the printer, publisher and editor of such a work, and for as many penalties of £100 each as he could from the sale of copies. Mr. Mill remarked that the Whigs would be pleased with an opportunity to Exchequer me."

72. Add.Mss., 35154, p.169.
73. D.N.B., Vol.2, William Arnot, Vol.7, Charles Buller, Vol. 19, Albany Fonblanque, Vol.23, George Grote, Vol.53, Southwood Smith, Vo.59, Henry Warburton.
74. Add.Mss., 35154, F167.
75. Add.Mss. 35154, f173.
76. J.A. Roebuck, Life and Letters, p.62.
77. PP. 1835, VII, pp.833-835.
78. *ibid.*, p.850.
79. *ibid.*, p.855.
80. *ibid.*, p.844.
81. See Ch.10, Ireland, p.299.
82. PP. 1835, VII, Appendix 3,
83. Add.Mss., 35154, f193, Place to Parkes, 21st April, 1834.
84. Pamphlets for the People, Ed. J.A. Roebuck, "On the Means of conveying Information--", p.4.
85. "Mr. Spring-Rice and the Taxes on Knowledge", H.S. Chapman, p.9.
86. "On the Means of Conveying Information", J.A. Roebuck, p.3.
87. William Thomas, *op.cit.*, pp.278-279.
88. "A Letter to the Electors of Bath, on the Municipal Corporation Reform Bill", J.A. Roebuck.
89. D.G. Paz, *op.cit.*, p.61
90. "Of What Use is the House of Lords?", J.A. Roebuck, p.2.
91. "Evils of a House of Lords", J.A. Roebuck, p.2.
92. J.A. Roebuck, Life and Letters, p.61.
93. *ibid.*, p.76.
94. The Creevey Papers, Vol.1, 20th January, 1837.
95. See Ch.10, Ireland, p.291.
96. See Ch.1, p.24; Ch.9, p.268, and Ch.10, p.303.
97. J.J. Auchmuty, Sir Thomas Wyse 1791-1862, pp.149-150.

98. Central Society of Education, 1st Publication 1837, p.29, "Education in the United Kingdom", T. Wyse, "The Central Society of Education", B.F. Duppa.
99. *ibid.*, p.3.
100. *ibid.*, p.2.
101. See Ch.9, The Statistical Societies, p.242.
102. See Ch.9, The Statistical Societies, p.248ff.
103. Central Society of Education, 1st Publication 1837, p.14.
104. See Ch.1, p. 24.
105. Richard Parkin, "The Central Society of Education 1836-40", pp.14-15.
106. See Ch.11, p. 322.
107. G. Wallas, *op.cit.*, p.86.
108. Add.Mss., 47226, f208.
109. Thomas Kelly, George Birkbeck, p.107.
110. The Reformer, Vol.1, No.5, 14th May, 1835, p.1.
111. Thomas Kelly, *op.cit.*, p.173.

CHAPTER 4

Robert Owen

The major pressures to promote education usually came from the organisational strength of groups. During this period of the 19th Century, however, there arose one individual, inspired by his experience and imagination, who followed his own inclinations and sought to impose his will upon the nation. Robert Owen, forever associated with New Lanark, singlemindedly developed his plans for the improvement of the uneducated poor, and then generated much of his own publicity to try to have them adopted by the government.

Owen originated from Newtown, Montgomeryshire and, after an educational route through Shrewsbury and London, before the end of the 18th Century, he was already an established manufacturer in Manchester. After an apprenticeship with Mr. McCuffog, he rose to manage Bank Top Mill for a Mr. Drinkwater. During his residence there, Owen developed intellectual pursuits by involving himself in "two institutions which attracted considerable notice."¹ He became associated with Manchester College through the acquaintance of John Dalton, a Quaker and later Dr. Dalton, philosopher, famous for investigating colour-blindness, and a Mr. Winstanley, both of whom were assistants there under Dr. Baines. Owen recalled meeting in their room in the evenings to discuss subjects such as religion and morals, as well as the latest scientific discoveries.² On 1st November, 1793, when he was still only 23 years of age, Owen was elected a member of the Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society,³ which offered facility for debate, exchange of ideas and contacts with eminent professional people of the area. On the committee at the time were Dr. Percival, the President, who had founded the society in 1781, Doctors Ferriar, Holme and Bardsley, a surgeon, Simpson, and Mr. Henry,

a chemist.⁴ Dr. Percival was a physician and author⁵ and, like Currie in Liverpool and Thomas Bernard in London, was particularly concerned with social conditions.

Owen learned of current educational ideas through the Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society which debated the works of Rousseau, Helvetius, Godwin, Wollstonecraft, Paine and Bentham.⁶ Owen played his part and contributed papers regularly to meetings, though in a stumbling and unsophisticated style at first, improving a little with time. None of his essays was chosen for publication though.⁷ The experience provided by his own workforce, together with the association of men of social conscience probably helped to sow the seeds of Owen's concerned attitude towards the poor. He admitted that some of the conditions he witnessed in Manchester had caused him to begin to ponder the value of education.⁸

Robert Owen was to develop his ideas to the stage of practical application when he moved to New Lanark, Scotland, at the turn of the Century. He first viewed the New Lanark Mills as the "New Lanark Twist Company", with a friend from Preston, in the summer of 1797.⁹ In January, 1800, he became 'part proprietor' and took over the management from David Dale,¹⁰ his father-in-law. Dale had already established a tradition of benevolent management, particularly towards the children, who were given the opportunity of receiving some education.¹¹ Owen, therefore, was presented with circumstances which facilitated the introduction of his own ideas, though he was always careful to emphasise the improvement wrought by his developments. When he assumed control of the New Lanark Mills, the local working population consisted of between 1,800-2,000 persons, with some 500 children who had been apprenticed to the mills from parish workhouses. Some of them he regarded as the dregs

of Scotland, poor, ignorant, generally indolent and ingrained with drunkenness and crime.¹²

Gradually, Owen set about transforming the environment with the intention of improving both the domestic and working conditions. In much of what he did, Owen demonstrated an affinity with utilitarian philosophy.¹³ Some of these notions might have been acquired while a member of the Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society but he was to have the occasional acquaintance of leading Utilitarians and Radicals later. Like the Utilitarians, he believed in the effect of the environment upon people's attitudes in life and that he would gain in the efficiency of his workers if they were happier in their lives and educated in the correct manner. Whereas the Utilitarians accepted an individual's liberty to accept or reject proffered improvements, Owen adopted a strong paternalistic attitude and imposed his regulations upon the people.

In the village, he instituted strict rules of cleanliness to eradicate the rubbish and grime from the streets and houses. Committees were elected to make regular inspections of the interior of the houses, which did not please the women of the community. He established a village shop which was a great success. It supplied the inhabitants' needs and obviated travel elsewhere. The cost of this was borne by the people themselves and in no way affected the profits of the mills. In the workplace, silent, colour-coded monitors were introduced to indicate an individual's attitude and application. Similarly, he provided a book of character as an additional record of the people. Owen removed the use of any external punishments or rewards. As an example of his paternal imposition, Owen even introduced a curfew of 10.30p.m. during winter months to try to instill good practice. As an adjunct to the regime

upon the adults of the society, provision was made for the education of the children, with a view to influencing the development of their characters. Realising that the children were too tired to benefit from school after a hard day's labour, Owen reduced their working hours. He introduced the minimum employment age of 10 and the company provided a school for children between 5 years and 10.¹⁴

Some of his alterations did not meet with the approval of his partners, particularly his specific intentions with regard to education. Their concern was primarily commercial. So, in 1809 Owen bought them out for £84,000 with a new partnership. One of his former associates remained, John Atkinson, together with Dennistown and Alexander Campbell, a relative of Mrs. Owen, plus a Colin Campbell, who was an associate of Alexander. This partnership was to prove even less amenable to Owen's ideas,¹⁵ but Owen was reaching the stage at which he was confident enough to begin to broadcast the apparent success of his endeavours. In a Statement Regarding the New Lanark Establishment (1812), he remarked upon the vast improvement in sobriety, honesty and good order which had overtaken the people since his plans had been applied.¹⁶

In 1812, on a lecture tour of the British Isles, Joseph Lancaster was tempted to add to his schedule a visit to Scotland. He was guest of honour at a dinner in Glasgow but, Owen claimed, because Lancaster was a Quaker, he only agreed to attend if Owen acted as chairman.¹⁷ Owen had adapted the monitorial system to the school at New Lanark, before his own modifications were formulated. Owen vigorously supported Lancaster's efforts in Glasgow and was keen to persuade those present that all the children of the poor should enjoy the benefits of education. At the dinner, Owen chose to impress the audience with his own perspectives on education.

In his exposition, Robert Owen again showed how close to Utilitarian attitudes he was in some respects. There was some identification with James Mill,¹⁸ when Owen spoke of his understanding of education as "the instruction of all kinds which we receive from our earliest infancy until our characters are generally fixed and established..." He maintained that despite all that had been written and spoken about education, few really appreciated its importance for society. As far as he was concerned, education was "the primary source of all good and evil, misery and happiness which exist in the real world."¹⁹ For Owen, education involved more than the transfer of facts or minor academic skills; it could help to develop the moral character of the people resulting in a more harmonious social order. At Glasgow, he revealed his belief in the control and manipulation of the environment with a statement that "we can materially command those circumstances which determine character."²⁰

Owen was so inspired by the reception he received at the dinner for Lancaster that he decided to elaborate upon his ideas in more detail. Towards the close of 1812 and into 1813, he wrote and published four essays, collectively entitled A New View of Society. To do this, Owen spent much time in London and in the preparation of the fourth essay received assistance from James Mill and Francis Place²¹ which would suggest an interest from Radical-Utilitarian circles. Owen was confident that he had a formula for curing the problems which afflicted the working communities. In addition to reducing crime and drunkenness, Owen had a genuine desire to make the people happy, to improve the quality of life for the poor. A contented population would remove many of the problems from society, and, because children were more malleable than adults, education was an essential part of his system in order to bring them up in the appropriate frame of mind.

He was convinced that his ideas had universal application and his first essay offered his scheme for examination. He called upon legislators and other powerful figures to overcome their sectarian and party prejudices and to investigate the potential benefits of his plan in reducing social problems. Dr. Bell and Joseph Lancaster were acknowledged for increasing public awareness of the benefits of education but their monitorial systems were criticised as limited.²² Owen had more enlightened, liberal plans for education, a system which would bear no restrictions upon entry. He emphasized that what he had in mind was

"a national proceeding for rationally forming the characters of that immense mass of population which is now allowed to be so formed as to fill the world with crimes."²³

His Second Essay repeated the emphasis on the formation of character and non-exclusive policy. It moved from a general exhortation to an explanation of the workings of New Lanark as a simple plan to train and manage the ignorant. Owen was not really concerned with higher education. The utilitarian characteristic of his thinking assumed that the children would only progress to a position in the local factory, thereby contributing to the common good, and, therefore, there was no need to extend provision beyond preparing them to occupy that role.²⁴ Nevertheless, he still expected some means to make the adult population knowledgeable. In practical terms, it was essential for him to give attention to this because for many years to come, there were going to be adults who had never received any education as children. They could be approached only through evening classes. He suggested that adult lectures should be provided,

"familiar discourses, delivered in plain impressive language, to instruct the adult part of the community in the most useful practical parts of knowledge in which they are deficient, particularly in the proper method of training their children to become rational creatures."²⁵

Owen called for the wealthier sections of society to accept their share of responsibility since they had the power and financial means to effect the changes he required. He reminded them ominously that the labouring classes constituted by far the bulk of the population and it was upon their happiness and comfort that the remaining ranks of society depended for their peace of mind.²⁶ The Third Essay was aimed at the manufacturing classes and appealed to them for support and funds. Owen also warned them of the danger of only half-hearted commitment. If they did not provide the poor with a proper, rational and useful training, there was the threat to society that limited instruction would only make them conscious of their degrading conditions.²⁷ This implied that rebellion could result. Owen would have been aware of the disturbances in Glasgow during 1812.

He had no qualms about informing the government that they must take responsibility, too. His Fourth Essay applied the principles he had extolled to the level of legislative power. Firstly, he arraigned government for retarding the status of the nation in an often repeated theme.

"It has been said that 'the state which shall possess the best national system of education, will be the best governed' --- Yet (will future ages credit the fact?) to this day the British Government is without any national system of training and education, even for its millions of poor and uninstructed!!!"²⁸

Owen recommended that an Act be passed immediately to establish a new government department to supervise the training and education of the labouring classes. Seminaries, should be set up to train teachers, with an extended nationwide system of seminaries for all who required instruction. He advised that his plan should complement those already in existence. Proper masters should then be appointed. Ultimately, the government would be responsible for financing their building and continued

support. There was a final, critical addition to Owen's plan; the necessity for the government to provide employment, too. It would be pointless training the people if there were no gainful employment at the end of their education, so that they could fulfil a useful role. This provision was essential in Owen's mind and would assist towards real national unity.²⁹

In the dedications at the beginning of each essay, Owen's promotional intent was clear. The first, he addressed to William Wilberforce, hoping that he would use his influence to bring the plan into legislative practice.³⁰ The second appealed to the public in general, the third specifically to the 'Superintendents of Manufactories'. The fourth essay was dedicated to the Prince Regent,³¹ but with the hope that Owen's principles would find favour enough for the Prince Regent to influence their introduction by the government.³³

Owen aimed for the people in positions of greatest influence. Heads of administration and churches demanded to peruse his works before publication and apparently received them well. Owen claimed that Lord Liverpool and his Cabinet, the Archbishop of Canterbury, along with other English and Irish Bishops were well disposed towards his recommendations.³⁴ He sent copies to the Prime Minister and then went to his home for a personal interview. Both Lord and Lady Liverpool expressed their approbation. After the members of the Government had closely examined his essays as well, the formal response was, - "We see nothing to object in them."³⁵ This did not mean government action would result but Owen felt confident as he went ahead with publication. He did not confine his ambition to the British Isles. Owen wanted to promote his ideas abroad and in this respect he received assistance from at least one member of the government. Lord Sidmouth, Secretary of the Home Department, helped

with the distribution of some two hundred copies to governments, universities and learned individuals on the Continent.³⁶ Owen also left a number of copies with Francis Place, perhaps for circulation among Radicals and Utilitarians.

While Owen was euphoric about the public reception of his plans for society, he found setbacks at the very roots of his work. His second group of partners, Mr. Atkinson and the Campbells, disapproved of his educational experiments. The partnership was to be dissolved and the mills sold. According to Owen, prior to the sale, his partners vented their displeasure by defaming his character. They denounced his schemes for education as visionary and wild, stating that nobody but Owen thought them to be practicable.³⁷ The sale was to be by public auction.

Faced with the prospect of losing his livelihood and his experimental laboratory for his ideas, Owen cast around to search for new associates to purchase the mills. He managed a profitable operation, returning an attractive 46% on capital between 1810-14.³⁹ He printed a private pamphlet of his New Lanark principles and circulated the "wealthy benevolent". He found suitable men among the familiar philanthropic Quaker supporters of education. John Walker of Arno's Grove, Joseph Foster of Bromley, Joseph Fox, William Allen together with Utilitarian philosopher Jeremy Bentham and Michael Gibbs, subsequently alderman and Lord Mayor of London,³⁹ joined forces with Owen to buy the New Lanark operation. Because of Owen's independent and innovative approach to education, even this partnership was to prove an uncomfortable one but, with Bentham and the Radicals showing interest, William Allen found the ideas acceptable for the time being. They saw some intrinsic good behind the scheme. A few days before the sale, at the end of 1813, Allen recorded

his support for Owen.

"The mills are to be sold on the 31st(December) and we are very anxious that Owen should be one of the purchasers, in order that his noble pleas for ameliorating the condition of the labouring and manufacturing poor may be maintained."⁴⁰

There were conditions for this support, however, and after securing the mills, in August 1814 Fox and Allen made it conditional that the Holy Scriptures would be used in the New Lanark School.⁴¹ Despite strains in the relationship, the third partnership allowed Owen to expand the school and he erected a new building which would be used exclusively for education and recreation. This was opened on 1st January, 1816 as the core of The Institute for the Formation of Character, which now included an Infant School. In his inaugural address to the local population, Owen explained that the Institution was intended to improve the entire character of the village. Children would be received at an early age, "as soon almost as they can walk." This would relieve mothers of care and anxiety while giving them more time to earn more money for their support. Education played an important practical role in Owen's scheme. It released the women to the workforce, reducing the need to import labour from outside the community. The children would be prepared to acquire the best habits and prevented from acquiring bad ones.⁴² In the address, he re-affirmed his belief that character could be formed for the individual and not by the individual. In this control of experience, Owen was implying that habits and attitudes could be programmed into the individual. In this manipulation of the environment and his paternalistic direction, Owen's environmentalism differed from that of the Utilitarian mainstream, which still acknowledged personal freedom to react to circumstances. Nevertheless, Owen's intention was to exhibit New Lanark as an example of his theories in action which he hoped would

induce "the British legislature to enact such laws as will secure benefits to every part of our population."⁴³

The interior environment of the Institute was considerably different to normal schools. The master in charge was Mr. James Buchanan who admitted children from the age of two years. The youngest children occupied three rooms on the lower floor, where they played and were taught the rudiments of reading, natural history and geography, until the age of six. Then they would progress to the school proper on the second floor. The principal schoolroom was arranged with desks and forms on the typical Lancasterian system. Galleries branched off the room, which also served as a lecture room for the adults and as a place of worship. The second floor contained a long gallery of natural history specimens. At one end was a place for an orchestra, while at the opposite end hung two large hemispheres. This area duplicated its services as another lecture room, a ballroom, and occasional reading room. Music and singing lessons were given here. The whole Institute was open in evenings for the children and adults who had been working during the day so that they could avail themselves of lectures and the singing and dancing classes.

The school day for most children lasted for five hours. There were no rewards or punishments used since the aim was to make every subject as interesting as possible. Lessons were taught, as far as possible, by conversation with liberal use of visual examples. To avoid encroaching weariness, lessons were planned to last no longer than three quarters of an hour. Owen wanted the children to enjoy school and be happy. It would influence their frame of mind as they approached the age of work. It was hoped that they would carry over a happy disposition into all aspects of community life thereafter. Although Owen provided for education up to the age of twelve, many parents still felt the

financial need to withdraw children, often to start work.⁴⁴

With the completion of the practical application of his ideas, Owen continued to seek different avenues to press his plan upon the government. He still envisaged a broader application of his scheme. As an experienced manufacturer, he collaborated with the committee which was preparing Sir Robert Peel's Factory Act⁴⁵ (1819). Apart from his development of New Lanark, Owen had published his Observations on the Effect of the Manufacturing System in 1815, which called for a more sympathetic attitude in general to the plight of the labouring poor. He pointed out the pressures on the poor, who were used merely as instruments of gain. His benevolent attitude was evident in his complaint that they knew little of how to use their scarce free time other than to sink into the same bad habit of drink. Surrounded by the bad example of others of similar circumstances, the poor knew no better. Lacking any other stimulus for their minds, Owen explained that the only relaxation they knew was the end of their work.⁴⁶ Children also formed a focus of attention and he called for a restriction upon the age at which they should be employed. He advised preliminary educational standards before employment began. Children were to be taught to read well and understand what they read; to write legibly and to learn, comprehend and be able to use the fundamental rules of arithmetic. Girls were also to be taught to sew, cut out and make useful family garments and to receive further training in house-keeping and the preparation of meals. There would also be a limitation upon children's hours of labour.⁴⁷ The subsequent act reduced working hours to ten and three quarters and stipulated half an hour for basic education, but, like the 1802 Act, was generally ineffective.

Owen also attended the committee on the manufacturing and labouring

poor which was chaired by the Archbishop of Canterbury, but the more he tried to publicise, the more the critics seemed to emerge and block his efforts. They had had time to absorb the full import of his proposals and became sceptical about their practicality. Owen was offering a complete plan for society and the radical change to a utopian style of communal living did not appeal. Education might have presented an attractive aspect, but, linked with other proposals such as the provision of employment, it caused people to demur. To supply so much assistance and direction to the lives of others would have been anathema to the laissez-faire philosophy of self-help. It seemed inevitable that he would also experience conflict with the churches. His theories on the influence of the environment in the formation of character contradicted the doctrine that people were individually responsible for their acts. In providing excuses for the weaknesses of the people, he countered the concept of the innate evil in man, the doctrine of original sin. Therefore, his ideas were a challenge to some fundamental principles of contemporary society and difficult to accommodate.

Robert Owen's over-zealous personal promotion did not always endear him to the public. Robert Southey, writer and contributor to the Quarterly Review, indicated this in a letter to John Rickman in September, 1816. Owen's enthusiasm sometimes led to imprudent public displays which only injured his cause. Southey felt some sympathy for his intentions but thought his ideas too fanciful to bring about such a total change in society. People approved of parts but not the whole plan. Neither was Southey convinced by the theory of character formation, which he regarded as harmless speculation.⁴⁸

Official channels tried to avoid Owen's eccentric ideas. He became suspicious of a conspiracy against him. He considered the people to be in one sense approving but then scared of his ideas, that the committees

were merely placatory steps as the government really wished to repress the poor. When he went to the Archbishop's committee with his report, it was "considered by that committee to be too large and important in a national view for their consideration."⁴⁹ He was diverted with advice to present it to the House of Commons Committee on the Poor Laws. Here, even with his acquaintance, Henry Brougham,⁵⁰ on the Committee, Owen again found that his expertise was not required. Despite presenting himself for examination he had to wait two days before Brougham broke the news that his proposals would not be presented.⁵¹

Owen did not allow this rebuff to hinder his determination that the country should learn of his idea. He wrote to the London newspaper editors and obtained the publication of an imaginary examination of himself as he assumed it would have unfolded before the Poor Law Committee.

As his proposals became better known, The Times, during April, 1817, (12th and 16th) expressed reservations about the imagined expense of Owen's scheme, but he was at pains to indicate its economy. A typical establishment would cost him £100,000. On 29th May, The Times carried a lengthy letter from Owen, together with a line drawing of his idealised community. Then, on 24th July, 1817, a meeting of wealthy merchants was convened at the George and Vulture Inn, London, to hear Owen explain his plan. The result was a committee formed to consider the scheme in detail and to try to raise subscriptions towards establishing a model community.⁵² Robert Southey attacked it as unreligious. Owen had found his path to complete freedom of development blocked by religious interests and the notable absence of traditional religious standards in his plan contributed to the weakening of public support.

Nevertheless, he replied with further lengthy coverage in The Times on 30th July, which stressed the economic practicality of the scheme.

The editor let Owen's work speak for itself, but took the trouble to defend Owen, "this ardent philanthropist", against "some liberal attacks of a personal nature."⁵³ On 9th August, the entire fourth page was surrendered to another exposition from Owen, accompanied by another drawing, this time representing the clean, ideal image of New Lanark.

On 14th August, at the City of London Tavern, Owen addressed a public meeting, at which he called for a committee to investigate his plan and asked for subscriptions to begin an experiment. He claimed he had already received an anonymous offer of 1,500 acres for the site of a pilot community. Despite his promise of a new social life and the fact that many present were "reformers", no one spoke in favour of this new lifestyle.⁵⁴ The meeting, in fact, ended in disorder. Owen made extravagant claims of thousands turned away from the meeting, such was the interest he had aroused, but, of those admitted, towards the end some trouble was created "by the violent and most ignorant of the democracy."⁵⁵

To maintain the momentum of public interest, Owen bought thirty thousand copies of newspapers carrying reports of his meetings and sent copies to all the clergy in the kingdom, one to every Member of Parliament, one to the chief magistrate and banker of every city and town, and other leading citizens.⁵⁶ Between August and September 1817, this practice cost Owen some £4,000 and his newspaper dispatches were said to have delayed the mail coach by 20 minutes on one occasion. Even this failed to satisfy Owen. To meet the "extraordinary excitement in the general public" as Owen described it, he further published three broadsheets with extracts from the newspaper reports. He estimated that forty thousand copies were picked up within three days, such was the public demand.⁵⁷

Public meetings continued and two days before his next one, on 12th August, Owen obtained an interview with the Prime Minister again.

At that stage, he seemed convinced that he was in a strong influential position, with a mass of public support. Owen's recollection of the meeting seemed to present a government at his mercy, as if he could have asked and received anything.⁵⁸ To contrast with Owen's impression, Lord Liverpool did not even accord him a mention in his memoirs of the period.⁵⁹ Owen recalled the relief of the Prime Minister when he discovered that Owen only wanted to place the names of the Cabinet upon the committee of investigation, which he would propose at the forthcoming public meeting. An equal number of the opposition in both Houses would also be included.⁶⁰ Lord Liverpool gave permission as long as no implication of formal Government sanction could be drawn.

At the meeting on the twenty-first, Owen caused a sensation by openly denouncing all forms of religion. It was the single point of importance of the gathering. The political economist, Major Robert Torrens, later Colonel, described the proceedings of "that maniac Robert Owen" in a letter to Francis Place. He was not impressed by the people who tried to conduct the meeting and, in relating the course of events, he deflated Owen's opinion of his success with the public.

"Owen, as on the former day, commenced by reading a tedious flat and absurdly egotistical address, in which he went over all his old assertions without accompanying them with any proof or explanation, and without attempting to reply to the numerous objections which had been urged against his plans."⁶¹

Torrens did not denigrate Owen completely, for his letter contained much respect for the man. Torrens also conveyed a genuine regard from the meeting for the intrinsic benevolence of Owen's intentions but he also presented a clear impression of the sensation caused by Owen's pronouncement that the erroneous notions of every religion had prevented the people from experiencing real happiness.⁶²

"Towards the close a most extraordinary spectacle was exhibited. When Owen proceeded to proclaim universal liberty of conscience and to denounce all the Religions which have ever been taught upon earth, an electric shock was communicated to the assembly, and from every part of the room consentaneous (sic) shouts of astonishment and applause burst forth."⁶³

Some of his opponents in the room encouraged Owen in a deceitful manner, hoping that he would continue to give himself enough rope to hang himself and eliminate popular support. For Torrens, it was a complete defeat for Owen's campaign, but either the insidious nature of the crowd escaped Owen or he ignored them. Torrens found a "most barefaced and impudent thing" that Owen could release a statement which proclaimed that the "adjourned meeting was more favourable to him than his most sanguine wishes."⁶⁴

Owen's recollection of the event noted the impossibility of proceeding to appoint the committee of investigation into his plan. Such was the disturbance caused by his opponents that for the sake of ending the meeting peacefully he declared the resolution negatived and the meeting closed.⁶⁵ This conclusion probably saved the members of the government from an embarrassing association. Yet, even in defeat, Owen remained optimistic and oblivious to the furor he had created. Henry Brougham encountered Owen walking through London the day after the meeting and expressed his astonishment at Owen's calmness, as if nothing had occurred.⁶⁶

This adversity did not deflect a resilient Owen from his purpose. He hit back at the "fatuity and weakness" of his opponents in a letter to the newspapers on 10th September, 1817 and on 19th September, he announced his intention of launching a new and larger scheme. The New State of Society Enrolment Office was to open in Temple Chambers, Fleet Street, and all leading publishers would hold books of enrolment. To

cope with the expected applications, a Dr. Wilkes was appointed, while Owen returned to his business.⁶⁷ Like most of his subsequent public ventures, this did not materialise into a successful project. He withdrew to the Continent for a tour.

When he returned, on the basis of his past experience in collaborating with Sir Robert Peel on his Factory Act, Owen sought election to Parliament in April 1819, in the constituency of Lanark, Selkirk, Peebles and Linlithgow. He was not successful and issued an "Address to the Working Classes," published in The Star on 15th April, and The Examiner on 25th April, to explain his defeat. He blamed the traditional, limited habits of the rich.⁶⁸ Later the same year, a committee was set up to examine Owen's plans and to seek subscriptions. It is possible that Owen used contacts to attract prestigious personages to this endeavour. One Henry Grey McNab had just written a report on New Lanark. He also happened to be honorary physician to the Duke of Kent, a proven supporter of education.⁶⁹ On 26th June, 1819, the Duke presided over a meeting at the Freemasons' Hall,⁷⁰ in the company of the Duke of Sussex, Sir Robert Peel, and David Ricardo, with the object of raising £100,000 to establish an Owenite community.⁷¹

To try and sway the doubtful, an address was published on 23rd August testifying to the committee's faith in Owen's plan. They had to counterbalance Owen's bad publicity of 1817 and were concerned to point out that the plan was not Godless or communistic, but a commercial, joint-stock venture. Not many were swayed, for after struggling for a few months, the committee disbanded on 1st December, 1819.⁷² Less than £8,000 had been subscribed.⁷³

A last attempt was made to arouse the interest of Parliament when, on 16th December, 1819, Sir William Crespigny, a member of the Duke

of Kent's committee, moved for the appointment of a select committee to inquire into Owen's proposals. Though Brougham and Ricardo were among the supporters, they could not overcome opposition led by Wilberforce and the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The motion was heavily defeated, 141 to 17.⁷⁴ Another subscriptions appeal in 1822 dried up with similar results to 1819.⁷⁵

While failing to gain public support for his schemes, Owen's position at New Lanark also declined. Since 1817, he had found less time for New Lanark and the detailed supervision of the factory was left more to subordinates. He seemed to spend much of his time in travelling and publicity work. Therefore, contact with the base of his theories diminished. His relationship with his third partnership became increasingly strained. From the early years of their association, William Allen had found it particularly difficult to feel at ease with Owen's religious policy. In 1815, he wrote to Owen to reaffirm the points of common agreement among the Christians and others of his supporters. They agreed to attend to the temporal comfort of the workers as far as possible, to remove temptations to vice and immorality, to provide a savings bank for relief in sickness and support in old age, and to provide education for the children, with the aim of forming habits of morality and virtue. The final point of agreement was to encourage all in following their own system of religion.⁷⁶

When Owen made his public denunciation of religion, William Allen was greatly distressed, particularly as he felt that Owen wished to identify him with "his infidel principles." Allen resolved not to remain in the partnership unless New Lanark were more closely and reliably supervised.⁷⁷ He told Lord Sidmouth that he wished to be dissociated from Owen's recent pronouncements.⁷⁸ A schism was avoided but checks

were made. In 1818, Allen and Foster visited New Lanark to determine whether or not the faith of the people had been undermined. Owen had, at first, refused leave for the people to establish a Bible Society but later relented and both he and his wife became subscribers. A good report on the sobriety of the people was given by two ministers of the locality⁷⁹ and so the partnership remained intact for a while longer.

In 1820, there was a slight revival of Owen as figurehead when the County of Lanark invited him to submit a plan for "relieving Public Distress and Removing Discontent, by giving permanent, productive Employment to the Poor and the Working Classes." It was politely received but promptly ignored.⁸⁰ His London partners became uneasy again in 1822. In July, Allen, Foster and Gibbs were again dispatched to investigate. Although they found the religious aspect satisfactory, this time the general provision of education and the way it was carried on was thought in need of revision. Once more, William Allen decided upon withdrawing unless the affairs were set right.⁸¹ In reflection, Owen was critical of his partnership with the Quakers. He suggested that their uneasiness at his educational endeavours centred upon the inclusion of dancing, music and even the military-style discipline of the routine at the Institute. William Allen was described as "a man of great pretensions in his sect, a very busy, bustling, meddling character, making great professions of friendship to me, yet underhandedly doing all in his power to undermine my views and authority." This showed a certain acrimony on Owen's part for he claimed that such were the good effects of his un-Quaker-like proceedings that some years elapsed before Allen raised the objection of the Friends.⁸²

A more balanced appraisal of the dissolution of their partnership

ought to take account of Allen's business sense. While the New Lanark mill remained in profit, William Allen endured his discomfort at the religious problems and Owen was able to deflect objections to his innovations. After 1817, however, the expenses of the New Institution began to increase. From £506 in 1817, they reached £1,394 in 1822, when Allen also learned that New Lanark had made a trading loss in 1821. Allen might have objected not so much to Owen's methods as to the financial burden they placed upon the company.⁸³

Owen's absence and the Quaker insistence upon modifications reduced his active interest as he became more absorbed with the idea of utopian communities⁸⁴ and less with the immediate problems of the poor. On 21st January, 1824, William Allen, as Treasurer of the B.F.S.S., secured control of the New Lanark Schools.⁸⁵ The firm of Robert Owen and Co. had to agree to a number of resolutions, which provided for the dismissal of some of the old teachers and the appointment of a new master, John Daniel, who would instruct the children from the age of six years onwards according to the B.F.S.S. system.⁸⁶ For the sake of economy, dancing was no longer to be taught at the expense of the company. Normal dress, instead of uniforms, was to be resumed and Catherine Vale Whitwell, who was paid nearly twice as much as the next highest paid teachers, was to be dismissed from her position as artist-in-residence.⁸⁷ Owen ceased to be manager of the New Lanark Mills in 1825 and, although he retained his financial interest until 1828,⁸⁸ this released him to pursue his other interests, which almost immediately took him over to America.

Thus concluded the more active phase of Robert Owen's attempts to improve the condition of the poor through education. Throughout this period, his work could not be dissociated from the question of poor relief, since he spent much energy in promoting his ideas to committees

examining the predicament of the poor. He would also fit into the category of a benevolent manufacturer with a genuine desire to improve the standard of life of his labourers. This carried with it the bonus effect of producing a more stable and efficient workforce. His efforts were not entirely fruitless. Accepting the improvements wrought in his immediate locality of New Lanark, Owen, through his collaboration with Sir Robert Peel, contributed to a broader acknowledgement of the need to improve some factory conditions. His association with other politicians and education supporters inspired them to try experiments of their own.

In Westminster, after 1815, the Owen influence resulted in a "second rational infant school." The distinguished group behind this venture were the Marquis of Lansdowne, Henry Brougham, John Smith, banker, M.P., Benjamin Smith, M.P., Henry Hase, cashier of the Bank of England and James Mill. Brougham, Mill and Hase had frequently visited New Lanark⁸⁹ and John Walker, one of Owen's current partners, was included on the Westminster School committee. At the request of this committee, Owen released his New Lanark master, J. Buchanan, to head their school, which opened in Brewer's Green in February, 1819.⁹⁰

Although they had had their disagreements with Owen, the Society of Friends also favoured this type of infant school and desired a similar model, but under their direct control in London. They erected this in Spitalfields and appointed Samuel Wilderspin as master. He had visited the Buchanans and Owen, in turn, decided to call on him. He discovered that Wilderspin had paid frequent visits to the Westminster School, which Owen declared an inferior copy. So with the personal instruction he provided for Wilderspin,⁹¹ and presumably the contribution of Mr. Buchanan, the work of Robert Owen might well have sown some of the

seeds of the infant school movement which developed after 1824, when Wilderspin founded the Infant School Society.⁹²

Owen engendered sympathy for his ideals but when he spoke out against religion, he virtually destroyed any prospect of achieving complete acceptance of his schemes for the nation. Apart from his unorthodox religious views, the fact that education was always tied up with other aspects of reform meant that his promotion was at a disadvantage. Owen had a global concept of society but people were only willing to select and accept segments. If he had concentrated solely on education, Owen might have been more successful. The total package of responsibilities was too much for the philosophy of the time to take. The real crux might well have been Owen's insistence that the wealthy and the government had to be responsible for the provision of employment opportunities, too. The laissez-faire attitude could not accommodate that and, in hindsight, Owen seemed to recognize this. For all his contacts and friends of the political economists, Malthus, James Mill, Ricardo, Sir James Mackintosh, Francis Place, even Torrens among them, he could not gain support for the combination of his ideas. He wrote,

"They were liberal men for their time; friends to the national education of the people, but opposed to national employment for the poor and unemployed, or to the greatest creation of real wealth."⁹³

For their part, Torrens seemed to express the wariness of his associates when he described Owen's exposition of his ideas at the City of London Tavern in 1817.

"I shall not attempt to decide whether it is composed of wilful falsehoods, or to believe that Robert Owen is a knave, my inclination is still to consider him as an interesting enthusiast in whose brain a copulation between vanity and benevolence has engendered madness."⁹⁴

The growing perception of the eccentricity in Owen's public image, particularly in the outspoken criticism of religion, saw his influence

as a pressure figure decline rapidly after 1817. His schemes were dismissed as impractical on a national basis. Nevertheless, such was the effect of the dissemination of his views that, while his attempts to promote them through government evaporated, his ideas remained to influence and inspire others to experiment. Owen's contribution as a mentor to the aspiration of others is the subject of a subsequent chapter.⁹⁵

Notes to Chapter Four

1. Robert Owen, Life, Vol.1, p.35.
2. *ibid.*, p.36.
3. F. Podmore, Robert Owen - A Biography, p.58.
4. Robert Owen, Life, Vol.1, pp.36-37.
5. D.N.B., Vol.44, Thomas Percival.
6. M. Browning, "Owen as an Educator", p.57.
7. Robert Owen, Life, Vol.1, p.38, (and F. Podmore, *op.cit.*, p.58.)
8. *ibid.*, p.84.
9. *ibid.*, p.53.
10. F. Podmore, *op.cit.*, p.74.
11. *ibid.*, pp.71-72.
12. *ibid.*, p.81.
13. See Ch.3, Utilitarians and Radicals, p.70ff.
14. F. Podmore, *op.cit.*, pp.86-91.
15. *ibid.*, p.93.
16. *ibid.*, p.82.
17. H.B. Binns, A Century of Education, p.50.
18. See Ch.3, p.81.
19. J.F.C. Harrison, Robert Owen and the Owenites in Britain and America, p.140.
20. *ibid.*, p.142.
21. M. Browning, *op.cit.*, p.57; and E. Halevy, *op.cit.*, p.285.
22. H. Silver, Robert Owen on Education, "1st essay", pp.74-75.
23. *ibid.*, p.78.
24. M. Browning, *op.cit.*, p.62.
25. H. Silver, *op.cit.*, "3rd essay", p.113.
26. R. Owen, A New View of Society and Other Writings, p.51.

27. M. Browning, *op.cit.*, p.63.
28. H. Silver, *op.cit.*, "4th essay", p.141.
29. *ibid.*, pp.142-145.
30. R. Owen, Life, Appendix B, p.257.
31. *ibid.*, p.264.
32. See Ch.1, and Ch.2. p.29.
33. R. Owen, Life, p.264.
34. *ibid.*, p.108.
35. *ibid.*, p.109.
36. *ibid.*, p.110.
37. *ibid.*, p.88.
38. D. Hamilton, "Robert Owen and Education: A Reassessment", p.16.
39. R. Owen, Life, p.89, see also Ch.2, William Allen, et.al., and the B.F.S.S., p.29ff.
40. William Allen, Life, Vol.1, 27th December, 1813, p.181.
41. W.H.G. Armytage, Heavens Below, p.85.
42. R. Owen, A New View, "Address to the Inhabitants of New Lanark", 1st January, 1816, p.98.
43. *ibid.*, p.105.
44. F. Podmore, *op.cit.*, pp.131-137.
45. See Ch.1, p.9.
46. R. Owen, A New View, p.124.
47. *ibid.*, pp.124-125, and 3rd essay, p.48.
48. W.H.G. Armytage, *op.cit.*, p.79.
49. R. Owen, Life, Vol.1, p.155.
50. See Ch.6, Henry Brougham, p.158
51. R. Owen, Life, Vol.1, p.133.
52. W.H.F. Armytage, *op.cit.*, p.80.
53. The Times, 30th July, 1817, 3c.

54. W.H.G. Armytage, op.cit., pp.80-81.
55. R. Owen, Life, Vol.1, p.157.
56. *ibid.*, p.156, (also W.H.G. Armytage, op.cit., p.81).
57. *ibid.*
58. *ibid.*, p.158.
59. Robert Banks Jenkinson, 2nd Earl Liverpool, Memoirs, 1827.
60. R. Owen, Life, Vol.1, p.159.
61. Add.Mss., 37949, f50.
62. W.H.G. Armytage, op.cit., p.81,
In response to an inquiry as to why the plan had not been adopted in the past Owen replied..."hitherto you have been prevented from knowing what happiness really is, solely in consequence of the errors - gross errors - that have been combined with the fundamental notions of every religion that has hitherto been taught to men. And in consequence, they have made man the most inconsistent, and the most miserable being in existence. By the errors of these systems he has been made a weak, imbecile animal, a furious bigot and fanatic; or a miserable hypocrite; and should these qualities be carried, not only into the projected villages, but into Paradise itself, a Paradise would no longer be found!"
63. Add.Mss., 37949, f50.
64. *ibid.*
65. R. Owen, Life, Vol.1, p.164.
66. *ibid.*
67. W.H.G. Armytage, op.cit., p.82.
68. *ibid.*, p.88.
69. See Ch.2, B.F.S.S. p.38, and Appendix I.
70. W.H.G. Armytage, op.cit., p.88.
71. A.L. Morton, The Life and Ideas of Robert Owen, p.32.
72. W.H.G. Armytage, op.cit., p.83.
73. A.L. Morton, op.cit., p.33.
74. W.H.G. Armytage, op.cit., p.84.
75. A.L. Morton, op.cit., p.33.
76. William Allen, Life, Vol.1, p.246, Letter, October, 1815, pp.244-248.

77. *ibid.*, 11th September, 1817, p.324.
78. *ibid.*, 13th September 1817, p.325.
79. F. Podmore, *op.cit.*, pp.155-156.
80. A.L. Morton, *op.cit.*, p.31.
81. F. Podmore, *op.cit.*, p.156.
82. R. Owen, Life, Vol.1, p.141.
83. D. Hamilton, *op.cit.*, p.20.
84. See Ch.5, p.138.
85. W.H.G. Armytage, *op.cit.*, p.86.
86. F. Podmore, *op.cit.*, p.156-157.
87. D. Hamilton, *op.cit.*, pp.20-21.
88. A.L. Morton, *op.cit.*, p.31.
89. R. Owen, Life, Vol.1, p.142.
90. H. Silver, A Concept of Popular Education, p.137.
91. R. Owen, Life, Vol.1, p.153.
92. W.H.G. Armytage, *op.cit.*, p.79.
93. R. Owen, Life, Vol.1, p.103.
94. Add. Mss. 37949, f50.
95. See Ch.5, p.137.

CHAPTER 5

Co-operation and Working Class Movements

Although the promoters of education aimed to establish regular schooling for the working classes, the notion of "the poor" or "working class" took on different interpretations. The labouring population was not a uniform social group¹ and could not be dismissed as totally uneducated, passive and without initiative. The middle class philanthropist tended to be pre-occupied with the problems of the very poor who had little concern for education. Among those in employment there were trades which required learning and skill. The skilled artisan had native intelligence, appreciated knowledge and some rose to promote working class activities. Francis Place emerged from the artisan class.² Thus the "working class" as seen by someone like William Lovett looked different from the 'working class" as seen by an upper class philanthropist, like Shaftesbury later in the Century.

The intelligent working class had their own means of acquiring knowledge. It was precisely the absence of any regulation of this knowledge which disturbed and motivated some supporters of national education. As the working classes became aware of political and social developments they became susceptible to the ideas of agitators who, on the whole, were the skilled men. Men were either self-educated or assisted by others. Newspapers were available in reading rooms but for those unable to read, items could be read aloud by friends. There were Coffee House meeting places in towns, debates and public lectures which provided other avenues to information. Left alone, the working classes had developed an instinct for self-help and co-operation. Like the manufacturers who used their initiative to establish the industrial progress of the nation, the working class managed to operate within their own institutions. After a time,

an increase in working class literacy had also been created by the Sunday Schools and the British and National Societies.³ How the working classes would use their new abilities was the problem.

The ability of the working classes to progress from sporadic endeavour to a more co-ordinated system of associations was demonstrated by the Corresponding Societies of the 1790's. A network spread across the country with several branch societies within one large town or city. They existed for reading and the exchange of ideas but tended to be identified with Radicalism. Francis Place was prominent in the organisation in London. He regarded the societies as beneficial because they enticed men away from public houses and interested them in reading. He said, "It taught them to think, to respect themselves, and to desire to educate their children. It elevated them in their own opinions."⁴ Nevertheless suspicion about the loyalties of the Corresponding Societies led to the dissolution of their activities and the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act in 1794 for eight years. In 1795, Pitt passed Acts which banned seditious meetings.

A similar situation arose over the years 1815 to 1820 when the Hampden Clubs or Political Unions were created by Major John Cartwright. Fuelled by Cobbett's Register, they sought to take advantage of the unrest of the post-war period to agitate for political reform, with the consequence that the Act of Habeas Corpus was suspended again in 1817 until January 1818.⁵ The disturbance of this period culminated in the Peterloo Massacre in 1819. During this period it is difficult to determine whether the government actions provoked working class agitation or vice versa.

In contrast to the problems of political agitation, and working class unrest, Robert Owen⁶ offered a plan which would occupy the people

usefully and train them in their attitudes and behaviour. He offered a constructive scheme of self-help which appealed to the self-interest and co-operative instinct of the working classes which had previously manifested itself in the more peaceful pursuits of chapel organisation and benefit societies. Owen had shattered his own prospects of success for his plans by the renunciation of all forms of religion. The circulation of his views, however, made them available to people and some eventually tried to apply them to their own advantage.

During the 1820's, some of the publicity which Robert Owen had devoted to his ideas began to bear fruition. He had spent much of his income upon the dissemination of his proposals for community living and the education of the people. As Owen became increasingly interested in the projection of plans for the complete revision of the nation's way of life, his ideas were picked up by others who were willing to experiment with their application, even though central administration rejected them as impractical.

When he went to America in 1825, Owen was pursuing a personal interest in an experimental community at New Harmony on the Wabash River, Indiana. William Maclure, the founder, had exchanged visits with Owen at New Lanark and had engaged Owen's involvement to try to ensure success.⁷ Owen advised the New Harmony community that education would be the means by which they would free themselves from all previous errors and corruptions and regenerate their minds.⁸ It seemed ironic, therefore, that Maclure and Owen clashed over education practice and their quarrel ensured the collapse of the experiment.⁹

William Allen, one of the New Lanark partnership,¹⁰ also became involved in a model community, despite his differences with Owen, although he gleaned some of his ideas while on a visit to Russia.¹¹ He joined partnership with Stephen Wood, the Earl of Chichester and John Smith,

M.P. for Buckinghamshire, to establish a base at Linfield, near Brighton, in July 1824. The first thing built was a school, open to pupils of any religion, equipped with a farm, a printing office and workshop.¹² Allen was clearly able to sustain this project for he wrote to Henry Brougham in 1834 to explain that he had extended the Linfield Plans to a School of Agriculture.¹³ He took in boys from Ireland and had ambitions for extending his schools of agriculture to that country. The following year he had formulated a plan for a model village in Ireland, while the School of Agriculture at Linfield had commenced and Allen anticipated that it would prove self-sufficient.¹⁴

Nearer the original New Lanark establishment, there appeared an off-shoot at Orbiston by the River Calder, nine miles east of Glasgow, which opened on 1st March, 1825, with communal living as its aim. A £50,000 stone building, four storeys high, was designed to accommodate a thousand people. There were to be common kitchens, common dining and amusement rooms and a common school.¹⁵ The guiding hand was Abraham Combe, who, during October 1820, visited New Lanark¹⁶ and, probably received advice from Owen. Combe allowed a Captain O'Brien to administer the educational side of Orbiston. O'Brien, a Pestalozzian enthusiast, advocated a boarding school of 100-200 children, which would educate up to the limit of twelve years of age and duplicate its services as a school of labour. With the latter and the profit from the school fund, the intention was that all aspects of expense would be met, so that education at Orbiston would impose no burden on the community.¹⁷ Upon this basis, O'Brien set up the school and placed it in the care of a Miss Whitwell.

Owen visited a later experiment established at Ralahine, County Clare, Ireland in 1831. Its founder, John Scott Vandeleur, had heard of New Lanark but his community was entitled The Ralahine Agricultural and

Manufacturing Association. Education was central to the life of the Association. Parents were obliged to present their children at the infant school at six o'clock in the morning, including Sundays, "thoroughly cleaned, combed and washed." The children remained there until six in the evening, the parents forbidden to remove them during these hours.¹⁸

There were other attempts to follow the tradition of New Lanark, among them examples at Motherwell, Manea Fen, near Wisbech, Cambridge~~shire~~ and Queenswood, Hampshire, but they were doomed to failure through inadequate resources. Most community experiments proved temporary affairs and Owen was only involved directly in one, New Harmony.¹⁹ The remainder came about through people trying to apply his ideas in different circumstances.

Some men selected from Owen's publicity the theories they wished to support. One such was John Minter Morgan, who had attended the fateful meeting at the London Tavern on 21st August, 1817. Despite Owen's proclamation against religion, Minter Morgan was impressed by the message that

"national education and employment could alone create a permanent national, intelligent, wealthy, and superior population, and that these results could be obtained by a scientific arrangement of the people, united in properly constructed villages of unity and co-operation."²⁰

He did not seem to mind that his Christianity conflicted with Owen's views and he supported the Duke of Kent's committee of 1819²¹ by publishing an enthusiastic pamphlet entitled Remarks on the Practicability of Mr. Owen's Plan to improve the conditions of the Lower Classes.²²

Minter Morgan continued the development of his brand of Owenite ideas through into the 1830's, influencing at least two other writers. The first was Stedman Whitwell, who, in 1830, published a Description of an Architectural Model... for a Community upon a principle of United Interests, as advocated by Robert Owen. A second was William Thompson

who in 1830, wrote Practical Directions for the Speedy and Economical Establishment of Communities.²³

The idea of establishing separate *microcosms of society under the* Owen plan required a certain amount of capital, which put these grand experiments beyond most of the labouring classes. Nevertheless, the continued appearance of Owen's ideas in the press and publications allowed the working classes to learn of his plan and adapt them to their own requirements. Frustrated in their search for political emancipation, the notion of self-help and independence from central government, perceived in Owen's plan for community co-operation, probably appealed to the imaginative men of the working classes as offering some way of improving their circumstances. Owen's plan of combining the resources of the community offered the prospect of an increase in self-esteem and strength in unity as well as a practical style of living, which made the immediate community the centre of importance rather than a distant government. Therefore, the Co-operative Movement began to take hold of the working-class mind.

Co-operation began tentatively on 22nd January, 1821. At a meeting of journeymen in London, Mr. George Mudie inaugurated the "Co-operative and Economical Society" aimed at improving the conditions of the working classes, society in general²⁴ and ultimately "to establish a village of unity and mutual co-operation combining agriculture manufacture and trades upon the plan projected by Robert Owen of New Lanark."²⁵ A few days later, on Saturday 27th January, there appeared the first number of the Economist, a journal devoted to the projection of Owen's new system for society and a plan of association for the working classes.²⁶ It was the first publication designed to promote the subject of co-operation and the new Society. One edition printed the constitution which pointed to

an immediate objective as

"to form a fund for the purchase of food, clothing and other necessaries at wholesale prices; and... to form arrangements for co-operating in the care of their dwellings, the superintendence, training and education of their children."²⁷

This early society petered out after only a few weeks and the Economist barely lasted a year, ceasing publication in January, 1822.²⁸

The succeeding years brought an expansion of interest in adult education and the growth of Mechanics' Institutions.²⁹ Perhaps in the wake of these developments and the repeal of the Combination Laws in 1824, the working classes found it easier to promote co-operation again. The London Co-operative Society was revived in the winter of 1824, though it was not officially in existence until February, 1825. Its expressed purpose was to remove obstacles to Owen's views by lectures, discussions and publications.³⁰ In September 1825, Owen addressed a public meeting of the society at the London Mechanics' Institution, a practice which he followed whenever he returned from America.³¹ Between 1824 and 1829, Owen spent a lot of time abroad which probably assisted the growth of co-operative associations because they avoided the controversy which had surrounded Owen in the past. His absence allowed the movement to develop as it pleased without clashes over policy which had littered Owen's career.

The value of the wider promotion of ideas through the press was still appreciated and The Co-Operative Magazine appeared in January 1826.³² This journal advertised subjects which should have been important for co-operators. Included was, "What is the best mode of educating and training children?"³³ Although there was no direct mention of education in the Rules of Co-operation as such, the subject, nevertheless, remained a vital factor in the lives of co-operators. In some common rules

adopted by societies, Brighton, Worthing, Belper, Birmingham and London among them, there was a demand for prospective members to be able to read and write.³⁴

In 1827, Dr. William King helped to found the Brighton Provident Society, an infant school and the Brighton British Schools, then also developed a benevolent fund association in the Mechanics' Institute to provide practical instruction. This spawned a further society known as the Sussex General Co-operative Trading Association.³⁵ King also issued a journal called The Co-operator. He was not particularly fond of Owen himself but accepted the benefit of some of his ideas and was keen on education.

In The Co-operator of 1st October 1828, King proposed that a strong educational line should be among the principles of a society or working union, which should not confine itself to adult education alone. Members were advised to pay close attention to the education of their children, use their common knowledge to agree to send them all to the best school in their locality but, preferably, try to have a school of their own and employ their own master. Part of the curriculum of this school sought to involve industrial training for the children. The last point reflected the utilitarian and Owenite philosophy of preparing the children for future life and averting the acquisition of lazy attitudes.³⁶

Dr. King wrote to Henry Brougham³⁷ in 1828, to explain his scheme of co-operative stores and the nature of co-operation as a social force.³⁸ He was anxious to impress upon Brougham the practical advantages for the working classes, how it would affect labour by withdrawing numbers from the open market, which would raise wages and have the bonus effect of reducing pauperism and crime. The important feature was that the members would appreciate the value of knowledge, which, from his experience,

created marvellously healthy attitudes to each other.

"They have appointed one of their members librarian and schoolmaster; he teaches every evening. Even their discussions involve both practice and theory, and are of a most improving nature. Their feelings are of an enlarged, liberal, and charitable description. They have no disputes, and feel towards mankind at large as brethren."³⁹

This was almost Owen-like in its *projection of the benefits to society* but Dr. King was hoping to capitalise upon Brougham's recent interest in adult education. He pointed out that the elite of his society were members of the Mechanics' Institute and suggested that this ought to reassure Brougham in his promotion of adult education and give him added incentive to continue with the publications of the newly-formed S.D.U.K.⁴⁰

The co-operators elsewhere appreciated the importance of education to further their collective aims and to transfer knowledge to one another, but they also demonstrated a commitment to their children. The Co-operative Society established in Liverpool in 1830 planned to divert profit in order to establish a school or college which would not only provide a superior education, but would be almost self-sufficient, requiring but three or four hours labour per day from the children. Hundreds would be accommodated, with clothing and lodging provided, but the institution would be exclusive to co-operators. Societies could send a number of pupils which would be determined by the amount of commission upon their purchases. Co-operative knowledge would dominate the curriculum.⁴¹

The ideas of co-operation were readily disseminated by a variety of publications assisted by the Radical press. For example, on 1st January, 1829, the Associate appeared,⁴² while Julian Hibbert, in 1827, printed his own circular on behalf of the Co-operative Fund Association an appeal devoted to Owen's system, how men could unlearn false knowledge

try to obtain real knowledge and improve themselves.⁴³ Others, such as William Pare, the Birmingham Secretary, toured and lectured in other provincial towns. He took the subject of co-operation to Manchester and Liverpool.⁴⁴

Pare was a cabinet-maker and upholsterer turned journalist. He had agitated for the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, for Catholic emancipation and Parliamentary reform. He helped found the Mechanics' Institute and the Birmingham Co-operative Society (1828). He was a member of the Council of the Political Union in 1830 and became Vice-President of Owen's society, The Association of all Classes of All Nations, the central board of which was established at Birmingham.⁴⁵

Possibly a reflection of the S.D.U.K., in 1829 The Society for the Promotion of Co-operative Knowledge began to hold quarterly meetings, which were reported in the Weekly Free Press, a Radical paper. The society became the British Association for Promoting Co-operative Knowledge in 1830.⁴⁶ The movement had expanded so much in four to five years that in order to co-ordinate, share ideas and exchange goods, major congresses were held.

The first Co-operative Congress took place in Manchester in March 1831. Here a return to the notion of Owenite communities was made. A resolution was laid down by William Thompson⁴⁷ to establish communication with 199 other Co-operative Societies in order that "an incipient Community of two hundred persons, with a capital of £6,000 may immediately be formed in some part of England."⁴⁸ Back from America and attending the second congress at Birmingham in October the same year, Robert Owen was included on a committee to raise funds to set up this community.⁴⁹ Perhaps recalling the temporary existence of previous experiments, Owen became worried that this project was promoted too hastily for he shortly

withdrew, much to the dismay of his disciples. He seemed correct in his judgement when the 1832 Congress in London reported that only two societies actually supported the idea.⁵⁰

The first half of the 1830's brought a revival of the importance of Robert Owen as he found himself the inspirational figurehead of working class movements. He was constantly sought for advice on education, as a correspondent from Wigan illustrated in 1832.

"I have to request your opinion on an undertaking that is of importance to the co-operative system... it is the wish of the co-operative Societies of the North of England... to establish a school for 500 children from 4 years old to 14 years... and I know your experience will enable you to give us some valuable information on this subject..."⁵¹

He gave lectures through the British Association for Promoting Co-operative Knowledge⁵² and he continued to preside at Congresses, held half-yearly, in different large towns, for a few more years.⁵³ Despite his reticence in 1831, Owen published a paper in 1832 called The Crisis. His intention was to publicise his ideas of community again and the first issue carried a picture of a community on the title page. Some two years later, the title was changed to New Moral World⁵⁴ to reflect the all-embracing design of his plans.

Owen travelled and became involved in numerous affairs in a few years, usually in connection with improving the conditions of employment and the education of the working classes. In February, 1832, he established the Association of the Intelligent and Well Disposed of the Industrious Classes for removing the Causes of Ignorance and Poverty by Education,⁵⁵ at which he lectured upon education and the forthcoming changes of "the millenium."⁵⁶ In 1833, he joined John Fielden⁵⁷ and his brother on a committee which formed the Society for Promoting National Regeneration and held an office in Manchester. The society defined three

principal objectives; i) an abridgement of the hours of daily labour, whereby a sufficient time must be afforded for education, recreation and sleep; ii) the maintenance of at least the existing amount of wages with an advance as soon as practicable, and iii) a system of daily education, to be carried on by the working people themselves but with free assistance of the well-disposed of all parties whenever time and inclination afforded it.⁵⁸ The scheme failed because it was too sophisticated for the members to manage at that stage.

The swing towards trades unionism also brought a greater interest in co-operative production, in particular among the pottery and building trades. The Operative Builders' Union embraced Owenism and in an address to delegates in September, 1833, Owen proposed expansion to a Grand National Guild of Builders, which could be organised on a regional basis. There were four points selected as primary aims, the fourth being "To educate both adults and children."⁵⁹ This became the Grand National Consolidated Trades Union but although only formalised in February 1834,⁶⁰ the union lasted only until the summer, a matter of months. From this time Owen seemed to drift away from working class activities into more utopian ideals for the future of the nation, though the legacy of his original views still remained.

What was left of the Co-operative Movement mostly dissolved in 1834, as well, because simple co-operation had developed into Trade Unionism and leaned more towards political rights. The British Association for Promoting Co-operative Knowledge developed into the Metropolitan Trades Union, then in 1831 became the National Union of Working Classes and Others.⁶¹ Among the members of the latter were William Lovett, John Cleave, James Watson and Henry Hetherington all of whom were responsible for working-class publications⁶² and would be among the later Chartist

Movement. They could trace their public activity from the rise of Co-operation. Lovett was originally apprenticed to a ropemaker in Penzance, Cornwall, but, after moving to London in 1821, he became a carpenter and cabinet maker. He educated himself by joining a discussion society, the 'Liberal' in Gerrard Street, Soho, and by attending a mechanics' institute and other associations. Lovett had been the second secretary of the chief co-operative society in London and the British Association for Promoting Co-operative Knowledge.

James Watson, from Malton, Yorkshire, was taught to read and write by his mother, a Sunday Schoolteacher. While she was in domestic service to a clergyman, James worked as under-gardener, stable-help and house-servant. In 1817, he became a warehouseman in Leeds, where he was converted to radicalism by public readings from Cobbett and Richard Carlile. He moved to London and worked as an assistant in Carlile's Water Lane bookshop. Converted to Owen's ideals of co-operation in 1828, he was storekeeper of the First Co-operative Trading Association in London's Red Lion Square. Eventually, in 1831, Watson set up as a printer and publisher. John Cleave and Henry Hetherington were both radical publishers.⁶³ Hetherington had supported the original Co-operative and Economical Society in 1821 and the foundation of the Mechanics' Institute in London in 1823. The National Union of the working Classes now worked for trade union protection, Parliamentary reform, a free press and against the taxes on knowledge. The opinions of the membership were usually publicised via Hetherington's Poor Man's Guardian.⁶⁴

The National Union organised a public meeting in April 1835,⁶⁵ as part of the campaign against the newspaper stamp duties but was disbanded later the same year. William Lovett recalled that numbers declined because of the "excitement occasioned by the Trades Unions in

1834" and the rise of the short-lived Consolidated National Trades Union.⁶⁶ Lovett and his Radical friends had joined the latter and tried to encourage a policy aimed at universal suffrage but they were not successful. Their political aspirations did not diminish. Discussions continued and they determined to establish a *political school of self-instruction* among the masses.⁶⁷

Their deliberations led to the formation of the London Working Men's Association on 16th June, 1836.⁶⁸ The Association met first at 14 Tavistock Street, Covent Garden, but later moved to premises at 6 Upper North Place, Gray's Inn Road.⁶⁹ Although there was a distinct political character to their ambitions, Lovett as Secretary, implanted a strong commitment to education. One of the objects of the Association was to "promote by all available means, the education of the rising generation."⁷⁰ There were plans to build up a library of information, to collect statistics on labourers' conditions and then to disseminate useful information through meetings and its own publications.⁷¹

Like the earlier Corresponding Societies, Hampden Clubs and Political Unions, a network of Working Men's Associations was established around the country. Messrs. Hetherington, Cleave, Vincent and Hartwell travelled to assist in the development of branches in other areas.⁷² Policy was disseminated through formal addresses to foreign associations as well as British. The Working Men's Association was critical of the corruptions of government and the defective education of man. They petitioned the Queen and her Ministers.

In 1837, Lovett was responsible for an address which outlined their policy on education and projected a scheme for the government to consider. The Working Men's Association acknowledged the importance of education, emphasized the mutual benefit to society and, therefore, the necessity

of extending it to the whole population. They demanded it, not as some form of charity, but as a right.⁷³ Lovett's address stated their belief that the provision of education was also an obligation which fell upon the Government.

"We assume then as a principle, that all just governments should seek to prevent the greatest possible evil, and to promote the greatest amount of good. Now if ignorance can be shown to be the most prolific source of evil, and knowledge the most efficient means of happiness, it is evidently the duty of Government to establish for all classes the best possible system of education."⁷⁴

The argument was influenced by Radical and Utilitarian principles.

"We contend --- that it is the duty of the government to provide the means of educating the whole nation; for as the whole people are benefited by each individual's laudable exertions, so all ought to be united in affording the best means of developing the useful powers of each."⁷⁵

The funding of a national system was left to the devices of the Government but to share the burden on a national basis brought the suggestion of a tax if need be.⁷⁶ A familiar cautionary note was made about the danger of stifling the vitality of localities if all responsibility were removed from them and devolved upon a central administration. Lovett recommended that the main concern of the Government should be the erection and superintendence of school buildings. The local representatives could have responsibility for the selection of teachers, books and kinds of instruction. The Association was worried that absolute power over a uniform system could be abused by a despotic government.

Lovett, therefore, proposed an administration to consist of locally-elected school committees with about twenty members each, both male and female, governed by a twelve-man Committee of Public Instruction selected by Parliament every three years. He advocated a Normal School to train the teachers and four stages of education for the population, i) Infant Schools from 3 to 6 years, ii) Preparatory Schools from 6 to 9, iii)

High Schools from 9 to 12 years, and iv) Finishing Schools or Colleges for those over 12 years old who were likely to proceed to higher education. These institutions would be open in the evenings for adult education. Taking into account the various religious sects of the country and the difficulty in determining uncontroversial doctrine, Lovett proposed that no forms of religion should be taught in the schools.⁷⁷ This would ensure the availability of education to all.

In February, 1837, the Working Men's Association held a public meeting at the Crown and Anchor in the Strand, to organise the petitioning of Parliament for universal suffrage, no property qualifications, annual Parliaments, equal representation, the payment of Members and vote by secret ballot.⁷⁸ This meeting commenced the transformation of the Association into the Chartist Movement. The six points of the petition became the nucleus of the People's Charter, which was the political base of the new movement.

During the summer of 1838, Chartism began to make an impression. Lovett was joined by Feargus O'Connor, Secretary of the Great Northern Union of Working Men, controller of the Northern Star paper from 1837, and decidedly Owenite in his ideas. Initially, the Chartists tried to influence by persuasion. Lovett transferred the format of education evolved in the London Working Men's Association into an education policy for the Chartists. He presented the policy of "moral force" Chartism before the movement became dominated by "physical force" protagonists. He valued the effects which could be wrought by education and urged that everyone should be instructed "in a knowledge of the science of human well-being... and some knowledge of the government of his country."⁷⁹

Chartism was only in its infancy, the full history extending beyond the realm of this study. The People's Charter was concerned with

political reform but the early "moral force" Chartists had some ambition of achieving their aims by a broader application of the benefits of education. Nevertheless, there soon appeared disturbing signs of what was to come. On 17th September, 1838, there was a demonstration in New Palace Yard, London, at which leading parliamentarians, Lord John Russell, the Duke of Wellington, Henry Brougham and Robert Peel, were denounced as knaves.⁸⁰ Chartist meetings created disturbances as the policy of "physical force" began to take over. Shortly after Russell announced the prospective formation of the Committee of Council, on 4th July, 1839 there was a Chartist riot in the Bull Ring area of Birmingham.⁸¹

The working class movements usually created concern among the establishment when they displayed political overtones. Their impact was critical in seeming to coincide with periods of stress for the nation. The Corresponding Societies were a problem during the sensitive years following the French Revolution with the threat of war. The Hampden Clubs flourished when bad trade and a struggling economy hampered the post-war years, but political activity came in phases. During the 1820's, there was a swing towards Owenism and co-operation, which was less of a threat to society and more of an attempt by the working class to improve their circumstances by themselves.

The development of trade unionism after the repeal of the Combination Laws, saw a return to political activity during the 1830's. The working class improved the knowledge of their human rights and their status in the politics of the country. They became increasingly disappointed that they had not benefited from the 1832 Reform Bill. The unrestrained dissemination of political knowledge had always been a fear of the opponents of education. The Working Men's Association combined political demands with the assertion of the people's right to better education.

The propaganda increased from the middle of the decade, when economic difficulties began to cause hardship, affecting the price of bread, the staple food of the poorer classes. The circumstances were ripe for unrest and the arrival of Chartist agitation might have convinced the Government that it would be worthwhile to consider more control of the education of the masses. Working class leaders like William Lovett had advocated the social benefits of a national system of education. With much of the working class activity and unrest located in the provinces, government began to consider the importance of maintaining a measure of central control over educational expansion in the country.

In relating government activities to working class agitation, it remains difficult to determine which was the cause and which one the effect.

Notes to Chapter Five

1. See Ch.11, Conclusion, p.311 and p.316.
2. See Ch.3, Utilitarians and Radicals, p.73.
3. See Ch.2, Religious Groups, p. 29.
4. E.P. Thompson, The Making of the English Working Class, p.170.
5. *ibid.*, p.700.
6. See Ch.4, Robert Owen, p. 109.
7. W.H.G. Armytage, Heavens Below, pp.119-120.
8. J.F.C. Harrison, Robert Owen and the Owenites in Britain and America, p.145.
9. W.H.G. Armytage, *op.cit.*, pp.86-87.
10. See Ch.4, p.117.
11. W.H.G. Armytage, *op.cit.*, pp.86-87.
12. *ibid.*, p.87.
13. U.C.L. Brougham Mss., 13610, 18th of 8th Month, 1834.
14. U.C.L., Brougham Mss, 13616, 27th of 11th Month, 1835.
15. W.H.G. Armytage, *op.cit.*, p.97.
16. F. Podmore, Robert Owen - A Biography, p.356.
17. W.H.G. Armytage, *op.cit.*, p.101.
18. *ibid.*, pp.109-110.
19. George Jacob Holyoake, The History of Co-operation, p.65.
20. W.G.H. Armytage, *op.cit.*, p.130.
21. See Ch.4, p.126.
22. W.H.G. Armytage, *op.cit.*, p.130.
23. *ibid.*, p.133.
24. G.J. Holyoake, *op.cit.*, p.40.
25. F. Podmore, *op.cit.*, p.350.
26. G.J. Holyoake, *op.cit.*, p.40.

27. H. Silver, The Concept of Popular Education, p.162.
28. G.J. Holyoake, op.cit., p.72.
29. See Ch.8, Adult Education, p. 214.
30. F. Podmore, op.cit., p.374.
31. ibid., p.376.
32. G.J. Holyoake, op.cit., p.587.
33. H. Silver, op.cit., p.159, also F. Podmore, op.cit., p.375.
34. G.J. Holyoake, op.cit., p.95, and p.101.
35. W.H.G. Armytage, op.cit., pp.89-90.
36. H. Silver, op.cit., p.176.
37. See Ch.6, p. 158.
38. G.J. Holyoake, op.cit., p.592.
39. ibid., p.594.
40. ibid., See also Ch.6, p.173, Ch. 8, Adult Education, p.222.
41. H. Silver, op.cit., p.176.
42. G.J. Holyoake, op.cit., p.83.
43. ibid., pp.80-81.
44. G.J. Holyoake, op.cit., p.429.
45. D.N.B. Vol,43, William Pare.
46. ibid., pp.83-84.
47. See this chapter, p.141.
48. W.H. Armytage, op.cit., p.133.
49. F. Podmore, op.cit., p.400.
50. W.H.G. Armytage, op.cit., p.133.
51. H. Silver, Robert Owen on Education, p.31.
52. F. Podmore, op.cit., p.424.
53. ibid., p.423.
54. W.H.G. Armytage, op.cit., p.140.

55. H. Silver, Concept of Popular Education, p.179.
56. H. Silver, Robert Owen on Education, p.33.
57. See Ch.2,32.
58. R.V. Holt, op.cit., p.194.
59. H. Silver, Concept of Popular Education, pp.191-193.
60. ibid., p.198.
61. F. Podmore, op.cit., p.425.
62. Thomas Kelly, op.cit., p.166.
63. D.N.B., Vol.34, William Lovett, Vol.60, James Watson.
64. H. Silver, English Education and the Radicals 1780-1850, pp.61-62.
65. Thomas Kelly, op.cit., p.166.
66. William Lovett, Life and Struggles, p.70.
67. ibid., p.75.
68. ibid., p.80.
69. ibid., p.76.
70. ibid.,
71. ibid., also H. Silver, English Education and the Radicals, p.73.
72. William Lovett, op.cit., p.91.
73. ibid., p.115.
74. ibid., p.112.
75. ibid., p.115.
76. ibid., p.116.
77. ibid., pp.116-121.
78. ibid., p.84.
79. H. Silver, Concept of Popular Education, p.233.
80. Joseph Irving, The Annals of Our Time, p.25.
81. ibid., p.45.

CHAPTER 6

Henry Brougham

A common feature in many developments in education during this period of the 19th Century was the name of Henry Brougham. Although not a Scot, Brougham was the product of Scottish Education and while in Edinburgh, formed acquaintanceships which were to prove useful in his legal and political careers. He was not particularly popular for his brusque manner of dealing with some of the people he encountered but Brougham seemed to be an educational entrepreneur, a catalyst who had the motivating power to seize upon matters and produce action.

Brougham was well aware of social questions. In the wake of French Revolutionary influence, he had read Rousseau, La Chalotais, other educational writers, and Tom Paine. Therefore, Brougham was abreast of educational ideas and the pressures for civil liberty, but throughout, he retained a moderating attitude. While Brougham was sympathetic to the notion of universal education, except for the very poor, he did not believe that education should be entirely free. He was mildly reformist but his philosophy seemed to be a blend of Utilitarianism and contemporary laissez-faire. His policy was reminiscent of James Mill and Robert Owen¹ in that the wealthy were expected to help the poor, but if the latter did not pay something towards their education, he feared that they would be unappreciative and unresponsive.²

Brougham demonstrated his political awareness and interest in moral themes of reform before he was drawn into the work of promoting education. He was active in literary and scientific circles and was brought to public prominence through his association with Sydney Smith, Francis Jeffrey and Francis Horner in setting up the Edinburgh Review in 1802. Political and social affairs, the poor law and the question

of slavery as well as literary items, were among the subjects presented. Brougham contributed regularly, but eminent Utilitarians, such as James Mill, also added their analysis of topics. This association with Utilitarians doubtless affected Brougham's attitude and future policy. He clearly regarded the Edinburgh Review as a crusading journal.

"The tone it took from the first was manly and independent. When it became as much political as literary, its attitude was upright and fearless; not a single contributor ever hesitated between the outspoken expression of his opinions and the consequences these might entail on his success in life, whether at the bar, the pulpit, or the senate."³

The Edinburgh Review was used to promote the causes in which Brougham was interested and he appreciated the value of presenting one's argument in print to catch public attention. He became involved in the cause for the abolition of the slave trade, which led to acquaintance with William Allen.⁴ In 1803, Brougham wrote a pamphlet entitled A Concise Statement of the Question regarding the Abolition of the Slave Trade. His intention was to influence Members of Parliament as he sent copies to the leading members of both Houses, but it also gained him access to the abolitionist circle of William Wilberforce.⁵ He was still a prominent figure in the Anti-Slavery Society in the 1820's.⁶

When Brougham was called upon to advise the Lancasterian trustees in 1810,⁷ he was already a familiar collaborator with William Allen and his associates. At the time, Brougham was in the process of establishing the Philanthropist with Allen and used his utilitarian contacts to attract the contribution of James Mill. Furthermore, Henry Brougham was a recent entrant to Parliament. It is possible that his motives for joining in the promotion of education were philanthropic, seeing a partial remedy for the social problems of the poor. Brougham might have been caught up in the benevolent perspective of his circle of

friends, while the political opportunist in him might have seen education as a suitable crusade through which he could establish himself politically. His fellow Whigs included the current leader or education spokesman in Samuel Whitbread.⁸

Once involved, Brougham took an important and active part in the organisation of the Lancasterian Committee and took the chair at times during the transitional phase leading to the formation of the new British and Foreign School Society in 1814.⁹ Indeed, many of the eventual committee were personal friends of Brougham, drawn into the work by his persuasion.¹⁰ His articles in the Edinburgh Review always promoted the policy of those who took their lead from Joseph Lancaster. Even though he temporarily lost his Parliamentary seat around the same time, he continued his public involvement with education. He branched out with the Radicals and Utilitarians to establish the West London Lancasterian Association.¹¹ Keen to ensure the right appointments by the Association, Brougham, while engaged in legal duties on the Northern Circuit, corresponded with Francis Place,¹² who took care of arrangements for public meetings. He also demonstrated that he was unafraid of experimentation, as illustrated by his friendship with Robert Owen and his participation in establishing an infant school in Brewer's Green, Westminster, 1819.¹³

Brougham's principal contribution, however, followed his return to Parliament in 1816. With the suicide of Samuel Whitbread in 1815, it fell to Brougham to pick up the mantle of Parliamentary leader for education and many friends looked to him to promote their interests. He was courted by the Radicals and in March, 1816, Francis Place wrote to eulogise Brougham's performance, congratulating him on a "manly english (sic) speech" and "having aquired position" while urging him to

have the 'daring to do right.' He was given a note of caution.

"You I hope are not made for mediocrity - you have indeed stepped out, and taken the lead from those who cannot but envy and must soon hate you, you have placed yourself full in the front of the people, you have made yourself a distinguished and marked object to them."¹⁴

In response, Brougham advertised his firm resolve to follow his own course and hoped that if this should cost him the allegiance of the Commons he would nevertheless retain the support of the country.¹⁵ This independent attitude helped Brougham to ride through the criticism of opponents.

His major success was in bringing education to the attention of a Parliamentary Select Committee in May, 1816.¹⁶ He was able to draw upon the experience of the two major societies and the survey by the West London Lancasterian Association to argue, in advance of the Select Committee conclusions, that the existing schools were not educating the numbers they had hoped. While the societies needed to justify their existence with optimistic reports of progress in the drive for Parliamentary involvement, Brougham could be honest in admitting the shortcomings. In seeking a formal investigation into the state of education, Brougham revealed that he was not only concerned with the recent voluntary foundation of schools. He thought there were grounds for an inquiry into the management of endowed schools to see if the wills of the founders were complied with and to consider how far they might assist the modes of public education. He recommended a start in the Metropolis before extending inquiries to other places.¹⁷

The House agreed to a select committee and an initial inquiry into the state of the poor in London. This in itself was something of a landmark for Brougham to have extracted a concession from the government to the importance of education, albeit only a Select Committee. It

was ironic that while England was only now at this stage, the government had already conceded, in 1815, to grant financial aid to the Kildare Place Society to assist the foundation of schools in Ireland.¹⁸

Opponents actually claimed that, for the sake of a committee of inquiry, Brougham had ignored a proposal for an experimental scheme in London for educating the poor by parliamentary assistance.¹⁹ This would suggest that Brougham had some broader purpose in mind. He seemed to use the inquiry as the first step to a full-scale investigation into charitable money which had been donated for the education of the poor, but which he suspected had not been applied properly. His scheme unfolded as the Committee carried out its work.

The findings of the Select Committee were virtually a foregone conclusion. Current educational endeavours were deemed inadequate. Their deliberations again suggested a connection between pauperism and juvenile crime. Since the parents generally corrupted the morals of the child, the Select Committee suggested that some forcible interference might be resorted to,²⁰ repeating the strong moral argument for educational provision. The answers to problems were still sought primarily from government. The Select Committee urged government measures,

"persuaded that the greatest advantage would result to this country from Parliament taking proper measures in concurrence with the prevailing disposition of the Community, for supplying the deficiency of the means of Instruction which exists at present, and for extending this blessing to the Poor of all descriptions."²¹

Early in the course of the Select Committee's work, Brougham demonstrated his willingness to overstep the strict limitations of his brief in order to bring into prominence the abuse of charity endowments, his primary target. The committee began to examine higher schools on a loose interpretation of that brief. Some endowments were made for the education of the poor and as such could come within the scope of

the examination. The committee claimed that their commission authorized them to include higher schools at their discretion although a detailed inquiry into their management was not an inevitable consequence.²²

Charterhouse, Christ's Hospital and Westminster were among those examined, although suspicions of abuse were sometimes groundless. Nevertheless, some flagrant misappropriations of funds were discovered. Charterhouse was investigated because the rules by which the school was instituted originally were not observed in practice. The poorer classes alone were supposed to be admitted but this was not the case. The parents of the children were not necessarily rich, but "they belonged to that class of society that was called the poorer order,"²³ (gentlemen of slender fortunes, small clergy or relatives of noblemen left poor.) Brougham claimed that trustees of endowed establishments had complained to him about the misappropriation of funds in the first instance, and that these investigations had been a secondary but legitimate follow-up to the Select Committee.

Some blatant cases were found with one anonymous example where £1,500 had been left for the endowment of a school, which was managed by the lord of the manor. He had appointed his own brother as schoolmaster with a large salary. The actual education of the children was left in the hands of an ignorant joiner, who had been appointed deputy schoolmaster with a small income of £40 per year.²⁴

Brougham had enough preliminary evidence to urge a broader official inquiry. To encourage the government, he intimated that by redirecting some of the money from dormant endowments, a system of education could be financed. This would remove the fear of additional burdensome expense. Brougham argued that by using the endowed funds, or at least having the value of their proper application, the country would save more money than it would ever expend upon a commission of inquiry.²⁵

The Philanthropist, in 1816, joined in the dissemination of the Select Committee evidence. Mr. Brougham was complimented for his display of zeal on behalf of education²⁶ and, towards the conclusion of the article, the theme of better application of existing endowments was picked up.

"We perceive that there is a great mass of property, a vast revenue, even now, applied to the purposes of education; but applied in such a way as to produce a very insignificant portion of those good effects which it is capable of yielding."²⁷

The Philanthropist took the government to task over the state of endowments. With the Select Committee in progress, there was anticipation of reform in the education of the poor, but the legislature was reminded of its duty to account for existing funds. It was warned that it had no authority to seek money for education from the country until it could show that the best possible use was being made of that already appropriated to that purpose.²⁸

It was anticipated that the Select Committee would be followed by the introduction of some legislative measure. With inquiries extending and further reports anticipated, Brougham's Select Committee deferred legislation in the hope that inquiries would be instituted into the broad field of endowments. In the Commons, on 7th July, 1817, Brougham reported on the general education of the poor and then proposed a formal inquiry into the abuse of charitable funds. With suitable appointments to the Commission, he envisaged beneficial results for the country.²⁹

At the same time, he pressurised the Government by alluding to the propriety of giving some Parliamentary aid to the societies involved in the education of the poor, at least for the building of schoolhouses. The expediency of this proposal was supported by Mr. Sergeant Onslow³⁰ and it was repeated when the committee was concluding its work in 1818.

The second report of the Select Committee was prefaced by a recommendation for a "Bill for appointing Commissioners to inquire into the Abuses of Charities connected with the Education of the Poor, in England and Wales; that no unnecessary delay may take place in prosecuting this Investigation."³¹ The final report returned to the suggestion of financing voluntary efforts. The Select Committee had concluded that there was enough enthusiasm in many places to be able to meet the yearly expenses of running schools but that the main obstacle to these efforts was the initial purchase or erection of a schoolhouse. Therefore, it was suggested that a sum of money could be assigned to supply this first step while leaving the charity of individuals to look after the continuation of the school.³² The British and National Societies were promoted as possible agencies for the distribution of such money, but the government was offered an alternative of appointing its own Commissioners.³³ There was no follow-up to these recommendations immediately, but they did form the basis of the application of the Government £20,000 grant in 1833.³⁴

Despite repeated suggestions for legislation in the reports, any prospect of a formal proposal from the Select Committee was deferred because Brougham finally secured a bill which permitted the examination of educational charities. It was passed by the Commons on 8th May, 1818³⁵ but not in its original form. He had tried to protect the bill from excessive revision by clearing it in advance with the Tory ministers.³⁶ He had hoped to cover all types of charitable trust but he met opposition from those who feared encroachment upon privileged areas and Brougham eventually had to accept a compromise in the terms of the Commission. Ministers, who had encouraged the inquiry as far as its avowed objects were concerned, objected to the nomination of

the Commissioners by Parliament as they conceived this to be the prerogative of the Crown.³⁷ They feared biased appointments engineered by sections of the House.

Despite Brougham's response to alleged criticisms in a pamphlet, Letter to Sir Samuel Romilly, he could not prevent curtailments which were added as the Bill passed through the Houses. In the Lords, Lord Eldon, the Lord Chancellor and ultimate controller of the charitable legacies, led the upper chamber, in restricting the powers of the Bill, and complained of some inadequacies in its preparation. Brougham, for instance, had estimated only £4,000 for expenses,³⁸ a somewhat inadequate sum. There would be 14 Commissioners but only 8 would be paid.³⁹ The quorum was raised from two to three, in response to accusations of meagre attendance at the Education Select Committee, which had provided opportunity for manipulation. Witnesses would not be compelled to produce deeds and papers (to prevent injurious disclosures) and inquiries were to be confined to charities specifically for education, not the whole range of charities. Exemption was given to the two universities, the great schools (Eton, Winchester, Westminster, Harrow, Rugby, and Charterhouse) and establishments which received special visitors.⁴⁰

The exemptions meant that some of the abuses already unveiled by the Education Select Committee, were now beyond further investigation. One of these would have been Pocklington School, Yorkshire, an ancient foundation which received visitors from St. John's College, Cambridge. By the 19th Century, this school's substantial endowment supported only one pupil, while the school had been converted to a sawpit or lumberroom.⁴¹ On the other hand, some Members of Parliament were aggrieved that their former schools had not been granted exemption.

Brougham must have been stung when Castlereagh rejected his own offer to serve on the Charity Commission and only two of the Education

Select Committee nominations were accepted.⁴² There was a good deal of suspicion about the motives of both sides. Brougham was worried that Tory appointees would merely defend rather than criticise endowments. Most charities were under the care of the Established Church, which would resent interference in the schools. Brougham's opponents feared a Dissenter plot to gain control of traditional legacies and divert them to schools under the British system.⁴³

Lord Castlereagh, who seemed to dictate the Government's stance in Parliament, agreed to re-examine the specific regulations of the Charity Commission the following year.⁴⁴ When the preliminary inquiries did not raise much alarm, Parliament duly considered extending the terms of reference. Brougham, however, still had to face some fierce opposition which emanated from his management of the Select Committee. The audacity in interrogating some university and public school representatives had caused some resentment. On 23rd June, 1819, he faced a premeditated attack upon the education committee led by Sir Robert Peel. Brougham was the only member of the committee in attendance and he had to respond without preparation. The exit of some members immediately after Peel's speech, Brougham interpreted as their conclusion that he would be unable to reply.⁴⁵

He was probably suffering for his determination to follow his own course but his handling of this occasion illustrated Brougham's ability to fend off opponents. His legal training and sharp mind enabled him to present a detailed defence of all Peel's charges, some of which were familiar. Brougham was accused of over-stepping the original commission to call before the Select Committee the Master and Senior Fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge and to investigate such as Eton and Winchester. Brougham repelled any suggestion of rude treatment of these gentlemen and claimed that he had only examined the charities because people had

written to his committee to complain about them.⁴⁶ Peel's other charges rested upon the timing of Brougham's introduction of the subject to the House, but these were easily refuted because opportunities to raise objections had existed. Lord Canning was cited as one who had taken advantage to offer his misgivings.⁴⁷ Peel seemed to have missed these occasions in the House, or had chosen not to speak at the time. Further accusations of withholding information, leaking facts only to friends, or lack of accessibility were defended on the basis of confidentiality or the chairman's discretion.

More important, considering the selection of the ensuing Commission, was the charge that Brougham had packed the Committee.⁴⁸ From the experience of the working sessions "packing" seemed an inappropriate description. The Quarterly Review reported a thinly attended committee with no more than three out of forty members usually lending assistance. This usually meant that the Chairman (Brougham) could direct everything according to his wishes.⁴⁹ It can be seen why Brougham was steered away from controlling the Charity Commission.

The qualifications of Brougham's colleagues were questioned, too. Sir William Curtis, Mr. Butterworth, Sir James Shaw, Mr. C. Calvert, Mr. Barclay, Mr. Alderman Wood were all politely regarded as successful in commerce or as magistrates and valuable additions to Parliament. On the other hand, they were dismissed as "probably some of the last members of the House who would have been selected for a Committee intended to inquire into the state of the Great Schools and Universities."⁵⁰

Brougham explained the inclusion of Aldermen as essential since the original focus had been on the state of education in London. The Members for Westminster and London were included as a matter of course.⁵¹ There were certainly men of higher qualification who served on the

Select Committee. Brougham challenged Peel for his opinion of Sir Samuel Romilly, Sir James Mackintosh, Mr. Frederick Douglas, Mr. William Lamb, later Lord Melbourne, Mr. William Wilberforce and Mr. John Smythe, the member for Cambridge University.⁵²

Some of his committee colleagues were established friends and associates linked not only by present commitments but by intellectual and social pursuits. Samuel Romilly was a supporter of the B.F.S.S. and was on the Sturges Bourne 1817 Poor Law Committee with Brougham. The credentials of Wilberforce could not be challenged. J. Butterworth was another B.F.S.S. member while Leonard and Francis Horner, who died in 1817, were life-long friends from Edinburgh. Sir James Mackintosh, another Scottish connection, was yet another British Society⁵³ member and had also written for the Edinburgh Review.

Brougham did not deny the inclusion of friends on the Select Committee but he claimed that he had not set a precedent but had merely followed the trend of other committees. He cited a recent Finance Committee selected by Peel's own friends, which showed a distinct bias towards the government. Of the 21 members, twelve were said to vote always with the government, possibly even fourteen, four were neutral while the remaining five might have differed in opinion.⁵⁴ Therefore, there seemed to be no question of appointing a completely impartial committee, even though Brougham declared that he had never interfered with the procedures of his committee.⁵⁵

All this defence of previous work was distracting from the real purpose of the confrontation, the re-appointment of the Commission to look into charities and the remedy of observed defects. Brougham felt that Peel had not given sufficient attention to his previous speeches on the problem of exemptions for specially visited charities⁵⁶ and

suggested that his attack had illustrated this misapprehension. With the limitations imposed on the Commissioners, while the Education Select Committee's closing stages overlapped the younger body, Brougham had hoped to lend assistance to the charity investigations through the Education Select Committee. Once again, he explained his willingness to ignore obstacles in his way.

"I disapproved of the measures brought forward last year. I lamented the course pursued; and I fairly avowed my disapprobation. I felt it necessary to back the Commissioners, armed with imperfect authority by the ample powers of the Committee, because I deemed them crippled by the checks and defects in the constitution of the Board."⁵⁷

Brougham had been prepared to move the reappointment of the Education Committee,⁵⁸ but yielded to persuasion to withdraw because he had been notified of Lord Castlereagh's intention to introduce a measure which would render his own unnecessary. Brougham still urged the reappointment of the Charity Commission because the objects of inquiry had been limited so far and he yearned for the investigation of those cases precluded from examination. He had been led to believe that Castlereagh's measure would increase the powers of the commissioners and anticipated an extension of the objects of inquiry.⁵⁹ Some favourable alterations were made. The number of Commissioners was increased to twenty, with ten to be stipendiary. Any two would now constitute a valid board. The terms of reference also included non-educational charities but the exemption for those with special visitors was retained.⁶⁰

The commissioners set out on a lengthy period of investigation which was permitted until 1830 but later extended and amended until 1837.⁶¹ Although he had worked hard to create a Commission of Inquiry, he had very little to do with the later progress of the reports on the charities. Nevertheless, Brougham had instigated a major movement for the monitoring

and regulation of the nation's charitable endowments, which extended well beyond the realms of this particular study. A Select Committee in 1835 reviewed the work of the Commissioners, proposed an official Board to manage the charities and set a deadline for the conclusion of the surveys.⁶² There was no legislative response until the institution of the Charity Commissioners in 1853. A further major assessment of the application of endowments was made by the Taunton Commission 1864-1868, but all these developments were an extension of Brougham's initiative.

Shortly after the Commission commenced its duties, Henry Brougham brought forward legislation which would compliment the work of his Select Committee on the Education of the Poor. In the Commons on 22nd June, 1820 he introduced a Bill for a national system of education, by which the government would provide schools where the British and National Societies had not. Financial support would be provided by the levy of a local school rate.⁶³ The Bill was read a second time and was ordered to be committed on 14th July, 1820.⁶⁴ Then Brougham withdrew it in order to take into account the recent developments on education charities. It was brought back at the beginning of 1821, in the modified form of two education bills; one "to secure to the poorer classes a useful and religious education," the other "to regulate and improve endowments for the purposes of education."⁶⁵

The alterations to remove the threat of additional taxation were welcomed. The Times gave the measures a favourable press, especially the use of endowments, which offered the prospect of easing the financial burden by diminishing parochial assessments.⁶⁶ The attraction of the Bill was clearly the second section which proposed to improve the administration and application of defective endowments. It offered to remedy failures to comply with the objects contemplated by the founders and to provide checks to prevent further abuse.⁶⁷

That the Bill was eventually lost was not due to the proposals on endowments. With regard to the control of the proposed government schools, Brougham had tried to reconcile the interests of religious groups, who had made the greatest advances in school provision in recent years. He made a number of concessions to the Church of England to acquire support from that quarter, but by so doing he succeeded in alienating the Dissenters⁶⁸ whom he probably thought he could rely on. James Mill tried to convert them to accept the proposals⁶⁹ but unsuccessfully. With such a division, the Bill had to be withdrawn, to the regret and frustration of Brougham, whose only comment on this episode was the following.

"My Parish School Bill had been introduced, which I afterwards was prevented from carrying by the absurd and groundless prejudice of the Dissenters, when it was supported by the Church - the Dissenters opposing it because it was so supported."⁷⁰

It is difficult to understand how Brougham, with his years of experience with the B.F.S.S., had failed to anticipate the problems his proposals created with his allies among the Dissenters. He might have been under too much pressure at the time, in particular as the defence counsel in the divorce proceedings against Queen Caroline. There was a story that in the very thick of the events, and shortly before his speech on her behalf, Brougham spent a quiet week-end at Holland House and was discovered one morning in the breakfast room, not engaged on one of the innumerable "recensions of his peroration", but in redrafting the clauses of the Education Bill.⁷¹ This could be interpreted as an example of the man's energy and intellect that he could divide his attention to cope with these important subjects simultaneously. An alternative view might be that the pressure of one damaged the other, that with less on his mind, Brougham might have planned his Education Bill

differently. The toll of his work, nevertheless, might have contributed to the subsequent breakdown in his health, which forced him to leave the Northern Circuit in April 1821 and again in February, 1822.⁷²

Despite the failure of his Education Bill, Brougham still emerged from these years as an important figure. He had gained fame and popularity following the divorce case and subsequent death of Queen Caroline. To the country, he had the image of the defender of oppressed innocence.⁷³ When he returned to public life after his illness, he was in a position to capitalize upon this popularity when he altered his tactics on education. With intransigent opposition preventing legislation at the elementary level, along with most other interested parties, Brougham switched his attention to adult education during the 1820's. With typical promotional skills, he did much to encourage the development of Mechanics' Institutes, supported them with the foundation of the S.D.U.K. and helped to establish the University of London.⁷⁴

While most of the country was pre-occupied with the development of adult education, the expansion of schools for children was allowed to proceed under the existing guidance of the two main societies. Towards the close of the 1820's, Brougham's interest returned to the children of the poor. After the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, in 1828, he considered it a favourable time to consider uniting religious groups, for the purpose of "planting schools." He judged it "a favourable moment for bringing them into one plan of exertion, and for calling on them all to aid in the great work of education."⁷⁵ By this time, however, Brougham's attitude to national education had been modified by a project which he undertook personally.

During 1828, Brougham decided to conduct a private survey on the current state of education. He addressed 700 or 800 circulars to the

clergymen of as many different parishes. He trusted to their former courtesy, co-operation and goodwill which he had experienced during the inquiries of 1818.⁷⁶ He received 487 replies which produced evidence of an increase in the school population from 50,000 in 1818 to 105,000 in 1828.⁷⁷ From the returns, he projected a similar increase nationwide. Despite criticisms against the accuracy of his calculations, Brougham was apparently so impressed by these results of the efforts of the major societies and the independent work of localities, that he modified his policy concerning government interference in education. The former champion of a government controlled national system of education, grew disenchanted with the idea of central administration. Brougham became wary of frightening away the goodwill and, more importantly, the amount of public financial subscriptions to the establishment of schools. This minor survey was to be influential, not only in affecting Brougham's opinion, but also the policy of the legislature. During the 1830's it was to resurface in his speeches and he had to defend the implications of his survey more than once. In some way the debate over the conclusions from the survey might have contributed to the interest in statistics during the 1830's and the search for accuracy.

The turning point in Brougham's attitude coincided with an advancement in his political career. In Grey's Ministry of 1830, Henry Brougham was appointed Lord Chancellor. With the attainment of his highest position of influence, Brougham seemed to relinquish to some extent, the cause he had promoted for so long. His new responsibilities might have persuaded him to take more consideration of the government's position. His change of mind disappointed political colleagues who had hoped that he would use his new political power to bring their educational work to practical fruition. Joseph Hume "was very sorry that the Lord Chancellor - all powerful as he was in the Cabinet - had

so grievously disappointed the ardent expectations of the whole nation on this most important subject."⁷⁸

Nevertheless, Brougham unashamedly spelled out his new position. He was convinced of the existence of a great need for education in many parts of the kingdom but considered that it would be most impolitic to interfere with the great good which had been supplied by voluntary contributions. He admitted that this opinion was contrary to his former views. Nevertheless, he wished to encourage immediate exertions to remedy the evils caused by the absence of education in the areas worst affected, the cities and towns.⁷⁹ While he still favoured national education, he was not inclined to promote it as a government responsibility.

At the beginning of the 1830's, without his drive and leadership, education seemed to be pushed to the background by the machinations of the reform movement and the campaign against "taxes on knowledge." When the Reform Bill was passed in 1832, it increased public expectations of further liberal measures. The S.D.U.K.'s Quarterly Journal greeted the Reformed Parliament as an opportunity for a national system of education. It contradicted Brougham by declaring that no matter how well directed, individual efforts would not be able to supply the education of the people without state support. The journal expected to see all friends of education unite in a more vigorous attempt to obtain government expenditure on the education of the poor.⁸⁰ The country had to wait for J.A. Roebuck⁸¹ to bring the subject before Parliament in July 1833.

In the debate on his motion, both Lord Althorp and Sir R. Inglis made recourse to the "laborious examination" in 1828 by Brougham to argue against government interference in education. They feared, as Brougham had done, the destruction of private initiative - "nothing could be more fatal to education than that." Mr. O'Connell persuaded Roebuck

to accept a committee to examine the proposal,⁸² but the government shortly introduced a £20,000 grant towards the erection of schools. When Joseph Hume, attacked the piecemeal nature of the government measure, he reminded the House of the long-standing work of the commissioners on charities. They had shown a sum of £50,000 to be available. With this money, Hume thought that a general system of education should have been brought forward. He spoke against the grant only because it was insufficient to be a serious step towards a national system.⁸³

Nevertheless, the government proceeded with the grant of £20,000 towards the cost of buildings only, to be distributed through the British and National Societies, with the proviso that the localities should demonstrate their willingness and ability to support a school. It can be argued that the sanction for the government grant came from Brougham. The fact that the rules for its application followed the recommendations of the Select Committee of 1818⁸⁴ suggests the hand of Brougham.

The government was clearly under pressure at the time of the grant and its introduction might have been a hasty attempt to appease the public. The repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts and the emancipation of Catholics were examples of reform under the Tories, but Grey's Ministry had built up the expectations of the people, especially with the passing of the Reform Bill. More liberal measures were anticipated but the ministers were struggling to maintain popularity in the country. There was no evidence of direct pressure upon Grey or Brougham to do something about education specifically, but the government was clearly in difficulties. A matter of weeks before Roebuck's motion prompted the government's intervention, Brougham wrote to Grey to express private and confidential opinions upon the government's loss of public confidence and the performance of his colleagues. He wrote bluntly - "It is quite vain to conceal from

ourselves that the Govt. is seriously damaged both in the eyes of the country + even of the H. of C. itself."⁸⁵ Partly he blamed the excitement of the "Reform situation", but his main criticisms were aimed at fellow members of the Cabinet. Apart from some compliments for Althorp, Stanley and Russell, most were performing inadequately, unable to defend the government in the House, and therefore, demeaning all. To revive the fortunes of government, he wrote:-

"The new Corporation Bill must be brought in - the Comm. of examining the Old Corporations must be prepar'd (sic) - and the Grant of what can be spared (£100,000 in two years) for providing Schools in the Great towns must be commenced."⁸⁶

This letter plainly puts Brougham behind the government grant but there is further evidence of a central plan in formation before the summer of 1833. In January, 1833, a letter from William Allen referred to some scheme which Brougham was considering for the financial assistance of schools. On behalf of the B.F.S.S. Allen gave tacit approval.

"With regard to schools thy own suggestions appear to me to be the very best viz! to give assistance in the local and outfit of Schools - which will increase the spirit + energy of those Societies that have given proof already by their doings that they are equal to the work - we find that twenty or thirty pounds given for the starting of a school in districts where they are wanted is the means of establishing them on a firm foundation..."⁸⁷

There was obviously some collusion between Allen and Brougham to prepare the acquiescence of the major parties involved in education and to determine the application of an undisclosed sum. Hence, the eventual grant went to the British and National Societies. The difference between the £20,000 and Brougham's original suggestion to Grey suggests a compromise within the Cabinet. On the other hand, Roebuck's motion might have stirred the administration to act before the scheme was fully prepared and assessed. The grant was possibly introduced to try to repair

the government's image while relieving pressure from Roebuck's Radical supporters.

The Quarterly Journal of Education approved the measure but remained disappointed at the limited nature of the government's effort. While it could see the advantage of increasing the number of schools, the grant offered no prospect of improving the quality of the actual teaching.⁸⁸ The Edinburgh Review on the one hand gave reserved praise to the government's first acknowledgement of the importance of education and the urgency of contemporary need. The grant was regarded as a temporary expedient but "worthy of being remembered to the credit of the first Session of a Reformed Parliament."⁸⁹ Then the Edinburgh Review rounded on the S.D.U.K. and thus on Brougham. The S.D.U.K. was blamed for indirectly influencing the government to be so miserly in its assistance to education. In 1829, the S.D.U.K. had published the Companion to the Almanac whose author had testified to his satisfaction in believing that there were very few districts where the working classes could not obtain instruction.⁹⁰ The article had been based upon Brougham's returns from the 487 parishes in 1828. This survey was alleged to have deluded those in power into believing that the 1833 grant would be adequate to make education universal throughout England and Wales.

The Edinburgh Review article was written by Professor Pillans of Edinburgh but Brougham had attempted to intervene to correct opinions in it because he was not confident that Pillans had his facts right. Brougham twice wrote to Macvey Napier, the editor, during the month preceding publication. At first he wanted to add a page or two to state the government's views in respect of the grant and the education question in general.⁹¹ A few days later, Brougham had read the Pillans article, which produced a further letter to defend his earlier conclusions and

to criticise errors of fact by the author. Brougham justified his belief in the increase in education in the 487 parishes as representative of the whole country because he could not see them all being wrong with their returns. He admitted that the article in the Companion to the Almanac could have over-estimated the expansion of education, but the impression remained of a considerable increase.⁹²

The figures were still being re-examined, but the criticism remained in the article. Brougham also indicated the government's desire to have done more for education but a major obstacle had been the fear of destroying the public's voluntary contribution, "the irreparable mischief of cutting off half a million a year."⁹³

The Edinburgh Review article berated this free-trade mentality with the state leaving education to individual competition, afraid to take charge and to superintend its own developments. The Edinburgh Review called for a well-digested, comprehensive scheme of instruction based on one plan and diffusing its benefits equally and impartially to all.⁹⁴

Nevertheless, the instructions for the distribution of the grant constituted national policy for the time being. There was to be no redirection of charity money, but, during the course of the inquiries to examine the effects of the grant, there arose opportunities to remind the government of the sums available. Roebuck moved the two Select Committees. The first, in 1834, examined the application of the government money, with a view to extending further grants in aid.⁹⁵ The committee drew upon the experiences of the British and National schools, since they were the recipients of the money. Naturally, most witnesses were in favour of the grant as it had increased the number of schools, but it was noticeable how concern seemed to shift towards the quality of the teachers as an area for government involvement.

Apart from representatives from the two societies, Professor Pillans was also examined. He brought his knowledge of the Scottish education system but also took his inspiration from the French Ecole Normale to advocate a central system of inspection with an adaptation of the district inspector system used in Ireland.⁹⁶ He used the familiar example of the successful national system in Prussia but this made no more impression than on other occasions.

The final witness was the Lord Chancellor, Henry Brougham himself. He used the occasion to remind people of the waste of charity funds, praised the idea of libraries, and how the S.D.U.K. had helped to reduce the price of books, all relevant to the diffusion of knowledge, but he came down firmly against any notion of a national system of education, established by law, with compulsory attendance. He thought that the mood of the country would not accept it and that those who advocated continental ideas failed to appreciate the immense cost.

Those who argued for Continental schemes he dismissed for having misjudged the nature of Englishmen. Prussia's system worked because the national character was militaristic. To even attempt measures with a suggestion of compulsion in England, be they only the offer of advantage or the imposition of disqualification, would have made education unpopular and retarded its progress.⁹⁷ He was unconvinced, now, that a national system was a panacea for all the social ills and was wary of the possibility that government control could lead to ministerial domination of opinion through the medium of schools. He could foresee the destruction of individual benevolence if any government attempted to place education on the rates. This was a repetition of the view he had held since 1828. The greater part of the funds for education had been raised voluntarily and to lose this would not only destroy the established work but it would

transfer a heavy financial burden to the Treasury. Brougham was satisfied with his figures on the progress of education through private endeavour but, should this source ever dry up, he did not preclude an increase in government assistance. In the wording of his response to the Select Committee, he clearly did not anticipate a decline in private benevolence.

"If, however, contrary to my present expectation, the same spirit should flag, and the means of education become deficient I am clearly of opinion that it will become the duty of the Legislature to interfere and provide for the deficiency."⁹⁸

For the time being, Brougham was confident that, allied with local effort, the government's policy was the correct one to ensure a national system eventually. He was content to continue with the grant system, envisaging a complete elementary system within two or three years.⁹⁹ He did accept, however, the concern about the quality of the teachers and so suggested a plan for Normal Schools based upon a similar grant system. He calculated that one hundred teachers could be trained annually in London, with additional groups of fifty at York, Lancaster and Exeter. Thus 250 teachers would be trained annually at an estimated cost of £10,000. With the appropriate public subscriptions this could be doubled. So Brougham anticipated a regular supply of some 500 teachers a year, trained at "a cost hardly perceptible to the country."¹⁰⁰ The government eventually decided to lay aside this further £10,000 grant but there was nothing directly resulting from the Select Committee of 1834, only the accumulation of evidence.

When Roebuck moved for the Select Committee to be renewed, Grey's administration had fallen, Peel's precarious "100 Days" had given way to Melbourne's second administration and Brougham had lost the Lord Chancellorship. He was not called to this second Select Committee but the case for a national education system and the use of endowments was

included in an appendix to the report, the evidence of James Simpson to the Select Committee on Education in Ireland.¹⁰¹ Simpson did not approve of the policy of demand and supply which had hitherto prevailed. For many of the population, education was not a major priority and, therefore, he believed that an element of compulsion was necessary in a national system.¹⁰² He could not see the achievement of the benefits of education without a government machinery, which would also provide the teachers, but that would require some contribution from the public. Where Brougham hedged at levying taxes, Simpson was adamant that the whole country had to pay because the whole nation would benefit. His ideal system called for direct parliamentary grants to pay for buildings, grounds and apparatus, but the general maintenance and repair of the schools would be provided by a parish or district rate.¹⁰³ Rates would also provide for the salary of a teacher. Despite its unpopularity, Simpson was sure that this was the best way of providing the essential funds. He was sceptical of the ability of individual benevolence to maintain schools once the novelty had waned and people began to find the demands upon their charity too oppressive. Like Brougham and others, however, he did appreciate that there was already a large fund in existence through endowments and bequests. Although local opinion naturally favoured the reservation of endowments to their particular places, Simpson proposed that they become part of a national fund to be redistributed as and where necessary. This would extend their benefits to more areas of the country, which he believed the original founders would have welcomed.

"Those funds were left for the purpose of educating particular localities, and therefore, it appears to me there is no interest existing anywhere to prevent a more enlightened and efficient application of those funds; and which, were the benevolent individuals now alive and

"and themselves enlightened, they would now wish. There is no interest to prevent it; the only interest is that of the locality, or the class to receive good education; but the national plan would afford them a much superior education than it was possible for the authors of these endowments to contemplate. I have not been able, therefore, to see a single solid objection to Parliament disposing of such endowments, for the purpose of conferring a vastly superior education to what was even heard of by the original founders."¹⁰⁴

Neither the Select Committee, nor the government, felt disposed to act upon the evidence collected, merely to present it for consideration. It was timely that the use of endowments was pressed again because during the same year, 1835, a different Select Committee was assessing the work of the Charity Commission.¹⁰⁵ Henry Brougham chose this time to revive his interest in the promotion of national education but this followed his loss of government office in November 1834. Brougham might have tried to use education to revive his flagging popularity.

In May, 1835, he drew the attention of the House of Lords to the backward state of education in various districts. From the basis of previous statements he had to acknowledge the increases in provision but he still declared them deficient. The education received was limited and not enough to instruct the population adequately. He appealed for an increase in infant schools, especially in towns, which would offer an improvement in morals and help to prevent crime. In his speech he presented 14 resolutions for the improvement of education. He called upon Parliament to provide effectual means of instruction where these could not be obtained for the people. He wanted seminaries for the training of masters who would supply the schools.¹⁰⁶ Before the Legislature considered involvement, he sounded the familiar cautionary note on the value of the contributions of the well-disposed individuals who had advanced the provision of schools. He did not wish to halt "that movement which it is our wish to accelerate."¹⁰⁷

Half of the list of resolutions were then devoted to the subject of endowments and how they had been allowed to drift from the purposes for which they were originally intended so that they produced little benefit to the country. Abuses in their management could only be remedied by tedious and expensive litigation. To improve the administration of these charities, he thought it expedient to appoint a Board of Commissioners with wide-ranging powers over trustees and teachers in endowed schools. With a requirement for the compulsory presentation of yearly accounts of expenditure to the Secretary of State, the trustees would be obliged to manage their funds more efficiently and the Board would be enabled to turn any surplus to the benefit of the community in general.¹⁰⁸

The Prime Minister, Melbourne, reminded Brougham that the government had already accepted his advice on the annual building grant and that a further £10,000 had been set aside for training teachers and promised that a model school would be established as soon as possible.¹⁰⁹ In the wake of his 14 resolutions, Brougham introduced a Bill to set up a Board to distribute the parliamentary grants and to supervise charitable trusts.¹¹⁰ The "Act for promoting Education and regulating Charities" was not considered until December 1837 and then ignored. It was a sign of Brougham's declining influence. Most of his recommendations, however, had already been noted, particularly with regard to endowments. Harvey's 1835 Select Committee, which examined the evidence of the Charity Commissioners, had called for a Board to administer endowed funds. So Brougham was effectively picking up ideas from around him and taking up their promotion. He had had some problems in drafting the Bill and had been compelled to alter its clauses.

Misgivings about the Bill were expressed by Henry Dunn, then

Secretary of the B.F.S.S., and they were conveyed to Brougham. Dunn envisaged legal objections to the violation of private rights and professed that the planned interference with endowments was not his main priority. He thought that efforts to elevate the status of teachers, improve ordinary schools, to create an efficient system of inspection and the wise distribution of limited funds should take preference. He warned that the public might not accept any embarrassing criticism of the endowed schools and the removal of their bequests.¹¹¹

Leonard Horner, M.P. the factory inspector and, an acquaintance of Brougham from his days in Edinburgh, corresponded directly with him. He paid Brougham the courtesy of explaining that he had criticised the Education Bill¹¹² and then listed his opinions. He clearly reflected a national reticence for interference with the endowments of the country but also exemplified the 1830's trend for accurate statistics. Horner's main objection was "against any legislative measure beyond one of inquiry, until the information indispensable for safe and wise legislation be collected and methodized".¹¹³ He thought the Bill should have confined itself to elementary schools and not attempted to combine the administration of the charities with educational functions. Horner did not approve of the proposed powers and constitution of the Board. He particularly objected to the inclusion of Cabinet Ministers as ex-officio members, suggesting that a Secretary of State would be more concerned with matters of greater importance than schools. Like Henry Dunn, he was worried about the wide-ranging powers to be vested in the commissioners

"to establish any such schools and seminaries where no application for aid may be made, according to their discretion and according to such rules as they may from time to time make for their own guidance in the administration of such funds."¹¹⁴

This seemed to confer unlimited power in the establishment of schools, a level of interference thought beyond public acceptance.

In some ways, Brougham resented this criticism as unsound. In a letter to Sir J.A. Murray, on 10th January, 1838, he complained that Horner had

"attacked the Ed. Bill without having seen it, hence he accuses it of the things which are not in it + from utter ignorance of law he flounders + blunders invariably - but his most ridiculous blunder is not knowing that the Bill is as much J. Russell's as mine."¹¹⁵

While awaiting the fate of his Bill, Brougham tried to promote the idea of a Government Board of Education in the Edinburgh Review in 1837. An article linked him with proposals made by Thomas Wyse¹¹⁶ in 1835 to establish a Board of Education in Ireland, which retained general superintendence while delegating some responsibilities to district or parish councils. Brougham thought this plan worthy of wider application for it provided a role for Government, but did not remove all the control from local inhabitants.¹¹⁷ This accorded with Brougham's general philosophy that individual initiative should not be destroyed. The article repeated the arguments he had presented throughout the 1830's.

Towards the end of the decade, he had come close to defining a clear policy for Government control of education, but the ideas were those promoted by others as well. He had tried to rekindle the force he once had in the work for national education but had been overtaken by the promotional work of different individuals and organisations. Whereas, before 1820, he could have been singled out as the dominant spokesman, by the 1830's there were more people anxious to put forward the case for national education.

Brougham retained the basic attitudes which had prevailed since his early involvement in education. The use of moribund endowments allied with public subscription were the fundamentals behind his work.

The emphasis in his policy sometimes changed. Up to 1820, he was preoccupied with the possible application of charity funds to the expansion of education. By 1830, Brougham had switched to the assertion of private initiatives, but, from the mid-thirties, turned again to the question of regulating educational endowments. His contribution was considerable in gaining so much Parliamentary preoccupation with aspects of education. He was the probable instigator of the Government's decision to assist developments with Treasury funds, a major step beyond the committee stages, plus the further £10,000 grant towards the training of teachers.

In terms of the use of endowments, Brougham managed to institute a mammoth statistical exercise of record-gathering which began a movement for the careful monitoring of charities which extended through the century and kept education in the public eye. He was unsuccessful in his efforts to make use of surplus charity money for the general good because of the association of endowments with a more privileged education in many cases. The control of the Church in endowed schools was a factor in preventing the transfer of money to possible secular establishments or to schools which were not in union with the Church. Endowed schools had become ingrained in the establishment of society and traditional reticence from disturbing the pillars of privileged life meant that the Legislature would have presented a barrier. When he linked his education proposals with the use of endowments, the joint project presented difficulties, which is why his Bill of 1838 failed. As Henry Dunn suggested, he would have had more chance of success if he had restricted the proposals simply to education in elementary and infant schools. Even the 1835 Select Committee's recommendation for a Board to administer the charities lay dormant until the 1850's.

With regard to the education of adults, he had done much to promote the availability of education to all, with the hope that the adults would appreciate the benefits of schools for their children. In the 1830's he was overtaken by the growing number of societies which agitated for the promotion of a national system, while his letter to Sir J.A. Murray mentioned one of the increasingly influential figures, Lord John Russell, who, like Roebuck and Thomas Wyse, became a prominent personality in the concern for national education. Russell it was, who eventually announced the government's intention to set up a controlling body in 1839. Brougham, for his part, might have paid for the unpopularity of Grey's Ministry and his own change of attitude in the 1830's. He became a government figure with different policies to uphold and when he appeared to try to press his ideas again in later years, he did not have the same impact, or the right combination of proposals to capture enough support.

Notes to Chapter Six

1. See Ch.4, p. 109.
2. C.W. New, op.cit., pp.198-199.
3. Henry Brougham, Life, Vol.1., p.523.
4. C.W. New, op.cit., p.203, See Ch.2, p.33ff.
5. Arthur Aspinall, Lord Brougham and the Whig Party, pp.10-11.
6. D. Owen, English Philanthropy 1660-1960, p.132.
7. See Ch.1, p.14, and Ch.2, p.36.
8. See Ch.1, p.10.
9. See Ch.1, p.17.
10. See Ch.2, p.38.
11. See Ch.3, p.76.
12. Add. Mss. 37949, f.12, March 18, 1814.
Brougham wrote to Place concerning the position of Secretary to the West London Association. "I wish to call your attention to a young man of the name of Hammond who has been mentioned to me in a way that lends me to hope he may prove extremely serviceable, for his zeal is described as very uncommon, and his character and qualifications as perfectly satisfactory. I am not myself acquainted with him, but I believe that our friend Mr. Mill can tell you more about him.--"
To which, Place assured him:- March 22, 1814. "Mr. Hammond is my friend and I would go great lengths to serve him, he is a man of talents and amiable manners.-- Mill and I have been talking of him for the situation you mentioned."
13. See Ch.4, p.130.
14. Add. Mss. 37949, f.37, Place to Henry Brougham, March 13, 1816.
15. Add. Mss. 37949, F.38, Brougham to Place, March 23, 1816.
16. See Ch.1., p. 18.
17. The Times, 22nd May, 1816, 2b.
18. See Ch.10, p. 283ff.
19. Q.R., Vol.XIX, No.XXXVIII, July, 1818, p.496.
20. The Times, 21st June, 1816, 2b.
21. PP. 1816, IV, p.3, in A.S. Bishop, The Rise of a Central Authority for English Education, p.7.

22. The Times, 21st June, 1816.
23. *ibid.*
24. *ibid.*
25. *ibid.*
26. The Philanthropist, Vol.VI, 1816, "Report of the Education of the Lower Orders in the Metropolis", p.210.
27. *ibid.*, p.290.
28. *ibid.*, p.291.
29. The Times, 8th July, 1817, 2d.
30. *ibid.*
31. PP., 1818, Vol.4, p.2.
32. PP., 1818, Vol.4, p.59 cited in A.S. Bishop, *op.cit.*, p.7.
33. *ibid.*, pp.7-8.
34. See Ch.1, p.21.
35. D. Owen, *op.cit.*, p.186.
36. *ibid.*, p.184.
37. Q.R., July, 1818, XIX, No.38, p.499.
38. D. Owen, *op.cit.*, p.186.
39. *ibid.*, p.188.
40. Q.R., July, 1818, XIX, No.38, p.499.
41. D. Owen, *op.cit.*, pp.186-187, (Sel. Comm., 3rd Report, p.144, ff).
42. *ibid.*, p.187.
43. *ibid.*
44. *ibid.*
45. H. Brougham, Speeches, Vol.1, p.301.
46. C.W. New, *op.cit.*, pp.211-212.
47. H. Brougham, Speeches, Vol.I, p.307.
48. *ibid.*, p.310.
49. Q.R., July, 1818, Vol.XIX, No.38, p.498.

50. *ibid.*, pp.509-510.
51. H. Brougham, Speeches, Vol.1, p.312.
52. *ibid.*, p.313.
53. See Ch.2, p.38, committee members of the B.F.S.S. and Appendix I, p.334.
54. H. Brougham, Speeches, Vol.1, p.311.
55. *ibid.*, pp.312-313.
56. *ibid.*, p.304.
57. *ibid.*, p.306.
58. *ibid.*, p.305.
59. *ibid.*, p.306.
60. D. Owen, *op.cit.*, p.188.
61. See Ch.7, p.194, The Charity Commissions, 1819-1837.
62. *ibid.*, pp.209-210.
63. C.W. New, *op.cit.*, p.328.
64. The Times, 13th July, 1820.
65. The Times, 5th January, 1821.
66. *ibid.*
67. The Times, 8th January, 1821.
68. See. Ch.2, p.48ff.
69. C.W. New, *op.cit.*, p.329.
70. H. Brougham, Life, Vol.II, p.383.
71. J.B. Atlay, The Victorian Chancellors, citing Q.R., Vol.CXXVI, 58, p.268.
72. C.W. New, *op.cit.*, p.263.
73. Frances Hawes, Henry Brougham, p.162.
74. See Ch.8, Adult Education, p.228.
75. H. Brougham, Speeches, Vol.III, p.223.
76. Add. Mss. 37949, F.83, A letter from Brougham to F. Place with regard to the figures for the Isle of Man commented upon the co-operation of the church at that time. "I should add that we found the Bishop most kind and ready in aiding our inquiries." Sept. 14th, 1820.

77. H. Brougham, Speeches, Vol.III, p 223, also Add. Mss. 34616, F.156,
78. J. Alexander and D.G. Paz, "The Treasury Grants 1833-1839", p.79, B.J. Ed. Studies, Vol.XXII, Feb-Oct, 1974.
79. *ibid.*
80. Frank Smith, A History of English Elementary Education 1760-1902, pp.147-148.
81. See Ch.1, p.21, Ch.3. p.88ff.
82. The Times, 31st July, 1833, 4f.
83. The Times, 19th August, 1833, 1e.
84. See this Chapter, p.164.
85. U.C.L., Brougham Mss., 40, Whitsunday, 1833.
86. *ibid.*
87. U.C.L., Brougham Mss., 18,093, 26 of 1st month, 1833.
88. Frank Smith, *op.cit.*, p.148.
89. E.R., Vol. LVIII, No.CXVIII, Oct, 1833, pp.3-4.
90. *ibid.*, p.4.
91. Add. Mss. 34616, F.151, Sept, 23, 1833.
92. Add. Mss. 35616, F.156, 25.27 Sept. 1833.
93. *ibid.*,
94. E.R., Vol.LVIII, No.CXVII, Oct. 1833, p.9.
95. see Ch.1, p. 23, and Ch.3, p.88.
96. PP., 1834, IX, pp.42-43.
97. *ibid.*, p.221.
98. *ibid.*, p.222.
99. *ibid.*, p.244.
100. Frank Smith, *op.cit.*, p.149.
101. See Ch.3, p.93, and Ch.10, p.299.
102. PP., 1835, VII, 763, Appendix 3, pp.124-125.
103. *ibid.*, p.131.

104. *ibid.*, p.138.
105. See Ch.7 p.210, and also this chapter p.162ff.
106. The Reformer, Vol.2, No.7, May 28, 1835.
107. H. Brougham, Speeches, Vol.I, p.226.
108. The Reformer, Vol.1, No.7, May 28, 1835.
109. Frank Smith, *op.cit.*, p.158.
110. *ibid.*, Also U.C.L. Brougham Mss. 13619.
111. U.C.L., 13619, Henry Dunn, "Observations on such portions of a Bill entitled 'an Act for promoting Education and regulating Charities' as relate to the furtherance of Popular Education in England and Wales" Attached to a William Allen letter to Brougham 8th of 8th month, 1837.
112. U.C.L., 13494, 28th Dec. 1837.
113. U.C.L., 13494, 7th January 1838.
114. *ibid.*
115. Add. Mss. 40687 f17, 10th January, 1838.
116. See Ch.10, p.291ff.
117. E.R., Vol.LXV, No.CXXXI, April, 1837, p.246.

CHAPTER 7

THE CHARITY COMMISSIONS 1819-1837

In turning public and Parliamentary attention to the administration of old endowments, Henry Brougham was probably only reviving an old problem which had remained unsolved in spite of occasional official concern. As long ago as 1601, the Elizabethan Statute of Charitable Uses permitted the abolition of a time limit on charitable trusts, so that a grant could be accepted in perpetuity under the jurisdiction of the Court of Chancery. The Court assumed responsibility for earlier trusts, previously supervised by ecclesiastical courts, and became empowered to ensure that trusts were used for the purposes designated by the benefactors. Should the original practice fall into disuse, new legal guidelines could be instituted to redirect funds to their primary purpose.¹

During the 17th and 18th Centuries, in the wake of Anglican revivalism and simple humanitarian concern throughout the nation, to create a legacy to a charitable trust for schools or the welfare of the poor became a final gesture for those who wished to leave a good impression of their characters in the world they were departing. There might also have been a suggestion of the medieval practice of "purchasing indulgences" to gain eternal succour for souls by a final, temporal gesture. The amounts donated varied in size and a school could receive any number of endowments over the years. The funds were usually administered by a board of trustees consisting of prominent figures, either clergy or members of the gentry. The boards reappointed themselves as the years passed. The accumulation of funds in some cases meant that schools not only had pecuniary income, but land and property at the disposal of the trustees for rent or lease to further augment the value of the

endowment. Schools were by no means the only recipients. Philanthropy provided an assortment of benefactions which were primarily aimed at financing some relief to the poor. Brougham was interested in the use of these funds, if there were means of applying them to the financing of education.

Approximately two centuries saw the growth of charity foundation schools which, though their original charters designated provision for the poor, became associated with the more advantaged sections of society. The suspected misappropriation of funds caused Brougham and others to consider that, given legal sanction, recourse could be made to the original purpose of the endowments to improve their contribution to education. Where legacies were not used properly it was hoped to divert them to the provision of new schools. The Select Committee of 1816 uncovered some blatant abuses but the only framework for their examination was through the Courty of Chancery, a cumbersome, time-consuming and expensive method. Legislation had not improved with the passage of time and Henry Brougham was keen to press this point when he moved for his Commission of Inquiry.

The Elizabethan legal machinery had created a safeguard against the misapplication of trust funds. Special commissioners had been empowered to 'make Enquiry by the Oaths of twelve men or more' into possible abuses and to take the necessary measures to return the charity to the original intention of the donor.² In the Commons, in 1818, Brougham illustrated the decline of this procedure, which had reached the point of obsolescence in more recent times. Of the 964 Special Commissions created under the Statute of Charitable Abuses, their distribution up to 1760 was as follows

Between 1643 and 1660 - 295 commissions
" 1660 " 1678 - 344 "

Between 1678 and 1700 - 197 commissions

" 1700 " 1746 - 125 "

" 1746 " 1760 - 3 "

In the 75 years prior to 1818, only 6 commissions were issued and none at all in the 20 years immediately preceding.³ Brougham was trying to revive a process which had fallen into disuse. The absence of this legal restraint had facilitated the spread of malpractice in the management of endowments. Brougham, however, was by no means the first to express concern.

In the 1780's, Thomas Gilbert attempted to catalogue the charities, but his principal concern was Poor Law Reform and, therefore, the Gilbert Returns, 1786-88, were restricted to funds for the "Use and Benefit of Poor Persons" and excluded many other categories.⁴ Gilbert must have increased public awareness of the existence of charity money. Sir Thomas Bernard of the Society for Bettering the Condition of the Poor called for a public inquiry in 1804 and proposed an extension of the use of endowments for the improvement of education. The Society suggested engrafting day schools, charging 3d a week, on to the boarding charity foundations and creating new parochial schools on similar lines. By the legal control of "uncorrected abuses" and by empowering magistrates in cases where parents could not afford the 3d fee, to order the payment of it "as an act of parish relief" the Bettering Society was optimistic of improving educational provision. "The whole system of education in this country may be thus completed with a trifling alteration of the mode, and with very little, if any, increase in the parochial charges."⁵ Those in power were not ready to accept education schemes and interference with ancient foundations. A few years later, Samuel Whitbread's attempt to use education to remedy the problem of the poor was also rejected.⁶

At intervals, the Gilbert Returns were reprinted and seemed to attract enough attention to instigate some measures which attempted to control charity funds. They reappeared in 1810 and were followed by the Charitable Donations Registration Act, 1812, which, by requiring a central listing of endowments, hoped to prevent their misuse. This was not very effective and failed to enforce control. Sir Samuel Romilly proposed to expedite and reduce the cost of Chancery proceedings but made little impression with the Charity Procedure Act, also of 1812.⁷

Although there was no effective legislation for change, schemes for the better employment of endowments circulated among the Radicals. In a letter to Francis Place in 1813, Edward Wakefield⁸ wrote about the spirit and plans for "schools for all", in which he suggested that the "grammer (sic) or superior schools, will furnish funds for the elementary ones."⁹ At the time, Brougham mixed with Radical-Utilitarian company and worked with Place and Wakefield on the B.F.S.S. committee.¹⁰ Therefore Brougham had the opportunities to develop a policy for endowments before he obtained the Select Committee on the Education of the Poor. Another re-issue of the Gilbert Returns in 1816¹¹ probably heightened the awareness of politicians and educationists and gave Brougham the final inspiration. The quick manoeuvre to examine endowments as part of the work of the Select Committee suggests a pre-arranged plan. Its success was confirmed in the creation of the Commission of Inquiry, which set about the task of investigating the state of the nation's charities.

Since London and Westminster were the original areas of Brougham's inquiry under the Education Select Committee, it was appropriate that the Commissioners included these locations in their early reports. They did not conceive their brief to include schools supported entirely by voluntary and casual contributions. The Commissioners thought their

province to be charities with funds of a permanent nature, but, with schools supported by a combination of voluntary and endowed funds, they felt it came within their authority to ascertain the description, management and application of the latter.¹²

The Commissioners divided into teams, which travelled to their designated areas of the country to carry out their inquiries. The first report dealt with parts of Berkshire, Kent and Westminster, which occupied three separate teams. This was the pattern for a somewhat haphazard approach. Instead of concentrating upon one area at a time, the Commissioners attempted to extend their authority into distant provinces as early as possible. Subsequently, it sometimes took several reports, while the county of Yorkshire was spread through twenty.¹³ Reports appeared twice-yearly.

Curiously, the Commissioners were not empowered, nor did they make, formal recommendations for legislation. This was probably because the machinery for the correction of abuses already existed, the Court of Chancery. What was required was an exposition of abuses to set the legal processes in motion. A radical alteration of the endowments to support general education would have meant interference with the domain of the Established Church, under whose guardianship fell most educational trusts. To attempt to disturb this entrenched power in schools would have met determined opposition from the elite of society, especially those who had been the products of the public endowed schools and regarded them as the foundations of the nation. The Commissioners had to be sensitive to the mood of the country. Occasionally their reports made observations as to the propriety of certain practices, but regarded their primary task as the accumulation of a public record. The creation of a detailed account of charities was expected to be sufficient to stimulate remedial action to correct any failings. The responsibility

of carrying through this necessary legal process was left to others.

The Commissioners' method was to unfold the terms of the original foundations of the schools and, by carefully reporting the history of their development, expose any contradictions and abuse. The Commissioners found evidence of schools operating contrary to the terms of endowment. In their Fourth Report, for instance, St. Paul's School in London was scrutinised. This school came under the arm of the Mercers' Company and by the statutes of the founder, its aim was to teach children of all nations and countries indifferently to the number of 153."¹⁴ The Commission queried the drift towards the more classical education which was attractive to the upper classes but tended to exclude the poor. They implied that the purposes of the school showed no obvious distinction and even intended there to be a mixture of social classes, but there were aspects of the current regulations which militated against the poor. Children were forbidden to use tallow candles in the school, only wax candles, which was not compatible with the circumstances of poor children. Yet there were references to the poor in the articles of the school. It was directed that each child, on admission, should pay "once for ever four pence for writing his name, which money the poor scholar shall have that sweeps the school; and other offices are directed to be done by a poor child of the school." St. Paul's was found to be no different to many other schools of the same period, which were commonly expressed to be for the children of the poor.¹⁵

Although the school was not fulfilling its obligation to the poorer classes, the Commissioners recorded that there was no specific policy of exclusion on the grounds of status but that the principle observed was to prefer those to whom the education of the school was likely to

prove advantageous as being most suited to their station and prospects in life.¹⁶

In the provinces, a similar drift towards the classics was found to be detrimental to the success of schools. The Free Grammar School, Wolverhampton, was struggling to attract numbers. In 1819, the school, intended for 150, had only 54 pupils on roll. The average number fluctuated between 50 and 60 but had been as low as 22 in 1803.¹⁷ It was alleged that the school suffered from the proximity of Rugby, which was preferred by the gentry who could afford it. The manufacturing town of Wolverhampton lacked appeal and the clientele of the Grammar School were usually the town's respectable tradesmen.¹⁸ One of the trustees, Joseph Tarret, volunteered his impression that the education provided was partly the cause, being too inclined towards classics, which was unsuitable for a commercial town. He suggested that if part of the funds could be used to establish a National School or a school combined with the Grammar School, the establishment would be raised in utility and importance and be of greater service to the town.¹⁹

Although they were concerned with the history of the application of the terms of an endowment, since Brougham's original intention had sought to redirect some of the money tied up in charities, the Commissioners took particular interest in the management of funds. They exposed examples of incompetent administration and wasteful extravagance. St. Paul's was unable to provide an accurate record of regular expenditure but offered the excuse of accidental charges for the upkeep of school property.²⁰ The Commissioners specifically criticised a £1,000 annuity, paid to the former high master, a pension which far exceeded his salary. This was defended as keeping up his standard of living which used to be maintained by perquisites of his post, for instance, his rent and tax-free residence and the taking-in of boarders.²¹

The allocation of £287 14s. for the courts and committees of the school was deemed excessive. When the Court of Assistants of the Mercers' Company were summoned to consider the school's business, in order to ensure sufficient attendance an expense allowance of usually one guinea was permitted. Many members resided in the country and were comfortably well-off. The Commissioners called attention to the point that this "payment certainly appears, at least with respect to the latter class of persons, to militate against the rule, that a trustee is not entitled to charge for his time and his labour."²² The trustees were cautioned about the temptation to create unnecessary meetings. Further extravagance was indicated by a sum of £229 9s. expended on the apposition dinner, "somewhat large, when compared with the economical provision of the founder," and on occasional charges for gold medals.²³ St. Paul's was quite a wealthy institution and the report suggested that the surplus revenue, squandered by lax administration, could be put to better use. The Commissioners recommended a more economical system of management to produce far more benefit "than the mere instruction in classical learning of 153 scholars."²⁴

The depressed condition of the Wolverhampton Free Grammar School had not prevented the trustees from adding a large increase to the master's salary in 1814. One trustee who had missed the meeting which approved the sum, declared that there were no circumstances which justified such a disproportionate increase.²⁵ In neighbouring Walsall, the Free Grammar School had not presented a regular settlement of accounts for some years and then, in 1813, a discrepancy of £10,000 was discovered. The Treasurer, Mr. Samuel Wilson, left in embarrassed circumstances but agreed to pay back the money. All but £350 had been repaid before the gentleman died.²⁶

In Lancashire, a Girl's Charity School had been established in Blackburn in 1763 and, by all accounts, prospered. The Will of William Leyland, dated 18th July, 1763, provided £200 to three trustees in the first place, to be invested and then the interest used to promote a charity school for poor girls in the town. Mr. Leyland also left £60 to two other trustees, £50 of which was to go towards building a chapel of ease and the other £10 to erect a workhouse for the poor of Blackburn. Any residue of the interest was to be directed towards the advancement of the school.²⁷ With the addition of other donations, by 1796 the school's fund amounted to £1,130. In July the same year, £1,073 5s. was laid out for the purchase of "£1,800, 3 per cent consols" whose value had increased to £3,000 by 1813. Then in 1817, the trustees made a mistake which the Commissioners highlighted despite the previous good record. The whole stock was sold at the price of 74 per cent and produced, after deducting commission, £2,216 5s. which, with the addition of some dividends due, made a total amount of £2,339 9s 4d.²⁸

The Commissioners accepted that the Blackburn trustees were acting with good intentions, to avail themselves, for the benefit of the charity, of the rise which had taken place in government funds, by obtaining a larger sum than had been invested and by augmenting the annual income. The Commissioners questioned the propriety of this measure and thought that it would have been more prudent not to have parted with the government security on which the charity's money was held. They advised that the money ought not to remain unsecured in the hands of any individuals, no matter how respectable.²⁹

While the Commissioners were concerned about the handling of finances at the hands of trustees, their work was equally meticulous in discovering the loss of money to the charities. Even small donations

received their attention for the cumulative figure of these minor "doles" throughout the country might have been substantial. Some of the more obscure ones were found to have fallen into disuse; inadequate records had failed to keep track of them. For example, Pinson's Doles at Wolverhampton, a sum of 20 shillings a year, payable out of the Brookrow estate in the Shropshire parish of Corley, had not been received since 1813. The churchwardens had not applied for it.³⁰ In the Parish of Norton Under Cannock, Staffordshire, a brief entry related to Green's Dole, which had been recorded in the Gilbert Returns of 1786. Richard Green had given £30 to the poor of Norton for which 10 shillings a year was paid by a widow Smith and Richard Smith. In 1823, the Commissioners reported that 15 guineas of this benefaction was lost, yet 10 shillings a year was distributed but nothing known about it.³¹ This showed that the recording of smaller endowments had been lax and that, if properly traced, an indeterminate sum of money might yet be available.

Batt's Charity, relating to the parish of St. Botolph without Bishopsgate, London, was singularly misappropriated. From a vestry minute dated 19th May, 1731, it could be traced that one Arthur Batt had given to the poor of the parish £100 to be set out at interest and the produce annually divided among them. Subsequent minutes, 25th May, 1731, 27th November, 1740, and 8th February, 1742, revealed that the rector and churchwardens used the sum to purchase old South Sea annuities, which were ultimately sold to discharge a debt due from the parish. No allowance was made later by the parish in respect of the money thus applied.³²

The loss of legacies led to the possibility of financial difficulties. The Commissioners discovered an example in Bewdley, Worcestershire. Established by charter of King James I on 12th September, 1606,³³ the

Free Grammar School of King James lost a number of gifts made during the 17th Century. Some were due from tolls on the market and fair and were intended specifically for the school and scholars. Hugh Pooler had donated £20, dated 27th December, 1621, 40 shillings of which was to be paid to the schoolmaster out of the toll of the market and fairs. The gift had not been made since 1749. There was no information on the payment of 20s. by William Keye, a baker, dated 3rd December, 1625, for the maintenance of the school and scholars. There was nothing known of two other bequests, one of 20s. for ever, by Joan Tyler and 40s. by John Wakeman, a timberman, in 1640.³⁴

When the school suffered financial difficulties, it was rescued by the intervention of the town corporation, which paid the debt. From 1804 to 1824, the taxes for the schoolhouse poor rates and property tax, while it existed, were paid by the corporation.³⁵ The liaison continued after 1824, with the school honouring its debts when its funds recovered to be in surplus. Nevertheless, the Commissioners called for the resumption of the forgotten legacies.

Most of the criticisms levelled at the management of endowments concerned their later history, but problems were also uncovered within a few years of a bequest, sometimes due to the descendants of the founder. A relatively recent example came within the life of the Commission of Inquiry. In the Parish of Great Missenden, Buckinghamshire in 1822, a schoolhouse was erected as a Sunday School for children of parents of the Established Church. It cost £500 but this was met by James Oldham Oldham, in whose field it was also built.³⁶ This benefactor died in June the same year, shortly after its completion, and left everything in the hands of his son Joseph, who sold the field three years later but ensured the reservation of the school premises. Despite

the passage of a further seven years, Joseph had still not vested the school in the hands of trustees to fulfil his father's intentions, but the Commissioners assumed that this would eventually be done. James' widow was believed to be intending to invest £100 in public funds, with the vicar or others as trustees to direct the dividends towards the upkeep of the schoolhouse.³⁷

Great Missenden was an example of probably only tardy developments, though the Commissioners were unable to check if the good intentions were followed through. Here, though, the Commissioners also uncovered one of the occasional examples of variation from the terms of endowment to extend the benefits of education to others. The Sunday School offered the use of the schoolroom during the week as a British School, in which 50 to 60 boys were taught "the common English education."³⁸

At Binfield, Berkshire, Wynch's and Symondson's gifts had been applied accordingly to the directions of the benefactors until 1786. Then, the principal inhabitants of the parish agreed, as the distributions in small sums produced little benefit, to turn the charities to the support of the parish Sunday Schools. These ceased to operate in 1814, when a National School was established and became the new object of support.³⁹ The Girls' Charity School at Blackburn also offered support to a rising school. In 1819, a section of the schoolroom was partitioned off and turned over to teaching the boys and girls of the Blackburn National School, which was mainly supported by voluntary contributions. From that time, a weekly allowance of 6s. amounting to £15 12s. per year had been paid from the funds of the charity to the mistress of that school.⁴⁰

Whether or not these additional uses of the endowments had the legal sanction of the Court of Chancery was not expressed. Such revelations

of small-scale diversions of endowed facilities, however, might have encouraged Brougham and others who wished to extend the benefit of the charities to assist the establishment of other schools. On the other hand, the story of the Sir William Turner School, Kirkleatham, Yorkshire, is worth recounting in detail because it summarises most of the criticisms of endowments, from the destructive interference of an immediate descendant to the malpractice of the management of the remaining funds.

Sir William Turner, a former Lord Mayor of London, had established a hospital for the care of poor men, women and children during the reign of Charles II. Turner's Hospital was granted the rights and privileges of a corporate body to purchase lands, goods and acquire further "hereditaments".⁴¹ By his will, Sir William left £2,000 to buy £100 of land a year which would be settled upon the Hospital of Kirkleatham. Substantial legacies were also provided for his nephews but subject to conditions. To one Cholmley Turner a sum of £5,000 was allotted, provided that he completed an apprenticeship to a prominent merchant in London. Should he not serve his apprenticeship faithfully then the terms of the will

"gave 1,000l. of that 5,000l. to build a free school near the hospital at Kirkleatham; and 2,000l. thereof to buy 100l. a year to be settled on the schoolmaster for the time being, for ever, and another 1,000l. of that 5,000l. to purchase 50l. a year, for the comfortable maintenance of an usher in that school, for ever."⁴²

Mr. Cholmley Turner declined the opportunity to apprentice himself and the money was transferred to the establishment of the school as prescribed. An additional benefit came from the final £1,000 of the above sum, which was designated for the building of a conduit for water. This was later found impracticable and the money was therefore applied to finish the school and buildings.⁴³ Cholmley Turner was a man of his

own means and opinions for subsequently, it seems, he was directly responsible for the malfunction of the briefly established Sir William Turner School. When the Commissioners investigated the case, they found that the free-school had ceased to exist for some considerable time. The history of events relied much on traditional accounts, and, apart from the closure of the school, were somewhat imprecise.

Either because the school and scholars, being situated too near to his mansion and adjoining property at Kirkleatham, disturbed his enjoyment thereof, or because the school did not sufficiently answer its intended purpose, or for some other unknown or forgotten reason, Cholmley Turner did all in his power to discourage the residence of scholars and to extinguish the school as a viable concern. Consequently, the school did decline. Nevertheless, despite the fact that boys were no longer educated, a master and usher were regularly appointed with yearly stipends of £100 and £50 respectively. Even the current master and usher at the time of investigation had accepted their appointments as "situations of emolument only, without duties attached."⁴⁴

As well as this squandering of salaries, there was evidence that rents had been lost due to administrative oversights, which made clear that sources of finance were still legally available to this already substantial charity.

To their credit, the trustees of the school in 1823, led by Mr. Vansittart and Lady Turner, had tried to apply the funds in alternative directions to try to make up for the loss of the school and to approximate to the original terms of the foundation. With the cessation of activity at the Kirkleatham School, surplus funds were employed to pay the salaries of a master and mistress of a school at Coatham, and to a master at Yearly, both within the parish of Kirkleatham, for the instruction

of poor children in their neighbourhoods. Some small sums had also been paid for repairs and other expenses relating to these two schools.⁴⁵

Despite the effort of Mr. Vansittart and the board to reconstitute some educational purpose to the funds, the overall picture obliged the Commissioners to urge a legal remedy.

"Under these circumstances, it seems desirable that means should be resorted to, under the sanction of the legislature, for changing the situation of the school-house, or for directing the application of the revenues to some other charitable purposes, than those to which they were primarily destined."⁴⁶

The history of the school was already an example of all that could go wrong with endowments. Now in taking the advice of the Commissioners, the trustees illustrated the cumbersome legal machinations involved. The charity was obviously wealthy enough to suffer the expenses but the board of trustees did not follow the suggestion to broaden the application of the funds. Instead they applied to the Court of Chancery for the re-establishment of the charity estate and for directions and a scheme for the management of the charity. The commission report appeared in 1823. It took until 1825 for an inquiry to be decreed and the report from this was still awaited three years later,⁴⁷ which left the future of Sir William Turner's School uncertain.

Any remedies to faults, without the force of legislation, were left to the conscience-stirring effect of public exposure in reports. The prominent criticism of trustees, in most cases, was criticism of the Church, which explained the original opposition to inquiries into the historic endowments of the country. By the end of the first period of commission, July 1830, much of the country still awaited inquiry, but renewal was not to materialise until sixteen months later. That there was no automatic renewal of the Commission was probably due to increased political awareness of the state of endowments, and the

continued reluctance of opponents to sanction investigations. The investigations were drawn out, expensive and brought only slow change, because of the cumbersome legal processes.

When a new Charities Inquiries Bill was brought forward in 1831, supporters maintained the hope that the government would take measures to alter the terms of endowments. They were aware of the increased amount of money available and were keen to extend the brief of the Commission. Mr. John Weyland suggested an amendment to the Bill to enable the Commissioners, when faced with schools endowed for a specific purpose, "to ascertain whether the funds of the charity could not be distributed with greater advantage to those whose benefit they were intended, than according to the precise rules laid down by the founder of the charity." He understood there to be upwards of £1,000,000 in funds intended for education. He also imagined that those who made the bequests would appreciate that society changes and would want the state to alter their bequests to best fulfil the objects they had in view.⁴⁸

Joseph Hume affirmed his contention that the funds intended for education had been misapplied and further hoped that the Commissioners would ultimately have the authority to inquire into those charities connected with the Universities.⁴⁹ The Commission was reappointed with some extension to the brief but only until 1834.⁵⁰ With the authority now to examine charities with special visitors, the Commissioners resumed their meticulous inquiries and presented their evidence much as before, with no legislative proposals, only recommendations in their commentary.

The short-term brief increased not just the mounting evidence of charity finances but also the concern about the cost of the inquiries. Consequently, with its conclusion in 1834, David Whittle Harvey, an economy-minded radical and newspaper publisher, not to mention sometime

critic of the Commission, moved for a Select Committee to examine the evidence of the Commissioners and to consider measures for drawing their work to a conclusion. Although 26,751 charities had been dealt with, half of Wales and six English counties remained untouched and other areas were incomplete. The Select Committee was also empowered to consider schemes for a proper administration of charity funds.⁵¹ Harvey chaired the Select Committee whose members included Lord John Russell, Peel, Goulburn and Hume. Since the Commission had cost over £200,000 already, they decided that the work ought to be concluded in as short a time as possible. They increased the numbers of Commissioners and permitted them to carry out inquiries individually rather than in pairs. A deadline of 1st March, 1837 was set. For the future management of endowments, the Select Committee recommended a central Board of three Commissioners. The Board would oversee all matters relating to the sale or exchange of charity property, would audit accounts, govern the appointment or removal of trustees, masters and ushers, and generally recommend schemes for the management of charities and the correction of abuses.⁵²

The Board was not appointed and the suggestion was left for about twenty years before seriously considered. The changes to the legal framework were too time-consuming and the interest of the Church too strong. The final reports of the Commissioners of Inquiry were published in six parts between 1837 and 1840.⁵³ Although the reports had discovered a total of £312,500 designated for specifically education purposes, the remainder of the bequests amounted to over one million pounds.⁵⁴

The Brougham Commissioners had succeeded in their task of not only accounting for the charities but also revealing the amount of money which required proper application. The steady increase uncovered by

regular reports provided the quiet pressure upon the government that an education scheme could be financed without severe damage to the Treasury purse. The reports were an available source of evidence to which educationists could refer. Henry Brougham chose to remind the government in his 1825 pamphlet in support of adult education⁵⁵ and again in the mid-1830's to Roebuck's Select Committee and in the House of Lords.⁵⁶ By 1835, however, Harvey's Select committee had recommended a Board to control charities and, in the wake of experience in Ireland,⁵⁷ the notion of a Board of Education for England was also being mooted.

The difficulty was always going to be the reluctance of the Established Church, the main guardian of historic endowments, to release Church money to finance schools of other denominations. Nevertheless, the Commission reports encouraged some to avail themselves of the legal processes to re-establish the educational purpose of some legacies. Endowments became an important concern for future years.

Finally, the particular achievement of Brougham's Commission of Inquiry was the creation of what was in effect a long-term, government-financed pressure group. The Government paid the costs of the Commission which, in turn, built up the presence of the evidence on the abuse of charities.

Notes to Chapter Seven

1. D. Owen, English Philanthropy 1660-1960, p.70.
2. *ibid.*, p.84.
3. *ibid.*, p.85.
4. *ibid.*, p.86.
5. H.J. Burgess, *op.cit.*, pp.14-15.
6. See Ch.1, p.10ff.
7. D. Owen, *op.cit.*, pp.182-183.
8. See Ch.3, p.73ff.
9. Add. Mss. 35152, f6.
10. See Ch.2, p.29.
11. D. Owen, *op.cit.*, p.182.
12. PP., 1819, Vol.X, First Report, CC, p.3.
13. D. Owen, *op.cit.*, p.189.
14. PP., 1820, Vol.IV, Fourth Report, CC, p.237.
15. *ibid.*
16. *ibid.*, p.238.
17. PP., 1820, Vol.IV, Fourth Report, CC, p.613.
18. *ibid.*
19. *ibid.*, p.614.
20. PP., 1820, Vol.IV, p.239.
21. *ibid.*, p.240.
22. *ibid.*
23. *ibid.*, p.241.
24. *ibid.*
25. *ibid.*, p.614.
26. PP., 1823, Vol.IX, Ninth Report CC, p.568.
27. PP., 1826, Vol.XIII Fifteenth Report, CC, p.14.
28. *ibid.*, p.15.

29. *ibid.*
30. PP., 1820, Vol IV, Fourth Report, CC. p.364.
31. PP., 1823, Vol.IX, Ninth Report, CC. p.553.
32. PP., 1830, Vol.XII, Twenty-Second Report, CC., p.62.
33. PP., 1833, Vol.XIX, Twenty-Sixth Report, CC. p.555.
34. *ibid.*, p.559.
35. *ibid.*, p.560.
36. PP., 1833, Vol.XIX, Twenty-Sixth Report, CC. p.86.
37. *ibid.*, p.87.
38. PP., 1819, Vol.X, First Report, CC. p.15.
39. PP., 1826, Vol.XIII, Fifteenth Report, CC. p.16.
40. PP., 1833, Vol.XIX, Twenty-Sixth Report, CC. p.87.
41. PP., 1823, Vol.VIII, Eighth Report, CC. p.734.
42. *ibid.*, p.736.
43. *ibid.*, p.737.
44. *ibid.*, p.744.
45. *ibid.*, p.745.
46. *ibid.*
47. PP., 1828, Twentieth Report Law Proceedings, Vol.XXI, pp.18-19.
48. Hansard, 3rd Series, Vol.VIII, 1831, pp.702-703.
49. *ibid.*, p.704.
50. D. Owen, *op.cit.*, p.190.
51. *ibid.*
52. *ibid.*, p.191.
53. *ibid.*
54. *ibid.*, p.193.
55. See Ch.8, Adult Education, Practical Observations, p.216.
56. See. Ch.6, p.183.
57. See Ch.10, p.278,

CHAPTER 8Adult Education

After the failure of Henry Brougham's Education Bill in 1820,¹ the educational concern of the decade turned to the expansion of adult education. The intransigent opposition to a legalised national system of education allowed supporters to turn their attention away from the elementary level. There were pressing needs for more provision to cope with the numbers of adults who had acquired some degree of learning. Despite the absence of a formal system, the Charity Schools, Sunday Schools and other voluntary agencies had presented knowledge to some. By this time, the British and National Societies² had been expanding for ten years while Lancaster and Bell had promoted their ideas since the turn of the century. The problem of education, which had originally involved young children, had shifted its focus as those children had become adult. The working classes possessed a greater spread of education than ever before.

This new generation of educated poor had manifested a number of problems in the turbulent agitation of the post-war years. The labouring classes had displayed an ability to gain access to knowledge³ but, without direction, their interest in political knowledge only created concern among the middle and upper classes. The politically-inspired Hampden Clubs and Protestant Unions had spread after 1816. The increased agitation for political reform culminated in the Peterloo Massacre in 1819. Therefore, when the plans for Mechanics' Institutes circulated, Radicals, Utilitarians and Whig politicians were eager to assist their promotion.

The idea of Mechanics' Institutes could be traced back to John Anderson's Institute in Glasgow⁴ and even to earlier public lectures

given by the Literary and Philosophical Societies in the 18th Century. The first in England was established in London in 1823. Much of the groundwork was carried out by Joseph Clinton Robertson and Thomas Hodgskin, who were the editors of the Mechanics' Magazine. They had envisaged an institute mainly in the control of the workmen themselves, providing scientific and mechanical instruction together with education in politics and economics.⁵ They were acquainted with the Benthamite circle, however, mainly through Frances Place, who modified their ambitions when he became involved in the organisation of the Mechanics' Institute. The Mechanics' Magazine for October 1823 carried a manifesto which represented the ideas of Robertson and Hodgskin but had been revised by Place.⁶ Place also drew up the rules for the Institute, after examining other literary and scientific societies of the city. The support of Radicals and Utilitarians was compatible with the philosophy of James Mill who advocated the extension of education beyond the elementary level, for the middle classes as much as any. The Mechanics' Institute provided a means of occupying the intelligent workman with useful information relating to his skill and which served to curb any aggressive ambition towards political reform.

That the Mechanics' Institute met public demand may be concluded from its immediate and rapid success. The preliminary meeting was held in November 1823 and the London Institute opened in January 1824. Within a year, there were over 1,000 members and its own premises were being built at a cost of £3,000.⁷ It was the first to erect its own building. In the popular expansion of institutes in other towns and cities, most had to rely upon hired facilities.

Henry Brougham,⁸ keen to encourage the establishment of Mechanics' Institutes, became one of the four trustees of the London building. The other three were his friend George Birkbeck, Joshua Walker, M.P., and

Alderman John Key. Brougham offered guidelines for the management of institutes and emphasized their independence. The wealthy were invited to help, with gifts of books or by giving mechanics' associations a place in which to meet, but he stressed that the committees must be managed by the members themselves. This resembled the B.F.S.S.⁹ practice of school management by the locality; the men who raised the funds accepted and shared responsibility for the running of the establishment. Brougham recommended that expenditure should be limited to the amount of funds the students themselves could raise. He felt that he

"really should be disposed to view any advantage in point of knowledge gained by the body of people as somewhat equivocal or at least much alloyed with evil if purchased by the increase of their dependence on their superiors."¹⁰

To promote the expansion of these developments, Brougham had embodied his proposals in a famous treatise published in 1825, Practical Observations upon the Education of the People. This was virtually a duplicate of an article which he had written in the Edinburgh Review in October, 1824, under the pseudonym of William Davis. The treatise offered simple, practical advice for the foundation of a meeting place.

"In estimating the expenses, " Brougham wrote, "I have supposed a room to be hired and the rent to be moderate. To make a beginning, the parties must make a shift with any public room or other place that may be vacant, the great point is to begin; The numbers are certain to increase, and the income with the numbers, as the plan becomes known and its manifold attractions operate upon people."¹¹

His intention was to further the notion of the good sense shown in acquiring useful knowledge and the means of doing so. He drew attention to the fact that "the deficiency now existing in the proportion of schools to the population of the country, would in all probability be much diminished, if useful knowledge were diffused among all those who have already learnt to read."¹² Not only was Brougham prepared to

acknowledge the progress of the working class in educating themselves but also crucial to his argument was the assumption that the British and National Societies had stimulated sufficient interest in reading and acquiring further knowledge. A principal hindrance to the provision of cheaper, more varied reading material was the tax upon paper. Brougham presaged the Radical campaign of the 1830's¹³ with a call for the repeal of this tax upon knowledge, which penalised those who most sought instruction.¹⁴ This would release the benefits of increased learning to the complete range of society, not just the labouring classes. Brougham anticipated publications on politics and the principles of the constitution, both ecclesiastical and civil. With the promotion of wholesome instruction he could see nothing but gain for the good order of society.¹⁵

Practical Observations advised upon the valuable support to Mechanics' Institutes and the spread of knowledge which could be provided by circulating libraries, cottage libraries, book clubs or reading societies. It was hoped that these could even lead in themselves to a desire for scientific instruction. Some expense, of course, would be incurred but Brougham recommended the relative economy of these organisations. To meet the cost of some schemes, Brougham reminded the reader that an available source of revenue could be found among the abused endowments which the Commission of Inquiry had drawn attention to since 1818.¹⁶ "The wise and considerate manner of proceeding which I venture to recommend would speedily place at the disposal of charitable and enlightened individuals ample funds for supporting works of real, because of most useful charity."¹⁷

Brougham appealed to any philanthropic sentiments of the wealthier classes to support the less fortunate in their efforts to learn and

he called upon the labouring classes to take advantage of opportunities to help themselves. The conservative sections of society, however, remained apprehensive about the majority of the population becoming too powerful through knowledge. There were fears of mechanics' meetings developing into riotous assemblies. The Edinburgh Review responded in support of increased adult education and quoted a recent speech of the First Lord of the Treasury Lord Liverpool to imply government approval of developments.

"We live in a time when great efforts are making towards the general education of all classes, and all descriptions of men; and God forbid that anyone should suppose that there is any branch of education whatever from the acquisition of which any class should be excluded, and from the knowledge of which some benefit may not be acquired."¹⁸

If the middle and upper classes of society tried to benefit themselves from greater educational opportunity, the improvements offered to the poor would be more acceptable to them because the distance in status would be maintained. Rather than creating unrest among the populace, the Edinburgh Review felt that a better understanding of the laws governing working relationships would bring an improvement because the greatest danger to society stemmed from passions aroused by ignorance. By increasing men's awareness of the dangers to good order, it was hoped to produce a more reasoned approach and a desire to avoid such problems.

Conservative opinion was articulated in the attack upon Brougham's Practical Observations by Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, which thoroughly dissected the treatise from a literary, practical and even a political viewpoint. Simultaneously, it contrived a vein of sympathy with the object in view and was even complimentary towards Brougham's natural ability. Nevertheless, the writing was deemed unworthy of the man's talent both in style and content. Brougham was alleged to have withheld information which would have rendered the final draft more satisfactory,

while his writing was ponderous and infused with incorrect diction.¹⁹

Blackwoods was particularly keen to make a political statement before analysing the practical implications. The magazine criticised the Whigs and other friends of the 'liberal system' who had disturbed the order of society following the repeal of the Combination Laws.²⁰ Brougham was regarded as dangerous because he promoted his opinions recklessly, perceiving no faults other than the intermeddling of the government and the upper classes. His liberalism went further than other leading Whigs and he was labelled "without question, the most fanatical and outrageous party-man in the three kingdoms."

Blackwoods was sceptical of where the management of this new education might lead with Brougham, Burdett, Place and Radical friends directing affairs. They were expected to "pervert it into the misleading and deluding of the people - into a national curse." Blackwoods maintained that "such men ought to be driven by the voice of the country from intermeddling with the education of the people."²¹ The author anticipated that the successful benefits of education would only come about if the management were placed in the hands of men without any party allegiance.

As for Brougham's practical recommendations, Blackwoods offered a counterbalance to his confident enthusiasm. Brougham wrote as if there were such a disposition to learn among the labouring classes that there was nothing more certain than the attendance of the workers at lectures once they knew that they were available.²² Blackwoods rejected this easy projection of interest and success, claiming that Brougham had not inquired whether or not the people possessed a natural inclination towards reading. It pointed out that Brougham's background and taste for books differed considerably from the poor folk who faced long working

hours and might not regard reading as relaxation or beneficial. The labourers' occupation probably required no reading ability, and, without the necessity to practise intellectual skills in the course of work, they would probably find reading too much of a task during the limited time they had for relaxation and amusement.²³

Blackwoods claimed that reading societies achieved only limited success and that Brougham's schemes offered no hope of educating the whole of the working classes. The evolution of his plans in connection with Mechanics' Institutes was thought to contradict their purpose to educate the labouring poor. Those who attended Mechanics' Institutes represented a level of skill and intelligence superior to the poor workman. Upon this point, Blackwoods proclaimed that

"Those, therefore, whom Mr. Brougham will educate; are precisely those members of the working classes who need his assistance the least, and who would be intelligent and good members of society without him and his institutions."²⁴

Such criticism did not diminish the popularity of the idea of forming institutes. By the close of 1823, there were six mechanics' institutes, but only three actually carried the name, Glasgow, Greenock, and London. The other three were Edinburgh and Haddington Schools of Art and Kilmarnock Philosophical Institution. During 1824 expansion increased with four in Scotland, the Aberdeen and Hawick Mechanics' Institutes, the Dundee Watt Institution and the Aberdeen School of Arts. In Wales, the Bridgend Mechanics Institute was formed. Nine institutes were established in England, at Manchester, Lancaster, Kendal, Eyam, Leeds, Newcastle, Alnwick, Ipswich, and Bury St. Edmunds. The peak year was 1825 when, perhaps inspired by Brougham's treatise, seventy institutes commenced, in London, Scotland, seaports and Northern industrial areas.²⁵

In some instances, the wealthy appeared to heed Broughams' appeal

for assistance in their establishment. After all it was in the interests of manufacturers and merchants to encourage education for both a higher standard of work and a more disciplined workforce. In Manchester for example, Sir Benjamin Heywood was one of a group of bankers and businessmen who advanced £6,000 to establish the Mechanics' Institute albeit a profit-making arrangement.²⁶ They hoped to take advantage of the practical experience and observations of the manual worker to create mutual benefits to all ranks of society and to science in general. Their expressed purposes seemed to reflect Owenite ideals,²⁷ viz., the "extensive diffusion of rational information among the general mass of society" together with the "creation of intellectual pleasures and refined amusements, tending to the general elevation of character."²⁸

The control of provincial institutes varied. Leeds followed Manchester in being promoted mainly by Nonconformist manufacturers, while in Bradford and Huddersfield control, for some time, rested in the hands of Radical artisans. The developments were not always welcomed with criticism emanating from the representatives of the Church. In 1826, a Yorkshire vicar complained that the institutes were breeding grounds for reformist disaffection. Similar criticism was levelled at the Leicester Mechanics' Institute in the early 1830's.²⁹

The initial enthusiasm suddenly faded. The number of foundations reduced dramatically during 1826 to only 13 and, in the following years many more declined. Few replaced them. There were several reasons for this slump. In 1826, the country experienced severe economic depression which made it difficult for the workmen to maintain their subscriptions. The wealthy withdrew their initial support. Unskilled workmen lost interest quickly, partly because they were unused to the demands of learning, especially after a day's labour. With this relatively new venture, it

was difficult to find suitable, qualified lecturers to supply the rapid developments. Therefore, the teaching did not always suit the interests of the students. Many working men were Radicals, who looked for more prospect of social change from education while the Mechanics' Institutes avoided politics and religion.³⁰

Nevertheless, with a new policy on instruction, modified from the strong scientific influence to 'general useful knowledge', expansion resumed after 1832. Most institutes were concentrated in Lancashire and Yorkshire but more now appeared in the manufacturing Midlands. From 107 in 1831, the Mechanics Institutes grew to 305 by 1841.³¹

To provide suitable material for the institutes and to fulfil some of the recommendations contained in Practical Observations Henry Brougham created another organisation, whose task primarily would be publishing. In the provision of cheap books, it would challenge the stamp duties and the unstamped press. In April 1825, with the assistance of Lord John Russell, Dr. Lushington, William Allen and others, Brougham made ready to meet the deficiencies he had outlined in his treatise.³² To prepare the ground, an anonymous pamphlet Preliminary Discourse (Useful Knowledge Society) was published in 1825, with the contents also delivered in the form of lectures.³³ William Allen recorded a few meetings with Brougham to discuss plans for the poor and, on 22nd November 1826, a particular conference about the formation of a book society.³⁴ The committee issued their first advertisement at Christmas³⁵ and then on 18th January, 1827, at Furnival's Inn, they met and sealed the origins of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge.³⁶

This was determinedly Brougham's project. He drew up the rules and outlined the objectives, which included the provision of "Pamphlets of service and application."³⁷ In a private letter, he revealed that

some adjustment to policy was required. The original intention was to diffuse knowledge among the working people who had been taught to read and desire further information. This was to ensure that "wholesome" material reached them and not what he described as the "obscene publications" of cheap circulating libraries. There was probably some political motive in this, to placate the critics of the institutes and to counteract the propaganda in the more extreme radical publications. Brougham then discovered that his plan was too limited in concentrating upon one section of society. He was surprised to find that the upper and middle classes were remarkably ignorant themselves. Their comfortable positions and the stability of society had caused them to neglect their own education. In some respects, their inferiors knew more and the exposure of this weakness created a clamour against the advancement of the lower classes. Therefore, the S.D.U.K. felt obliged to broaden their prospectus to provide a better education for all ranks of society, not simply the working population.³⁸

The first volume of the Library of Useful Knowledge was "On the Pleasures of Science", written appropriately enough by Henry Brougham.³⁹ To reach some of the less literate, or less interested, they soon produced a Library of Entertaining Knowledge to try to capture minds and transmit knowledge incidentally, through material which, on the surface, provided amusement. By the first Annual General Meeting at the Freemasons' Tavern, Thomas Spring-Rice, M.P., felt able to declare that the S.D.U.K.

"was now one of the most powerful machines for the moral and intellectual improvement of the people, and the great objects of practical utility had been realised, which could scarcely, at its formation, have been contemplated as possible."⁴⁰

Like Brougham above, Spring-Rice was aware of the need to appease the wealthier classes and that, to assuage fears of social upheaval

through an unequal distribution of learning, the wealthy, too, needed to be spurred to maintain their own intellectual development in order to maintain and justify their social superiority.⁴¹

Brougham used the Edinburgh Review to carry articles promoting aspects of the Society's work. They were mainly written by himself but the Edinburgh Review agreed to present regular articles on the S.D.U.K. It was a public relations exercise as the reader was made aware of success and any criticism was parried. Initially, the S.D.U.K. received Radical support⁴² and Brougham's influential connections infiltrated the Radical Westminster Review. The Westminster Review, was due to carry an article entitled "Education of the People" when Brougham apparently caused some addition to be made. In the notes of the author, John Bowring, dated September or October 1827, he acknowledged that he added several pages to comply with Brougham's request in a letter to the printer of the Westminster Review.⁴³

Nevertheless, the same Westminster Review soon made a critical appraisal of the S.D.U.K. The Radicals had different expectations of the Society, so that, in their estimation, its policy was not commensurate with its avowed purpose. Criticism began, in a similar style to Blackwood's Magazine's condemnation of Practical Observations, attacking the obscure language and erroneous style of Brougham's first volume on the pleasures of science. Brougham's rhetoric was "not a guide to knowledge, addressed to the educated not the ignorant."⁴⁴ Examples of ensuing works were selected for their obvious unsuitability for the limited ability of the poor. They were concerned with areas of specialist knowledge:- 1) Hydrostatics, 2) Hydraulics, 3) Pneumatics, 4) and 5) Heat, 6), 7), 8), 11) Mechanics, 9) and 44) Animal Mechanics, 10) and 18) Familiar Account of Lord Bacon's Novum Organum. The tone of criticism

was, at one point, sarcastic as the current volumes of the S.D.U.K. were concluded.

"To a people ignorant of everything most intimately connected with their welfare, he (the reader) will find offered as a master of instruction two treatises, 46 and 53, on the Polarisation of Light, and another on the Rigidity of Cordage!"⁴⁵

The aspirations of the Radical/Utilitarian wing of the society were at variance with those of Brougham. They were more interested in developing the political awareness of the lower classes, while Brougham envisaged the advancement of society at all levels. Blackwoods Magazine entered the argument with an attack on the whole concept of "education for the people"⁴⁶ and its advocates, in particular the lack of moral education. The concern of Blackwood's Magazine was the stability of society, which required that the uncivilised sections of the population be instructed on how to behave peacefully and reasonably. The Westminster Review's criticism leaned towards the class and composition of the governing body of the S.D.U.K. It was their detachment from reality which created the problems. They were reminded that the choice of material printed was inappropriate and that the style of presentation was beyond 999 out of every thousand of the labouring class.⁴⁷ The committee members were alleged to be wrong for the job and the writers they employed unfit to be popular instructors.

Brougham, however, had already pre-empted such criticism at the 1828 Annual General Meeting when in response to critical letters at the time, he had stated that the Society never meant to address itself to the poorer classes exclusively.⁴⁸ Ignorance existed at all levels and the material was expected to be suitable to different levels. Brougham had always insisted that the higher classes should improve their own progress in intelligence to justify their superiority.

The S.D.U.K. was proud that it avoided religious and political discussion so that members of all creeds and parties could meet on common ground. The Westminster interpreted this as avoiding issues which ought to have been treated.⁴⁹ This "neutrality" was not achieved without some internal checks. In 1829, William Allen, wrote to Brougham to express his alarm at a proposal to include the Philosophy of Kant in the Library of Useful Knowledge. As well as the content, he berated the proponents of this philosophy for causing the disintegration of the Lancasterian School Society in Westminster.⁵⁰ Allen was adamant in his stand. He instructed Brougham to remove his name from the Committee if the article on Kant was published or anything similar, so that no sign of approval could be attributed to him.⁵¹

The avoidance of religious topics failed to satisfy all denominations, but the S.D.U.K. was successful in stirring the interests of rivals to consider adult education. The Church of England felt obliged to fill the vacant religious areas abandoned by the S.D.U.K. and to provide another perspective on general subjects. A rival National Library was mooted, to be published by Mr. Murray. All subjects including religious controversy and politics were to be treated, but, despite the appearance of an advertisement in March, 1827, it was subsequently withdrawn and this society did not materialize to compete immediately with the S.D.U.K.⁵²

Meanwhile, the S.D.U.K. was firmly established with the Edinburgh Review proclaiming its valuable service to the country. The publicity from the Edinburgh Review claimed that much ignorance in all classes of society was now dissipated, bad feelings extinguished and groundless prejudices overcome.⁵³ The euphoria did not convince the opponents of the education movement. The Quarterly Review sniped at the efforts to advise the poor on how to organise their lives. The Quarterly Review

thought the S.D.U.K. was trying too hard and offered impractical information for the circumstances of labouring folk. When political economy was introduced in the early 1830's, one tract, The Results of Machinery, suggested that the poor "become capitalists", deposit a portion of their earnings in a savings bank, so that if they found themselves unemployed, they could live off their savings.⁵⁴ This exhibited a naive appreciation of the financial prospects of workmen.

The Quarterly Review did not pretend to support the dissemination of education, but while the journal acknowledged the possibility of some benefits, it did not expect the condition of the poor to be affected significantly by education. No form of education was thought capable of rendering the working classes sufficiently knowledgeable to govern their own interests safely. The Quarterly Review would not trust the poor to look after themselves. Their guidance, protection and improvement was still regarded as the work of their superiors.⁵⁵

There was considerable opposition from other quarters, too. William Cobbett, never a supporter, ridiculed the S.D.U.K. in an advertisement which was only an endorsement for a truss manufacturer.

"What I am now going to communicate will do more good in one single day, than Lord Brougham and Vaux's books will ever do till the last moment that a sheet of them shall be kept out of the hands of the trunk-maker, or preserved by accident from still less honourable uses."⁵⁶

The Radicals became so frustrated with the apolitical position of the Society and the absence of the anticipated political tracts that, with the inspiration of Francis Place and John Roebuck, they attempted to fill the gap with their own publications.⁵⁷ The S.D.U.K. nevertheless, continued with its work and, despite the loss of credibility in some eyes, even branched out to introduce The Quarterly Journal of Education. This aimed to provide a specialist service because there had existed

no previous publication "for communicating the improvements which are made from time to time in the modes of acquiring knowledge."⁵⁸

The Quarterly Journal ran from 1831 to 1835 and presented educational ideas from abroad as well as from this country, together with reviews of books. The publication of its own educational treatises continued, so that the S.D.U.K. became possibly the largest single producer of textbooks dealing with scientific and secular material for the use of Mechanics' Institutes and adults generally.

Parallel with the growth of the S.D.U.K. and the advocacy of Mechanics' Institutes, Henry Brougham was instrumental in the promotion of a higher level of education. This was a natural progression from the other work and was designed to satisfy the critics of the education of the poorer classes. It would enable the wealthier classes to maintain the differential as their subordinates improved in intelligence. This was a policy suggested by Edward Wakefield around 1813,⁵⁹ by Brougham's friend James Mill in his "Essay on Education" in 1818⁶⁰ and was repeated in his own treatise, Practical Observations.

The notion of a London University had been circulating among Dissenters since about 1820, but it was not until it fell into Brougham's hands that it received the impetus to become a reality. There was some acrimony concerning Brougham's taking charge. Thomas Campbell, the poet, originated a plan but he later complained that Brougham "the ostensible Founder had stolen the plan from him." The Edinburgh Review however, acknowledged Campbell as the promoter of the plan⁶¹ but Brougham claimed that Campbell had written to him to commend his major contribution to the project.⁶²

Whatever the dispute over credit, Campbell seemed to bring this problem upon himself by engaging Brougham's attention to the idea with an open letter in The Times of 9th February, 1825. After first acknowledging

the recently-published Practical Observations, Campbell took up Brougham's theme that "the rich, middle-rich should be educated in due scale of proportion to the advancement of the poor." He asserted that the poor had increased their knowledge and would continue to do so. In contrast, he suggested that, certainly with regard to London, the centre of the Empire, the middle and upper classes were not as well educated as they might have been. This accorded with Brougham's impression of the social classes above the level of mechanics.

Campbell suggested a great London University, not a traditional place for formal lectures but "for effectively and multifariously teaching, examining, exercising and rewarding with honours in the liberal arts and sciences, the youth of our middling rich people, between the age of 15 or 16 and 20, or later..." Despite his grasp of the detail of the project, Campbell lacked the initiative and influence to do more. Therefore, he publicly requisitioned the ability and connections of Brougham.

"I trust you will gain over men of every variety of opinion to this design. It is no matter of party-politics, or of church-and-state disputation. It is a point of union for all the friends of liberal views..."⁶⁴

Campbell had discussed the plan with Brougham previously and was aware that similar ideas were under consideration by other enlightened men. Therefore, it was a deliberate decision on his part to appeal to Brougham knowing full well that he could muster the support of additional men of influence. The timetable for proposing the scheme to the public was left to Brougham.

Between the time of Campbell's letter and progression toward the institution of the plan, Brougham had to return to Scotland, where he had been elected Rector of Glasgow University. When he travelled north

in April 1825, Edinburgh honoured him with a dinner, where he spoke of his approbation of the Scottish system of education, contrasted with the English. In particular he commended the higher levels of attainment in the Old High School of Edinburgh and in the University - "a system which cultivated and cherished higher objects than mere learning, which inculcated a nobler ambition than the mere acquisition of prosody and the dead languages."⁶⁵

The following day, 6th April, his inaugural address at Glasgow University dwelt upon the rhetorical arts. Even so, towards the conclusion he could not resist a reference to his abiding passion, the diffusion of useful information. Despite the advances in science by many men of talent, Brougham proclaimed that he still waited "with impatient anxiety to see the same course pursued by men of high station in society, and by men of rank in the world of letters."⁶⁶

The Scottish visit was relevant in that it affirmed his belief in university education as an essential segment of his policy for national education. It provided him with an opportunity to assess the Scottish system to add to his former experience, and probably determined his opinion that London's University should avoid the traditional classics of Oxford and Cambridge and adopt a more general educational curriculum from the Scottish Universities.

On 1st, July, 1825 with the Lord Mayor of London presiding and Henry Brougham the principal speaker, the project to create a University was launched.⁶⁷ A delegation again headed by Brougham, approached Lord Liverpool and the Chancellor of the Exchequer and received general approbation. A council was formed and included Lord John Russell, Brougham, James Mill, Zachary Macaulay, Olinthus Gregory, George Grote, Joseph Hume, the Marquis of Lansdowne, William Tooke and other supporters

of the Mechanics' Institutes.⁶⁸ Olinthus Gilbert Gregory was a mathematician at the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich. William Tooke was a Fellow of the Royal Society, reformer, abolitionist and member of the S.D.U.K. From the formation of the University, he was appointed treasurer to the council.⁶⁹ It was to take a few more years before the University could be opened. Meanwhile, the Edinburgh Review prepared the public for the necessity of such an institution and maintained its promotion.

From a purely administrative point, the council hoped to raise funds from the sale of shares at £100 each, and subscriptions or donations of £50. The estimated total fund required was £20,000 though it was not intended to call for more than 66% of each share at first. This would leave funds in reserve. Each share guaranteed one place per nominated student but could also earn interest not exceeding 4%. Holders could vote at general meetings and in the election of Directors or of the Council of Management. Proxy votes were also allowed. £50 donations carried all the privileges of shares except for the interest. There was to be a council of 21 members, with a Chancellor and a Vice-Chancellor would be chosen for periods of two years. Of the other 19, four would withdraw each year and become ineligible for one year thereafter.⁷⁰

Brougham drew upon his distinguished connections to ensure success.

On 12th, August, 1825, he wrote to Lord Grey

"Shall I put your name down for a London University share - to give you a vote? (Proxies vote). Lord Fitzwilliam takes five. Eleven hundred are already disposed of, so we are landed, and our advertisement for sites is in today's papers."/1

The motives for its establishment seemed to be to break the spell of the old universities, the bastions of privilege, and to provide a

financial and 'moral' alternative. Many more people were expected to find academic learning more accessible to them without the drawbacks associated with Oxford and Cambridge. The old universities were attacked for their clerical domination, which excluded Dissenters. The monastic style of college life was criticised for breeding selfishness and bad habits.⁷² The necessity for students to leave home was thought a premature emancipation of youth from parental supervision and unwise for their moral development. Hence the Scottish practice was advised for the new university. This combined "domestic habits and parental superintendence with College study."⁷³ The students would reside at home and simply attend the university for study. This created the added bonus of removing certain financial constraints. The Edinburgh Review linked the comparative expense of the old universities with the moral argument to demonstrate the advantage of the new institution.

"Unless a parent can afford to pay about three hundred pounds a year for each son, and resolve to neglect his duty so far as to devolve upon others the whole care of their morals, nay to leave their morals almost entirely uncared for, he has no means of educating his family at all. The establishment of a college in London, where everyone may obtain for his children the most complete education at the expense of ten or twelve pounds a year for each, retaining his parental superintendance, and not sacrificing the mutual pleasures of their society, is the complete and appropriate remedy for so great a defect."⁷⁴

As an additional attraction for popular support and to demonstrate that the University would be a natural progression from the Mechanics Institutes, the Edinburgh Review (i.e. Brougham) suggested that a judicious master in London might encourage his apprentices to attend College lectures within their reach.⁷⁵ This might have been a naive expectation from the point of view of academic differences or that manufacturers were so willing to co-operate.

Even in dealing with university education, there was some reference to other aspects of adult education in the declaration that "every useful art and science will be freely taught." Then the inquiries into charities were recalled when the University, and other prospective new colleges, were declared free of former rules and prejudices, "antiquated frailties and more recent abuses."⁷⁶

A distinguishing feature of the new University was its policy on religion. This was to earn "Brougham's Cockney college" another title of "The Godless Institution in Gower Street."⁷⁷ The governors had a problem but decided to apply the principle of the B.F.S.S.⁷⁸ and that was to leave religious education to parents, pastors and others. A compromise on Theological Studies had been considered to divide the teaching between different sects:- Theology by a member of the Church of England, Ecclesiastical History by a member of the Church of Scotland and Biblical Criticism by one of the Dissenting denominations.⁷⁹ No agreement could be reached on a code for all. Proposed schemes were thought impractical and therefore no Theology would be taught. Since that was abandoned, neither would there be any forms of worship. The University would concentrate upon the sciences and literature and leave the decisions on the learning of religion to the freedom of students and their parents.⁸⁰

This policy brought expected opposition from the Established Church. Publications which supported Church and Government treated the new University with contempt and fury. It was reviled in academic pulpits, while even the more enlightened members of the old foundations viewed it with misgivings.⁸¹

Although the Edinburgh Review declared that there was no intended interference with the proceedings of the other universities, the

entrenched opposition of some Parliamentarians caused delay to the recognition of the new University. An application for an early charter was declined. A bill was brought into the Commons to establish the new institution as a corporate body with associated privileges. Although it was expected to pass the Lower House "in spite of the Ministry", there was such firm resolve in the Lords not to countenance it, that the proposal was dropped.⁸² There was some objection that a joint-stock company was ill-adapted for superintending the education of youth.⁸³

Nevertheless, the Legislature was criticised in return for its prejudices and inconsistency. The Royal Institution and the New Royal Society of Literature had been incorporated. The Edinburgh Review referred to the former as "a most inefficient substitute for a London University", the latter as "a silly scheme for amusing a few amateurs, and for pensioning literary men" yet status had been granted. Another measure particularly galling to the liberal men of University College was the government's agreement to the establishment of a West India Company, to serve speculators in negro property.⁸⁴ Brougham, Mill and friends were prominent in the anti-slavery movement.

The main stumbling-block was openly declared. The Government "dreaded the cry of the Church - or rather the High Church faction, and were not sure how the two old Universities might like the measure."⁸⁵ With a patient, conciliatory and respectful attitude to Oxford and Cambridge, however, the prejudices gradually disappeared. The work, building and appointments proceeded until the classes were expected to begin in October, 1828.⁸⁶

An early testimony of the success of the new university project was the reaction of the Church. To compete with the University of

London and to teach exclusively to churchmen, the clergy decided to found a College in London as near as possible upon the plan of the ancient universities. So on 21st June, 1828 in Freemason's Tavern, the Duke of Wellington chaired a meeting which discussed the establishment of King's College. The teaching policy for this institution avowed that

"While the various branches of literature and science are made the subjects of instruction, it shall be an essential part of the system to imbue the minds of youth with a knowledge of the doctrines and duties of Christianity, as inculcated by the United Church of England and Ireland."⁸⁷

This was reaffirmed in the official advertisement as the fundamental principle upon which King's College was established. Without instruction in Christian religion the acquisition of other branches of knowledge was deemed of little value to the happiness of the individual or to the welfare of the state.⁸⁸ In actual fact, this line mellowed to some degree as the practicalities of imposing strict guidelines upon day students, who returned to their families, proved difficult. In the end, the only material distinction between the two new institutions was residence at King's College. Resident students were obliged to comply with regulations on worship.

From the prospect of one university, the country gained two, because of the necessity for a Church response. University College was not erected for the poor but represented the fulfilment of the Radical/Utilitarian philosophy. The success of both new colleges illustrated the accuracy of the policy of the educationists who had already demonstrated their concern with the elementary education.

The Mechanics' Institutes challenged the traditional structure of education. They increased the learning opportunities of the lower classes and caused a stir because of fears of their use for political

ends. The establishment might have felt under pressure because of the independence of individual institutes; hence the complaints regarding them as centres for universal free-thinkers, Jacobins and reformers. What the Institutes achieved, however, was an increase in knowledgeable members of the working classes, which would have prepared them for the changes and agitation of the 1830's. With the lax attitude of the middle and upper classes towards education, the institutes narrowed the gap between the levels of knowledge of the classes. The expanding knowledge of their inferiors probably threatened the security of the superior classes and made them more aware of the necessity of education in general, the need for central control.

The S.D.U.K., although not pleasing every party, assisted the Mechanics' Institutes in the diffusion of knowledge among the people. The ideas transmitted by a certain faction in society might have been disturbing to conservatives. The S.D.U.K. had a network of provincial committees to assist with distribution of books, a popular attraction to the Radicals.⁸⁹ The Society stimulated the agitation against taxes on knowledge by its policy of challenging the stamp duty with its cheaper publications. With the publication of the Quarterly Journal of Education through the years of reform and the education grant, the commentaries of the S.D.U.K. might have added to the formation of opinion. The Society was blamed for the restricted government grant in 1833, because of information in its Companion to the Almanac,⁹⁰ published in 1829. This projected opinions based upon Brougham's 1828 survey and allegedly exercised undue influence upon the government's attitude to the funding of schools.

The education of the nation was now being built from the top. The developments in adult education were carried out with the hope that they would provide another route to the provision of education for the

children. Adults were expected to perceive the benefits upon themselves and then seek to obtain the same for the younger generation. Through the Mechanics' Institutes, the artisans might have gained sufficient political experience to enable them to take much more control of their own education.

Notes to Chapter Eight

1. See Ch.6, p.171,Ch.1, p.20.
2. See Ch.2, p.29.
3. See Ch.5, p.137.
4. Thomas Kelly, op.cit., p.56.
5. Brian Simon, Studies in the History of Education 1780-1870, p.153.
6. Thomas Kelly, op.cit., p.79.
7. Frances Hawes, op.cit., pp.164-165.
8. See Sh.6, p.158.
9. See. Ch.2, p.36.
10. Frances Hawes, op.cit., pp.165-166.
11. Henry Brougham, Practical Observations, p.13.
12. E.R., Vol.41, No.LXXXI, October, 1824, p.97.
13. See Ch.3, p.87ff, and 101ff.
14. Henry Brougham, Practical Observations, p.3.
15. *ibid.*, p.5.
16. See Ch.7, p.194, and Ch.6, p.162.
17. Henry Brougham, Practical Observations, p.30.
18. E.R., Vol.43, No.LXXXV, November 1825-February 1826, p.227.
19. Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, May 1825, p.534.
20. *ibid.*
21. *ibid.*, pp.535-536.
22. Henry Brougham, Practical Observations, p.29.
23. Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, May 1825, p.537.
24. *ibid.*, p.539.
25. Thomas Kelly, op.cit., p.205.
26. Brian Simon, op.cit., p.157.
27. See Ch.4, p.109.

28. Brian Simon, *op.cit.*, p.158.
29. E.P. Thompson, *op.cit.*, p.819.
30. Thomas Kelly, *op.cit.*, pp.222-226.
31. *ibid.*, pp.230-234.
32. Arthur Aspinall, *op.cit.*, p.232.
33. Add. Mss., 34616, f282-3, Brougham to Macvey Napier, 1833.
34. William Allen, Life, Vol.II, p.429.
35. Add. Mss., 34616, F.282-3.
36. *ibid.*, (Also William Allen, Life, Vol.II, p.430).
37. *ibid.*
38. Arthur Aspinall, *op.cit.*, pp.232-233.
39. J.B. Atlay, The Victorian Chancellors, Vol.I, p.277.
40. The Times, 19th May, 1828, 3a.
41. *ibid.*
42. See Ch.3, p.85.
43. Walter E. Houghton ed., The Wellesley Index to Victorian Periodicals 1824-1900.
44. W.R., No.XXVIII, April, 1831, p.372.
45. *ibid.*
46. Blackwoods Magazine, January 1830, p.8.
47. W.R., No.XXVIII, April, 1831, p.373.
48. The Times, 19th May, 1828, 3a.
49. W.R., No.XXVIII, April, 1831, p.373.
50. See Ch.3, p.76ff.
51. U.C.L. Brougham Mss. 13608, 17th of 3rd Month, 1829.
52. E.R., Vol.46, No.XCI, June 1827, pp.230-232.
53. *ibid.*, p.228,
54. Q.R., Vol.46, No.XCII, January, 1832, p.282.
55. *ibid.*, pp.282-283.

56. Wolverhampton Chronicle, 30th January, 1833, 1e, Extracted from a letter in Cobbett's Register of 23rd June, 1832.
57. See Ch.3, p.90 and 93ff.
58. Frank Smith, A History of English Elementary Education 1760-1902, p.147.
59. See Ch.3, p.75.
60. John, Lord Campbell, Lives of Lord Lyndhurst and Lord Brougham, Vol.8, p.338.
61. E.R., Vol.42, No.LXXXIII, April, 1825, p.222.
62. H. Brougham, Life, Vol.II, p.505, also J.B. Atlay, op.cit., Vol.I, pp.278-279, Campbell wrote in October, 1828.
63. The Times, Wednesday, 9th November, 1825, 4a.
64. ibid.
65. H. Brougham, Life, Vol.III, pp.3-4.
66. Speeches of Henry, Lord Brougham, Vol.III, pp.95-96.
67. Frances Hawes, op.cit., p.168.
68. ibid., p.169 and Thomas Kelly, op.cit., pp.153-154.
69. D.N.B., Vol.23, Olinthus Gilbert Gregory, Vol.57, William Tooke.
70. E.R., Vol.42, No.LXXXIV, April 1825, p.362.
71. H. Brougham, Life, Vol.LL, p.469.
72. E.R., Vol.43, No.LXXXVI, Feb., 1826, pp.323-324.
73. E.R., Vol.42, No.LXXXIV August, 1825, p.353.
74. E.R., Vol.42, No.LXXXIII, April, 1825, p.223.
75. E.R., Vol.42, No.LXXXIV, August, 1825, p.354.
76. E.R., Vol.42, No.LXXXIII, April, 1825, p.223, For the Charity investigations, See Ch.6 and Ch.7.194.
77. Frances Hawes, op.cit., p.168.
78. See Ch.2, p.29.
79. E.R., Vol.42, No.LXXXIV, Aug, 1825, p.259.
80. ibid., p.361.
81. E.R., Vol.43, No.LXXXVI, Feb. 1826, p.315.

82. E.R., Vol.42, No.LXXXIV, Aug. 1825, p.363.
83. E.R., Vol.48, No.XCV, Sept. 1828, p.236.
84. E.R., Vol.42, No.LXXXIV, Aug. 1825, p.363.
85. *ibid.*, pp.363-364.
86. E.R., Vol.48, No.XCV, Sept, 1828, p.237.
87. *ibid.*, p.242.
88. *ibid.*, p.243.
89. See Ch.3, p.85.
90. See Ch.6, p.178.

CHAPTER 9The Statistical Societies

"One of the distinguishing characteristics of the present era in this country is the increasing desire which exists on the part of the higher classes of society to improve the condition and to raise the character of the poor and labouring classes. The legislature is occupied in discovering and removing the errors and defects which a faulty constitution or the progress of the time has introduced into the operation of the laws. Benevolent individuals are uniting in numerous societies for the purpose of enquiring accurately into the state of the poor; of searching out the true character of their wants; of considering and discussing the best method of supplying those wants; and lastly, of pointing out and endeavouring to remove the obstacles which at present hinder national improvement."¹

These were the reflections of the Statistical Society of London in 1839 on the impact which statistical societies had made on the prospects for the education of the poor during the 1830's. The collection and interpretation of data had assisted the cause from many directions. In the expectant mood of the post-Reform Parliament, from 1833 onwards, the interest in gathering accurate information on subjects led to the creation of formal statistical societies devoted to this new science. Although their investigations covered a range of topics, education provided a useful field of inquiry which suited the spirit of social advancement.

Opinions alone were no longer accepted without clinical evidence to support arguments, but the process of inquiry was not entirely new. It had been underlying aspects of policy for years but received more serious promotion only after 1830, possibly from the realisation that Britain was once again trailing behind her Continental competitors, so there was an element of national pride behind some endeavours. W.R. Greg wrote in 1833:-

In "England we are so far behind our Continental neighbours in accurate knowledge of the moral and intellectual Condition of our Poorer Classes." Brief Memoir on the present State of Criminal Statistics. 16th October, 1833.²

Just prior to the period of this study, there was the famous survey of the Poor Law by Sir Frederic Morton Eden in 1797. Before that there were the Gilbert Returns made in 1786, but reprinted in 1810 and again around 1816, both crucial dates in the developments concerning education, with the foundation of the Church societies³ followed by the Brougham Select Committee.⁴ It is possible that the recirculation of these statistics on the Poor Law contributed to the educational cum political activity of those times. It was logically insecure to expect decisions for improvement to be made without first knowing the existing conditions. In 1807, when the state of education had been challenged by Whitbread's attempt to advance a remedy to the problem of the poor, the Archbishop of Canterbury first checked with his clergy before responding.⁵ Henry Brougham's educational inquiries from 1816 onward were probably the first formal statistical exercise in education and drew upon the experience and figures presented to illustrate the current state of education. Subsequently, his own private survey in 1828, was enough to alter his opinions about the question of state control and convince him that progress was adequate in the hands of voluntary effort.⁶ For almost twenty years the commission to inquire into endowments, which Brougham had also instituted,⁷ carried out investigations and meticulously recorded details of charitable foundations, which protagonists were able to recommend as a monetary reservoir for general education.

In the 1830's, the British and Foreign School Society were still conducting inquiries to consider the establishment of schools.⁸ In 1833, the Government, too, instituted an educational investigation under the aegis of the Early of Kerry. The accuracy of these Kerry Returns was

to prove dubious and gave further incentive to the demand for true records. Although he continually referred to it, Brougham's private survey was treated sceptically as well and its conclusions dismissed as insignificant.

The desire for thoroughness and accuracy cannot be dissociated from the technical and scientific developments of the Industrial Revolution, the rise of the Mechanics' Institutes in the 1820's and the foundation of University College and King's College, London. In other towns, the spirit of inquiry was fostered by the creation of assorted institutions. In Manchester, for example, four newspapers were established along with a National History Society (1821), the Royal Manchester Institution (1823), the Mechanics' Institution (1824), and the Royal Medical College (1824).⁹ Similarly, there existed the provincial Literary and Philosophical Societies, gatherings of intellectual, professional and businessmen which provided melting pots for ideas. The period also saw the beginning of a new type of economics, realistic and inductive, based on what had formerly been known as political or social arithmetic.¹⁰

The growth of population in urban localities, after the end of the war in 1815, with the additional burden of Irish immigration in areas such as Liverpool and Manchester created further social pressures which taxed the minds of philanthropists and administrators charged with discovering appropriate solutions. It appeared to be the uncertainties inherent in speculative remedies which inspired the statistical inquirer to examine the facts before formulating judgements.

In "An Address Explanatory of the Objects and Advantages of Statistical Enquiries", Capt. J.E. Portlock, of the Royal Engineers and a geologist, remarked that:-

"...if it was thus impossible to lay the sure foundation of any one science without the previous collection and

"comparison of facts, how much more impossible must it be to understand or to reason upon the complicated operations of social or human life, without a rigid enquiry into the Statistics of every one of its branches, and yet nothing is more descanted on, without preliminary enquiry, than the phenomena of social life."¹¹

From these motivations came the foundation of the Manchester Statistical Society followed by the Statistical Society of London, (later the Royal Statistical Society) the two dominant groups in statistical circles. Behind these developments, however, there was a very strong influence from the British Association for the Advancement of Science and even some reserved involvement by the Government, apart from the Kerry Returns.

The British Association was founded in 1831 as an alternative body to the Royal Society, to represent the interests of science to the government and to co-ordinate research in the country, giving financial encouragement where appropriate.¹² The prime mover in the decision to create the British Association was Professor Charles Babbage, who had constantly clashed with William Whewell, the President of the Royal Society, over the position of science. Nevertheless the initiative to bring about the change came from a Scot, David Brewster inventor of the Kaleidoscope, who proposed early in 1831, "a meeting of British men of science in July or August next." The responsibility for the organisation of the meeting, in York, fell upon the Yorkshire Philosophical Society and they were gratified by a successful foundation with 350 members.¹³ The British Association divided its work into five sections but did not consider statistics at first.

The Government seemed to presage other organisations when, in 1832, Lord Auckland, and C.E. Poulett Thompson, M.P. for Manchester, established a Statistical Office at the Board of Trade.¹⁴ It will become evident,

however, that despite this initiative the Government was only half-hearted in its endeavour and, as with education in general, relied upon the voluntary spirit to supply the groundwork.

The formation of statistical societies commenced during the following year. In June 1833, in Cambridge, at the annual general meeting of the British Association, the President, Adam Sedgwick, was presented with a motion to expand the categories of study from the existing five to six. The responsibility for instituting a new Statistical Section had been assigned to Professor Babbage and he was ably assisted by eminent colleagues. At a private meeting of supporters were Professors Malthus, Rev. Richard Jones of King's College and M. Quetelet, attending the British Association meeting on behalf of the Belgian Government.¹⁵ Professor Quetelet seems to have been the catalyst for this activity because it was believed that he had brought with him some statistical documents which were part of his research for a future publication, Man and the Development of his Faculties, an Essay on Social Statistics (1835).¹⁶ The Rev. Richard Jones had also given prior indication of his interest in his inaugural address, 27th February 1833, when he was elected to the Chair of Political Economy at King's College. He had expressed the hope that a statistical society would be added so that the scientific knowledge of England would be further advanced. He regarded statistics as dealing with "mankind and their concerns."¹⁷

Apparently the procedure to promote the new section did not accord precisely with the laws of the British Association, which meant that its passage to the statutes was not easy. Sedgwick did not welcome the new diversion because of the implied concern with social matters. The President argued that the primary concern of the British Association was with the laws and property of matter and those alone. The nature

of the mind, the sciences of morals and politics he proclaimed beyond their province. He suggested that anyone considering a venture into moral phenomena, economic "speculation" and the "generalizations" of political science would be immediately dissociating themselves from the objects of the British Association which, for its own benefit to retain the secure foundations upon which it had set out, ought to sever any connections officially.¹⁸

Nevertheless, this conservative attitude was overcome. At the instigation of Richard Jones, the formation of the Statistical Section proceeded but with the knowledge that they would then procure from the council a bill of indemnity for their irregularity of procedure.¹⁹ Any doubts about the new section were soon dispelled. It proved an immediate attraction and, before the end of the session, it was not only recognised by the Association, but was as fully attended as the most popular of other sections.²⁰

The Statistical Section concluded the meeting at Cambridge with the resolution to create a more permanent body to carry out the views and wishes of the Section, a Statistical Society in London.²¹

Although the move was towards independent statistical bodies, the continued function of the British Association's Statistical Section served as an influence for unity, co-ordination, and a focal point for developments throughout the nation because representatives of societies attended the annual meetings to share the latest information. It is quite possible that representatives from Manchester returned from Cambridge with the idea of forming a local statistical society although the history suggests a different route to its foundation. Nevertheless, before the London plan could be brought to fruition, the Manchester Statistical Society was active and stamped its character upon statistical developments during the 1830's.

The Manchester Statistical Society was founded in September 1833,²² by William Langton, James Phillips Kay, Samuel and William Rathbone Greg, and Benjamin Heywood, who became the first President 1833-34.²³ They were a philanthropic group of friends with literary, medical, industrial and banking connections but united by a strong desire "to assist in promoting the progress of social improvement in the manufacturing population"²⁴ by which they were surrounded. The Unitarian influence was apparent,²⁵ The Gregs were Unitarians²⁶ and the Heywoods were a Unitarian banking family who moved to Manchester from Liverpool.²⁷ The seminal idea seems to have come from Langton, who was a cashier in Heywood's bank at the time. A conversation with Dr. Kay concerning the formation of a Provident Society brought to light the difficulty of access to necessary facts and figures. William Langton convinced Kay that Manchester required a society²⁸ to make up for this deficiency.

So the friends set up the society and decided that its objects should be: "The collection of facts illustrative of the condition of Society, and the discussion of subjects of Social and Political economy, totally excluding party politics."²⁹

It was Dr. Kay, already an author on the state of the working classes in Manchester,³⁰ who evidently determined policy and procedure, particularly with reference to social inquiries. With a new venture there must have been some initial confusion about the direction of their work. Kay was frustrated because preliminary meetings had been consumed with debate upon rules and regulations, but he soon prompted action.

"The Statistical Society has not yet applied itself with vigour to the forceful object proposed in its design - the collection of statistical information on all subjects connected with the economical and social welfare of Manchester and the surrounding neighbourhood."³¹

Kay laid down the minutiae of questioning which inquiries were to follow to gather the specific details on families, housing, jobs, education, and religious affiliation.

The association of Mr. Poulett Thomson with Manchester brought early government interest and, although they investigated other subjects, the early direction of the Statistical Society towards education attracted official support. After a visit from Mr. Thomson, Dr. Kay informed the Society of their importance, for despite the existence of the Government's statistical office, it was clear that the work of provincial voluntary societies, like their own, would be the key to gathering the information. Mr. Thomson left Kay in no doubt that the government had no intention of forming a nationwide scheme for collecting statistical information. Under the existing state of affairs the voluntary societies were the only means of supplying the existing deficiencies in the statistical information of the country. Mr. Thomson commended the objects of the Manchester Society and stressed the importance their inquiries would have in attracting attention to the condition of the economical interests of the region but especially to the question of the best means of ameliorating the social conditions of the labouring classes.³²

Mr. Thomson approved of the Society's attention to the education of the people and recommended that the Treasurer of the society ought to ensure the acquisition of the Government's Kerry Returns for Manchester and adjacent townships. He pointed out that these represented the best available statistics of the time and suggested that the society should await their arrival and then use them as a basis for future inquiries.³³

Poulett Thomson's responsibility for the statistical office at the Board of Trade may have led to a natural interest in the work of the

Manchester Statistical Society, and as parliamentary representative for the town, it would have done his political support no harm. It was ironic, however, that in sponsoring their activity based on the Kerry figures and welcoming any results to be forwarded, Thomson, if not already doubtful of the accuracy of the Kerry Returns, inadvertently invited criticism of the official figures. (It also demonstrated a growing awareness of the central government that some provincial activities were better informed than available Metropolitan bodies).

When the society was ready, an investigation into the state of schools in the immediate vicinity was initiated. A committee was appointed on 23rd April, 1834, not only to account for the state of schools in Manchester but with the further commission "to the analysis or correction" of the Kerry Returns. The members consisted of W. Langton, P. Ewart Junr., John Douglass, S.D. Darbshire, Thos. Boothman jnr., Saml. Greg, W.R. Greg, Rev. J.J. Taylor, Henry McConnel, Wm. Slater, with the assistance of Dr. Kay, Messrs. J.A. Turner, W.R. Wood, Richard Birley, Phil Merz, N. Gardiner, and Henry Romilly.³⁴

The first information to which they alluded in report was the evidence which contradicted the false impression of the Kerry figures. In Manchester alone, with a population of 142,000, they discovered the omission of a number of institutions from the government returns - 1 infant school, 10 Sunday schools and 176 Day schools, all of which were in existence and accounted for 10,611 scholars. Double returns were made for three other schools with 375 pupils. The total discrepancy concerning Manchester alone was 181 schools and 8,646 scholars. Apart from this, eight Dame Schools had been reported as Infant schools.

In Chorlton-on Medlock, population 20,500, the Kerry returns fell short by 40 schools and 837 scholars. One Infant school, a private establishment, was not in the returns at all, but a Sunday school

which had ceased to exist more than a year previously, was returned and credited with 222 scholars.

In Hulme, with a population of 9,600, the returns to Government also revealed inaccuracies, having failed to account for 14 schools and 864 scholars. Four Dame Schools with 112 pupils were misrepresented as Infant schools, of which not one existed in the town. A Sunday school of 102 scholars had been returned under Hulme but in fact, it belonged to another township. A further 400 scholars were omitted altogether.³⁵

It was already emerging that, for better or worse, the Government had an erroneous impression of the progress of education. Not only was the Society critical of the administration's misunderstanding, but points were made about the general condition of the schools and the quality of teaching. The latter was a preoccupation of Brougham, Wyse and other educationalists from 1835 onwards.³⁶ It was the work of the Statistical Societies, led by Manchester, which did much to bring to public attention the necessity of improved teacher training and, thereby, pressured the Government for action.

Dame schools were found to be the most numerous institutions in Manchester but they existed in generally deplorable conditions, such as in damp cellars or dilapidated garrets, with teachers to match the material standards.

"The greater part of them are kept by females, but some by old men, whose only qualification for this employment seems to be their unfitness for every other."³⁷

Conditions were poor and unhealthy with basic school equipment, such as benches and books, frequently non-existent. The common day schools were not much better and were criticised for their complete lack of discipline and order, the absence of moral education and their

mechanical adaptation of the monitorial system. Again the crucial weakness lay in the quality of the teachers.

"The Masters are generally in no way qualified for their occupation; take little interest in it, and show very little disposition to adopt any of the improvements that have elsewhere been made in the system of instruction."³⁸

A small measure of admiration was expressed for the few infant schools in the town, a matter of only five, which promised general utility.³⁹

In trying to summarize the conclusions from their findings the committee estimated that of children aged between 5 and 15, one third appeared still to be receiving no instruction at all in any type of school. They generalized from the implications of the Kerry Returns that the number of children returned as attending different schools afforded a "very imperfect" criterion of the real state of education in any town or district..."⁴⁰ In this respect, the Manchester Statistical Society went further than subsequent societies who contented themselves with the compilation and presentation of dry facts. As leaders in their field, the Manchester Society felt emboldened to make suggestions for future policy to stir both private endeavour and the government of the day. From their preliminary research, the society declared:-

"That until similar enquiries are instituted in other districts, this Report will afford no means of comparing the state of education in Manchester with that in other large towns, or in the rural districts; but assuming that Manchester affords a fair average, the state of education in England presents a painful and mortifying contrast to that of some of the countries on the continent, whether we look at the numbers continually in attendance at school or the nature and efficiency of the instruction that they there receive."⁴¹

On the basis of the public impact of this report, the Manchester Statistical Society were invited to present their evidence as part of the report of Roebuck's 1835 Select Committee of Inquiry. The Manchester

Report was added to the appendices of the Parliamentary Papers.⁴² Their work was acknowledged by the British and Foreign School Society,⁴³ too, but they were not averse to promoting their own cause, as shown by a letter from William Langton to "My Lord".

Manchester, 7 July, 1835

"In pursuance of a resolution of the Manchester Statistical Society I have the honor to transmit to your Lordship from a part of the Evidence to the Committee of the House of Commons the Report of a Committee of the Manchester Statistical Society on the state of education in the Borough of Manchester in 1834."⁴⁴

Within a few years, the Manchester Society had gathered figures for a large area extending from their own locality, but their evidence had not been available for the Select Committee. Statistics were produced on the condition of Salford, Bury, Ashton, Stalybridge and Dukinfield with specifically educational reports on Bury and Salford, published in 1836. From their immediate environs, since there existed no other group or official department to do the work, they decided to branch out and compare the situation in similar urban areas. Hence they produced the "Report -- on the State of Education in the borough of Liverpool in 1835-36." Messrs. W.R. Greg, W. Langton and H. Romilly were the committee charged with supervising this project, which was completed between October 1835 and June 1836.⁴⁵

Apart from the questionable state of the schools in Liverpool, the investigators found that they had to overcome psychological barriers in seeking information. Complete co-operation from teachers was difficult to achieve because of prejudice and suspicion that the inquiries emanated from the government and that they were the precursors of central or municipal influence.⁴⁶

The inadequacies of the school buildings in Liverpool were summarized by the following table.

	21 Dame Schools	7 Common Boys' Schools	44 Common Girls' Schools	were noticed as being	for children of
					:respectable appearance and well-clothed and as being more or less neat clean and orderly
45	21	10			:generally of a poor description
4					:without any forms
13	32	6			:very close
15	11	4			:very dark
18	2				:very damp
32	26	2			:very filthy
7	8	6			:very crowded and disorderly ⁴⁷

Although in terms of attendance, over half the child population were discovered to be receiving no education, by far the greatest pre-occupation of the committee were the factors which affected the demand for education and the quality of performance of the schools, at the heart of which were a lack of resources and further evidence of the poor standard of teachers. The value of education was not fully appreciated, particularly among the poorer classes whose philosophy, ruled by income, was that the best equalled the cheapest.⁴⁸ The poor simply could not maintain the payment of fees, which reduced the funds of the school and the salary of the teacher. An element of competition prevailed. Fees were undercut to try to attract numbers, but this only served to attract the least fortunate of the population, within whose range the school now entered. These still could not fulfil their financial obligations so that both the school and master suffered. Those with some aspiration sought education elsewhere. The low remuneration forced many teachers to quit after a short time, which created an atmosphere of instability, but still

the lowest quality of person, devoid of qualifications, used schools as a form of income.

Liverpool also had a peculiar religious problem which encouraged bigotry and sectarianism to affect education to the extent that even Charity schools were found to be exclusive to one denomination, but with the consequence that they were numerous. This situation, pointed out the Society, could have led to a serious misconception. With the extent of Charity schools in Liverpool, it might have been possible to infer that private benevolence had indeed succeeded in creating a national system of education. In other countries, this was the work of government, the report commented. The authors of the Liverpool Report also indicated that any system which could be entitled "National" would have to be more extensive and disregard all forms of distinction.⁴⁹

In the Report, the Society seemed to destroy the fallacious impression of the nation's system of schools and to urge the Government to accept responsibility. Two main priorities were suggested: 1) proper school rooms and a supply of school books, 2) a sufficient number of competent teachers.⁵⁰ With regard to the second point, it was significant that a footnote was added to illustrate the example of a two year teacher-training course at the University of the State of New York. They had seen enough to make them appreciate that the absence of these two vital ingredients would prevent the establishment of an efficient system of education which could never be supplied by "the unassisted efforts of the working classes themselves."⁵¹

The vision and imagination of this provincial society can be appreciated in the recommendations which arose from their investigations. They called for the establishment of a Board of Public Instruction which "would be hailed by all who have seen the glaring deficiencies of the

present state of education, as the first step in the performance of a duty, which is imperative with every enlightened government."⁵²

Although working in the provinces, the society still viewed the solution as a problem for the central administration.

While the country and the Statistical Society awaited political reaction to the suggestions, the statistical inquiries continued to accumulate information. To make their inquiries more generally applicable, the Manchester Society decided to extend their scope to the archiepiscopal residence of York,⁵³ which presented a different proportional relationship between the ranks of society. Yet, even here, in spite of the difference in local character, the Society found similar problems to their experiences in Lancashire.

Apart from remarks upon the unusual number of Charity and endowed schools, the inquiries were treated with utmost caution by teachers, who again suspected political motives, but the conclusion was familiar, that the returns of 1833 were extremely inaccurate.⁵⁴ After allowance for the temporary life of some schools, the committee still found a deficiency in the Government figures of 53 schools, with 1,650 pupils, amounting to more than a quarter of the school-age population.⁵⁵ Taking into consideration the five major towns examined by this time, (Manchester, Bury, Salford, Liverpool, and York) they calculated an error of 34,000 scholars and conceded that it could be even greater.⁵⁶

One regular aspect of education which confused the image of the state of schooling was the supplementary role of the Sunday Schools. Distinctions were not always presented between those who attended Day Schools or Sunday Schools, which could give generously favourable figures when in fact, the total education for some children amounted to only the brief time on Sunday. Nevertheless, these religious establishments fulfilled a valuable role. When the Statistical Society reported on education

in Pendleton in 1838,⁵⁷ the observations were that "the humbler schools are ephemeral and inefficient, and that at least one half of the children of the working classes are exceedingly irregular in their attendance at school."⁵⁸ The education provided was declared of no practical benefit as whatever was acquired was usually soon forgotten through subsequent neglect. Education from common day schools was failing but

"this would be the case to a much greater extent, were it not for Sunday Schools, which afford the opportunity of keeping up what has been previously acquired, and, in some instances, aid the children to make further progress."⁵⁹

Because of this supplementary assistance, the society felt justified in considering the Sunday Schools to be a means of secular instruction insofar as any was provided. They had to be aware of the primary purpose of Sunday Schools, viz., the moral and religious instruction of children, and the Manchester Society was ever wary of including them as a specific part of a general education system.⁶⁰ This caution was appropriate since many of the Churches at this time were refusing to allow secular instruction on Sundays, so that the religious principle should be preserved.

By 1840, the Manchester Statistical Society had published further reports on the state of education in Rutland and finally in Kingston-upon-Hull. Although the Society covered various aspects of life in other inquiries, which usually reflected upon education in passing association, these were the last purely educational reports of this period.

Being first, Manchester set the standard, the archetypal statistical society to which others aspired. The London Statistical Society, suggested by the British Association, took some time to organise after the inception of the idea, but was eventually established in 1834. London probably caught the tide of opinion in the wake of the Manchester foundation some months earlier. Manchester could also claim some influence in

the formation of the London Society because, among visiting politicians at the third meeting of the Manchester Statistical Society there had been the Earl of Kerry and G.W. Wood, M.P.,⁶¹ both of whom were among the founders of the Statistical Society of London.

In chronological terms, London had experienced a tenuous development in statistics in the 1820's, which, if primacy were of utmost importance, would rank before Manchester, but it did not make much impact. In 1825, a publisher, J. Miller of Blackfriars, had issued Statistical Illustrations of the territorial Extent and Population, Commerce, Taxation, Consumption, Insolvency, and Crime of the British Empire which had been compiled by a committee of artisans, thought to be Owenites⁶² acting anonymously. Formerly an 'Association', the name was altered in the third edition, 1827, to 'The London Statistical Society'. It seems to have been the private venture of men of small means⁶³ and not on the scale of Manchester or London.

The much grander organisation began with a meeting of the British Association Statistical Section on 21st February, 1834 at No.1, Dorset Street, Manchester Square, London. Present were Charles Babbage (President), William Empson, professor of general polity and laws of England at East India College, Haileybury, contributor to and later editor of the Edinburgh Review; Rev. Richard Jones, Rev. T.R. Malthus, a friend of Empson; William Ogilby, Lieut. Col. Sykes, naturalist and former statistical reporter to the Bombay government 1824-1831; G.W. Wood M.P., and John Elliot Drinkwater (Secretary), counsel to the Home Office during Grey's administration. There were also two co-opted members, Edward Strutt, M.P., a philosophical radical who had known Bentham, James Mill and John Stuart Mill while a student, and W.W. Whitmore, M.P.⁶⁴

At this meeting, a proposal was made by T.R. Malthus, seconded by Richard Jones and carried unanimously, that:-

"Following up the spirit of the instructions received by the Committee at Cambridge, it is advisable to take immediate steps to establish a Statistical Society in London, the object of which shall be the collection and classification of all facts illustrative of the present condition and prospects of Society, and that it can be an instruction to the President and Secretary of the Committee to take the necessary steps for conveying a public Meeting for that purpose."⁶⁵

The meeting duly convened on Saturday 15th March, 1834, at rooms of the Horticultural Society, 21 Regent Street, with the Marquis of Lansdowne in the Chair at the head of a generous gathering of politicians and academics. The chairman urged the need for statistics and the desirability of a co-operative partnership between private individuals and government. Mr. Henry Goulburn, M.P., Chancellor of the Exchequer in Wellington's administration (1828), argued that lack of Statistics had been a hindrance to his work of preparing public documents and he moved "That accurate knowledge of the actual condition and prospects of Society is an object of great national importance not to be obtained without a careful collection and classification of Statistical facts."⁶⁶

Francis Jeffrey (co-founder of the Edinburgh Review) seconded the motion and suggested that past as well as present facts should be collected as only an accurate statement of a constantly changing system could form sufficient ground for safe projection into the future.⁶⁷

It only remained for Professor Babbage to move the creation of the Statistical Society of London for it to be accomplished and the first meeting to follow on 18th April, 1834 with 313 members, increasing by 98 during the year. Many prominent figures from society joined, including men with education connections. Among them were the Earl of Kerry, Viscount Althorp, Henry, now Lord Brougham and Vaux, Dr. George Birkbeck, Edward Buxton and Edward Romilly.⁶⁸

The prospectus of the Society set forth its aim to collect "Facts calculated to illustrate the condition and Prospects of Society" but,

unlike the outspoken Manchester Society, opinions were to be excluded. The London Society divided the proposed areas of work into four sections, following the pattern of the British Association - 1) Economical Statistics, 2) Political Statistics, 3) Medical Statistics and 4) Moral and Intellectual Statistics, which incorporated education, literature, religious instruction and crime.⁶⁹

As can be seen, the interests of the Statistical Society were not limited to education and among the actual inquiries conducted by the Society by the end of the 1830's, only one report on Westminster covered this subject. The major contribution of the Statistical Society of London seemed to be in its assumed role of co-ordinating the work of other societies and accumulating a permanent library of works of inquiry in the country, then to circulate such information.

Early in its existence, the London Society thought it would be desirable and expedient to establish a working relationship with the Government through the statistical department at the Board of Trade. Such an arrangement would help to discover the interests of the Government and avoid the duplication of inquiries. The London Society was prepared to leave the government to conduct its own inquiries while the Society would expend its energies in other areas.⁷⁰

After offices were secured at the rooms of the Royal Society of Literature, 4 St. Martin's Place, the administrative functions of the Society were arranged. Three Committees of Council were appointed:- a Committee of Correspondence in May 1834, to arrange communications with provincial societies; in July, a committee on publications to prepare a volume of transactions, and a Library Committee to prepare "as complete a Catalogue as possible of Statistical Works already published" and to report on desirable purchases.⁷¹

The London Society was always prepared to acknowledge the debt to their Manchester colleagues, whom they contacted very early on for advice.

(4 St. Martin's Place: 27th May from Secretary, London Statistical Society)

"The Council are informed that the Statistical Society of Manchester has for some time past turned its attention to subjects similar to those which will occupy the Statistical Society of London and are desirous of knowing according to what plan your society has hitherto proceeded

"A plan is in preparation for organising a Systematic Correspondence between the London Society and all provincial Societies which may feel disposed to assist them, but this is not yet matured."⁷²

The publication of the Journal of the Statistical Society of London was only accomplished in 1839, but papers from various sources and on assorted themes were drawn together for public consumption. Some of the articles were concerned with contemporary issues, such as J. Wishaw's paper on endowments, "Endowed Charities in Cornwall". J.P. Kay contributed articles on pauper schools and schools of industry. London's own report on education in Westminster was alongside some of the work of the Manchester Society, whose contributions to statistics received credit once more.

"The valuable accounts of the state of Education in the towns of Manchester, Salford, Bury, Liverpool and York, prepared and published by the Statistical Society of Manchester, deserve to be specially noticed among the most important recent publications in the educational branch of Statistical Science."⁷³

The Journal set out to create awareness and by this policy present inferences for public and government. It was prepared to let the information speak for itself and let the readers draw their own conclusions. The science of statistics was distinguished from political economy. The Journal was not prepared to discuss or comment upon information, merely collect and present the statistics for comparison.⁷⁴

Because of this policy, the late arrival of the Journal and the London Society's limited investigations in education, the impact upon Government would have been minimal compared with the contribution of the Manchester Society over the years up to 1839. The Statistical Section of the British Association, however, continued to function. Much as the London Society intended to serve as a central co-ordinating body, so the British Association, like a parent body, provided a meeting place for representatives from other societies which sprang to life, drew upon nationwide expertise and provided the opportunities to discuss papers and exchange ideas. Their annual meetings also kept a register of progress in areas of the country, although the provincial societies did not have the same measure of impact as Manchester or the status of London. Perhaps as an acknowledgement of the activities in the provinces, the British Association tended to hold the annual meetings away from London.

The Manchester members maintained good links with the British Association and contributed to the proceedings. In Edinburgh, in 1834, Mr. B. Heywood presented the return of analyses in two police divisions of Manchester, using them to promote the cause of education. He claimed that the figures proved that nearly half of the infant poor were entirely cut off from means of education.⁷⁵

At the Annual General Meeting in Dublin the following year, there was a contribution from the London Society in the form of Colonel Sykes' reading of a paper on the state of education in the Deccan, while Mr. Stanley gave an account of the state of education in the parish of Alderley, Cheshire.⁷⁶ The latter was an off-spring of a project Stanley had pursued for the Manchester Society. In addition, William Langton and W.R. Greg accepted places on the statistical section and reported on behalf of Manchester.⁷⁷

At Bristol in 1836, the meeting provided a lively platform for the education aspect of statistics. Manchester's Rev. E. Stanley was on the committee, in the company of the Rt. Hon. T. Spring-Rice, Professor Babbage, Dr. Bowring M.P., T. Wyse M.P., and J. Simpson,⁷⁸ who had recently given evidence to the Select Committee on Education in Ireland, chaired by Wyse, and whose evidence had been attached as an appendix to the Select Committee of Inquiry, 1836, concerned with England and Wales.⁷⁹ Stanley presented a paper on "Statistical Desiderata" by W.R. Greg, which reiterated the problem of the erroneous Kerry Returns.⁸⁰ The following day,⁸¹ his colleague T. Heywood read the Manchester Statistical Society Report on Liverpool and promoted the recommendation for a Board of Public Instruction.

This was a very busy session on education with a report provided on Bristol by Mr. C. Bowles Fripp, whose incomplete investigation was a personal initiative which preceded the formation of a statistical society in that town.⁸² The Association was also addressed by Thomas Wyse - "one uninterrupted flow of eloquence, for the space of half an hour."⁸³ Wyse would have appreciated the Manchester call for a Government Board of Education from his experience of Irish education, because it also formed part of the policy of the Central Society of Education, which Wyse was instrumental in forming.⁸⁴ The Board of Education was an idea which Wyse also promoted in Parliament.⁸⁵

Provincial statistical societies emerged through the British Association and also other established bodies with similar interests. Among the statistical societies reported in existence were Tavistock (1835), Ulster (1837), Bristol (1836), Leeds (1838), Glasgow (1836), Birmingham (1835), and Liverpool (1837).⁸⁶ Evidence of others could also be found in journals. The South-West had a statistical society under

the guise of the Royal Cornwall Polytechnic society,⁸⁷ while the London Journal (1839), also carried a report from a Newcastle Society which, though not statistical in name, had produced work of that nature - "Educational, Criminal and other Statistics" presented by Wm. Cargill, Secretary of the Education Society of Newcastle - which had previously been read to another general meeting of the British Association in August, 1838.⁸⁸ Nottingham was reported to be forming a society,⁸⁹ but most of the provincial societies were short-lived, being temporary interests of other parent organisations.

The British Association itself was the springboard for the Liverpool Society. At the Association's general meeting in Liverpool, in 1837, Viscount Sandon, who was President of the Statistical Section, and one of the representatives of the borough, took several opportunities of recommending the formation of a Statistical Society. The suggestion was favourably received and on the 1st January, 1838, a society was duly formed.⁹⁰

In Birmingham a slightly different route was followed and results were not as instantaneous. Through the attendance of Mr. F. Clark at the British Association meeting in Edinburgh, the Birmingham Philosophical Institution Report for 1834 was able to record the development of the London Statistical Society and its intention to link with the different provincial Literary and Scientific Societies. Therefore, the Committee of Managers of the Birmingham Philosophical Institution impressed upon its members and the next Committee to be appointed, the desirability of a project to promote the objects of the London Society. They recommended the establishment of a sub-committee to pay attention to statistical subjects.⁹¹ In December, 1834, they wrote to London to announce that they had appointed a committee to collect information on the statistics

of Birmingham and wanted to conduct their inquiries in accordance with the system of the London Society.⁹²

There must have been a change of heart later, or news of the success of Manchester must have reached the Midlands, too, for the Birmingham Secretary, George Parsons, also sought advice from the northern society. Perhaps the Birmingham members wished to extract the best elements from both societies.

"To B. Heywood

Birmingham Philosophical Institution
21st September, 1835

Sir,

As I am not acquainted with the name of the Secretary of the Statistical Society at Manchester, I have taken the liberty of addressing the letter to you. The Statistical Committee of the Philosophical Institution of this Town is desirous of conducting its enquiries as far as it is practicable, on a plan similar to that adopted in other large towns. I beg therefore to request that you will favour me at your earliest convenience with a Copy of the regulations of your Statistical Society and the mode of proceedings which you have adopted for carrying on these inquiries at Manchester.

George Parsons 93
Secretary.

Progress was not easy as the subsequent reports proved. Although the statistical project was initiated, shortly after the letter to Manchester, the Birmingham sub-committee had to appeal to members of the Philosophical Institution to assist with the statistical work. The members carried out the investigations themselves, whereas Manchester usually employed an agent to collect information. In the Annual Report for 1836, some record of the struggle was in evidence.

"During the last year the Committee of statistics have been actively engaged in carrying on several branches of enquiry relating to the Statistics of the Borough; and from their labours much interesting and valuable information may be confidently anticipated; but as their enquiries are being conducted without the assistance of any paid agent, considerable time must necessarily be required to enable the Members of that Committee to complete the investigation of the large and hitherto unexplored, or but imperfectly explored, field which

"they have undertaken. It is hoped, however, that other Members of the Institution will afford their co-operation in carrying on these enquiries, which are rigidly restricted to the collection of facts, excluding all opinions or speculative matter."⁹⁴

The ensuing year brought little relief to their problems. They had commenced with simple records of mortality and weather conditions, but felt that they could not attempt a more substantial subject because they had not the means for carrying out a systematic inquiry. Nevertheless, a tone of optimism remained in the hope that the growing appreciation of the importance of the new science would not be ignored. The Committee hoped that Manchester's example would be an inspiration to their own people to assist the inquiries into trade, manufactures and the condition of the inhabitants of Birmingham. They were further encouraged to pursue their aim as a consequence of Mr. F. Clark presenting a paper to the Literary Society enumerating the errors in the government returns from the town.⁹⁵ This was a clear reference to the Kerry figures.

It seems that after this, the interested parties went independent of the Literary and Philosophical Institution because, from 1838 onwards, statistics no longer merited comment in the proceedings, yet in 1840, the Birmingham Statistical Society for the Improvement of Education produced a report on the state of education in Birmingham for the London Journal.⁹⁶ The survey had been conducted during the period from January to April 1838 and the report followed the Manchester pattern of comparing its results with the Kerry Returns. Some concession was made to Kerry on the grounds that the later inquiry had covered a larger area than the 1833 figures, which had been restricted to the Parliamentary borough.⁹⁷

Birmingham drew on the Manchester reports for comparison. They had even employed an agent used by the Manchester Statistical Society, but found it difficult to check completely his results and therefore would

not accept full responsibility for his statements contained therein. A rider to this effect was placed in a footnote.⁹⁸ The criticisms of the educational provisions were familiar, with slight variations. The dame schools of Birmingham were generally in better physical condition than anticipated. None were to be found in cellars, very few in garrets or bedrooms and they were cleaner and 'better-lighted' than their counterparts in Manchester and Liverpool. The main criticisms concerned bad ventilation especially in areas where the population was chiefly of the poorer class.⁹⁹

The use of statistics for other towns provided useful reflection on the typical state of schools during the 1830's. Dame schools were relatively numerous in Birmingham but the average number of scholars lower.

Places	Number of Dame Schools	Number of Teachers	Scholars	Number of Scholars to a School	Number of Scholars to a teacher
Manchester	230	234	4,722	20.5	20.2
Bury	29	31	840	28.9	27.1
Salford	65	66	1,543	23.7	23.4
Liverpool	244	250	5,240	21.4	20.9
York	37	38	745	20.1	19.6
Birmingham	<u>267</u>	<u>269</u>	<u>3,900</u>	<u>14.6</u>	<u>14.5</u>
Total and Average	872	888	16,990	19.48	19.29 ¹⁰⁰

If anything, the conditions in the Common Day Schools were worse, with poor ventilation, lack of cleanliness and serious overcrowding, which resulted in an oppressive atmosphere.¹⁰¹

Place	No. Schools	Number of Teachers	Number of Scholars	Number of Scholars to Schools	Number of Scholars to Teacher
Manchester	179	210	6,790	37.9	32.3
Bury	17	21	808	47.5	38.5
Salford	42	54	1,814	43.1	33.6
York	23	26	549	23.8	21.2
Birmingham	177	205	4,380	24.1	20.8
<u>Liverpool</u>	<u>194</u>	<u>242</u>	<u>6,096</u>	<u>31.4</u>	<u>25.1</u>
Total and Average	632	758	20,337	34.2	26.8 ¹⁰²

There was criticism of the general absence of moral education, reduced to the imposition of corporal punishment in many instances, and again of the standard of teachers. The majority of teachers were almost as poor as their pupils. In fact, some experienced privation. They were generally ill-equipped, some claiming there were insufficient suitable books while others had none at all.¹⁰²

The Birmingham Report offered nothing new and in some respects was too late to make a significant impact. Its usefulness probably lay in reinforcing the impression of the weaknesses in the nation's schools. Manchester had already made inroads into stirring the political awareness of government. Birmingham assisted the London Society in supplying material to disseminate throughout the country to support the argument for central initiatives. One society, however, received wide acknowledgement in statistical journals and that was the Central Society of Education, formed in 1836.¹⁰⁴ This group had a strong political element with the guiding spirit of Thomas Wyse M.P., and drew upon many of the threads of the education movement to give them more weight. While the statistical societies approached their science in general terms and encompassed any

aspect of statistics, the Central Society was established purely for the promotion of national education.

The Analyst, which carried progress reports on the statistical societies, heralded the formation of the Central Society.

"The Central Society of Education, at whose head we perceive Lord Denman, has been organized at a happy moment, for it has no longer the novelty of the subject to contend with; and it may now apply its efforts to the consideration of the subject itself."¹⁰⁵

The London Journal described it as "*one of the most important... institutions*" - "because the benefit which it seeks to confer is of a permanent nature, and one which may be termed self-reproductive good."¹⁰⁶ The prospectus suggested a statistical character to the society for its purpose was

"to collect, classify, and diffuse information concerning the education of all classes, in every department, for the purpose of ascertaining by what means individuals may be best fitted, in health, in mind, and in morals, to fill the stations which they are destined to occupy."¹⁰⁷

Among the Committee were M. DeMorgan, the Mathematician, Mr. Lay, former editor of the Journal of Education, Mr. Ewart M.P., Mr. Hawes, M.P., Sir C. Lemon, President of the Statistical Society, Sir W. Molesworth, M.P., the Lord Advocate, Sir R. Musgrave, M.P., Mr. W.S. O'Brien, M.P., Irish nationalist, supporter of Wyse and Irish reform, Mr. Porter, Vice President of the Statistical Society of the Board of Trade, Mr. Poulett Scrope, M.P., geologist and political economist, Mr. Shutt, M.P., Mr. Serjeant Talfourd, M.P., judge and author, Mr. Parden, Librarian of the House of Commons, Mr. Ward, M.P., Mr. Wyse, M.P., Chairman of the Committee and Lord Denman, friend of Brougham and supporter of the anti-slavery cause. B.F. Duppa was the Secretary.¹⁰⁸ There was considerable weight and influence in the political support given to the Central Society.

The Analyst was keen to promote the Central Society and recommend some priorities for consideration:- 1) that of parents being unable to permit their children to remain at schools for sufficient time to derive full benefit from them, 2) the incapacity of teachers 3) the funds for the support of schools, 4) the subject of allocation of power to control them and 5) compulsion, ("Whether it is not justice to children and to the State to prevent parents from neglecting their education")¹⁰⁹ The latter points had been contentious issues throughout this period and yet here was the suggestion for some readjustment of attitudes. Training for schoolmasters was demanded and an immediate inquiry to find out how best to improve the system. The inference was for the government now to take command.

"We think that so important a business as national education ought not to be left to casual charity."¹¹⁰

The Central Society supported their aims with publications which illustrated their willingness to draw from all sources and promote as part of their own programme. An article by Mr. Porter gave an abstract and comparative view of the major statistical inquiries, while a Mr. Long took up Brougham's ideas on the use of endowments from the continuing work of the Commission of Inquiry.¹¹¹ From the examination into the state of charities came the demand for direct government management and for the Legislature to accept its duty to appoint a minister of education and "to lay the foundation of a general education for all classes, which shall have for its object to cultivate the faculties of the understanding by a training adapted to the wants of every member of the community."¹¹² The Central Society seemed to have adopted the ideas of the Manchester Statistical Society but was able to give them more weight in their promotion. Another article on the "State of the

Existing Schools for the Industrious Classes" presented a summary of the working of the existing system and institutions for education before reaching the same conclusion that "their amelioration and adequate extension to meet the wants of the people can only be effected by a Central Board of Education appointed by the Crown."¹¹³

Manchester could claim to have been the original Statistical Society which created the vital impact in political circles with its recommendations to accompany the statistics. With its willingness to formulate proposals from its activities, which could be applied nationally, Manchester demonstrated a vitality in the provincial areas which created a new awareness. Most of the pressure groups administered their efforts from a committee based in the capital. The growth of statistical societies demonstrated the activity and pressure which could be generated from the provinces. With Manchester, in particular, the expertise on educational statistics was probably greater than that of any Government Department.

The London Society was an organising body, which fuelled the educational debate by circulating information. It may have maintained the morale of the minor societies by the part it played in keeping up communication with the rest of the country and eventually providing a publication to contain their contributions and records of progress. With the proposed library of available publications, it would have been a useful centre for statistical resources but there was not much inclination towards using statistics to affect change.

The British Association Statistical Section was the parent to them all, providing an exchange of ideas and helping to maintain the vitality of the range of provincial activities by holding meetings away from London. Nevertheless, the one statistical society which probably did most to break the government's resistance eventually,

because it united all the themes raised by the others and had enough political membership to give them impetus, was the Central Society of Education. For presenting influential evidence and opinion to the public and the Government, the statistical societies provided alternative means to the Select Committees. The cumulative pressure from the provinces, with mounting evidence of shortcomings, contributed to the pressure for a change in Government policy in 1839.

Notes to Chapter Nine

1. J.S.S.S.L., Vol.I, 1839, p.45, "The Central Society of Education".
2. Manchester Statistical Society, Appendix to Minutes, Vol.I,
3. See Ch.2, p.33ff.
4. See Ch.6, p.161, and Ch.1, p.18.
5. See Ch.2, p.42.
6. See Ch.6, p.173.
7. See Ch.6, p.165, and Ch.7.
8. B.F.S.S. Minute Book, p.167, 1st April, 1833, "The Enquiry into the state of Education in Sussex is continued under care."
9. T.S. Ashton, Economics and Social Investigations in Manchester 1833-1933, p.2.
10. *ibid.*, pp.2-3.
11. J.S.S.L., Vol.I, 1839, p.317.
"An Address Explanatory of the Objects and Advantages of Statistical Enquiries" -- delivered to the 2nd General Meeting of the Statistical Society of Ulster, 18th May, 1838, by Capt. J.E. Portlock, R.E.
12. Anthony Hyman, Charles Babbage, Pioneer of the Computer, pp.149-150.
13. *ibid.*, p.150-151.
14. T.S. Ashton, *op.cit.*, p.3.
15. Royal Statistical Society, Annals, p.5.
16. *ibid.*, pp.8-9.
17. *ibid.*, p.8.
18. *ibid.*, pp.5-6.
19. *ibid.*, p.8.
20. *ibid.*, pp.8-9.
21. *ibid.*, p.9.
22. Appendix to Minutes, Vol.I, 11 "First Report of the Statistical Society", Manchester, July 1834. The first meeting was on 2nd September, 1833, with 13 members.
23. T.S. Ashton, *op.cit.*, p.138.

24. Appendix to Minutes, Vol.I, 11.
25. See Ch.2, p.29.
26. D.N.B., Vol.XXIII, pp.87-88, William Rathbone Greg had been educated by Dr. Lant Carpenter at Bristol before going to Edinburgh University. Samuel Greg was educated at Unitarian schools in Nottingham and Bristol.
27. D.N.B., Vol.XXVI, p.338.
28. T.S. Ashton, op.cit., p.4.
29. Rulebook of the Manchester Statistical Society.
30. D.N.B., Vol.XXX, p.251, "The Moral and Physical Condition of the Working Classes employed in the Cotton Manufacture in Manchester"; 1832.
Dr. Kay had experience as medical officer in the Ancoats and Ardwick Dispensary. He was secretary to the Board of Health at Manchester during the cholera epidemic in 1832.
31. Appendix to Minutes, Vol.I,5, "Result of a Conference with Mr. Thomson concerning the Objects towards which the Society should direct its Attention." Dr. J.P. Kay.
32. *ibid.*
33. *ibid.*
34. Report of a Committee on the state of education in the borough of Manchester in 1834, p.3.
35. *ibid.*, pp.4-5.
36. See Ch.6, p.158 Henry Brougham, Ch.3, p.97, and Ch.10, p.291, Ths. Wyse.
37. Report on Manchester, p.5.
38. *ibid.*, pp.7-8.
39. *ibid.*, p.12.
40. *ibid.*, p.15.
41. *ibid.*, pp.17-18.
42. PP., 1835, VII, 763, Appendix 2, p.³³⁵ See also Ch.3, p.92.
43. B.F.S.S., 31st Report, May 9th, 1836, pp.12-13, for the B.F.S.S. see Ch.1, p.17 and Ch.2, p.46ff.
44. Appendix to Minutes, Vol.I, 47a, William Langton to 'My Lord'.
45. Report of A Committee of the Manchester Statistical Society, on the State of Education in the Borough of Liverpool in 1835-36, p.3.

46. *ibid.*, pp.4-5.
47. *ibid.*, p.24, part of footnote.
48. *ibid.*, p.21.
49. *ibid.*, p.32.
50. *ibid.*, p.39.
51. *ibid.*
52. *ibid.*, p.43.
53. Report on the State of Education in the City of York in 1836-37.
54. *ibid.*, p5.
55. *ibid.*
56. *ibid.*, pp.5-6.
57. "Report of a Committee of the Manchester Statistical Society, on the State of Education in the township of Pendleton, 1838", in J.S.S.L., Vol.II, 1839, p.65ff.
58. *ibid.*, p.46.
59. *ibid.*
60. Report on Manchester in 1834, 2nd Edition, 1837, p.V.
61. Appendix to Minutes, Vol.1, 11, First Report of the Statistical Society, Manchester, July, 1834.
62. See. Ch.4, p.100 and Ch.5, p.137.
63. Royal Statistical Society, Annals, pp.2-3.
64. *ibid.*, p.10, D.N.B., Vol.17, William Empson, Vol.4, Bethune, John Elliot Drinkwater, Vol.55, Edward Strutt, 1st Baron Belper, and William Henry Sykes.
65. Royal Statistical Society, Annals, p.10.
66. *ibid.*, p.11.
67. *ibid.*
68. *ibid.*, pp.13-15.
69. *ibid.*, pp.23-24.
70. *ibid.*, pp.24-25.

71. *ibid.*, pp.30-31.
72. Appendix to Minutes, Vol.I, 15.
73. J.S.S.L., Vol.I, 1839, p.4.
74. *ibid.*, p.1.
75. Appendix to Minutes, Vol.I, 18. The Courier, 15 November, 1834.
76. The Analyst, Vol.III, No.XIII, 1835, pp.126-127.
77. Appendix to Minutes, Vol.I, 53.
78. The Analyst, Vol.V, No.XVIII, 1836, p.141.
79. See Ch.3, p.93, and Ch.10, p.299.
80. The Analyst, Vol.V, No.XVIII, 1836, pp.142-143.
81. *ibid.*, p.145.
82. J.S.S.L., Vol.I, 1839, p.49.
83. The Analyst, Vol.V, No.XVII, 1836, p.146.
84. See Ch.3, p.97, and Ch.10, p.303.
85. E.R., Vol.65, April, 1837, p.246.
86. T.S. Ashton, *op.cit.*, p.4.
87. J.S.S.L., Vol.I, 1839, p.189.
88. *ibid.*, p.323 and p.355ff.
89. The Analyst, Vol.V, No.XVIII, 1836, p.313.
90. J.S.S.L., Vol.I, 1839, p.49, See also Ch.2, p.32.
91. B.P.I., Report, 27th October, 1834, pp.8-9.
92. Royal Statistical Society, Annals, pp.70-71.
93. Appendix to Minutes, Vol.I, 55.
94. B.P.I., Report, 3rd October, 1836, p.8.
95. B.P.I., Report, 16th October, 1837, p.11. Also p.15, "Observations on some Official Statistical Returns with hints for the collection of Statistical Data," by Mr. F. Clark.
96. J.S.S.L., Vol.3, 1840, p.25.
97. *ibid.*, p.26, See Appendix III p.336 for the table of returns.

98. *ibid.*, p.25 F/N, "The Sub-committee appointed to revise Mr. Wood's Report found it impossible to test the accuracy of the figures contained in it without going over the ground after that gentleman. With this observation the Sub-Committee return the Report, as Mr. Wood's Report, not taking upon themselves the responsibility of its statements, but, believing that it contains valuable information, they leave it with the General Committee to be dealt with as they think best."
99. *ibid.*, p.30.
100. *ibid.*, p.29.
101. *ibid.*, 34.
102. *ibid.*, p.32.
103. *ibid.*, p.30.
104. See Ch,3, p.97, Ch.10, p.303.
105. The Analyst, Vol.V, No.XVIII, 1836, p.312.
106. J.S.S.L., Vol.I, 1839, p.46.
107. The Analyst, Vol.V, No.XVIII, 1836, p.312.
108. *ibid.*, p.314.
109. *ibid.*, pp.312-313.
110. *ibid.*, p.314.
111. J.S.S.L., Vol.I, 1839, p.46, "On the Endowments in England for the Purposes of Education." by Mr. Long.
112. *ibid.*, p.47.
113. *ibid.*

CHAPTER 10

Ireland

As a province of the United Kingdom, 19th Century Ireland similarly did not possess a national system of education, yet progress towards that ideal curiously placed Ireland in advance of England and Wales, even with regard to the endowed schools which existed prior to 1800. Perhaps because of the turbulent origins of British rule, successive Parliaments had found it expedient to grant aid towards the foundation of certain schools. Presumably this tradition was intended to placate the population and to disseminate civilized standards. Serious rebellions in 1798 and 1803 indicated that much still needed to be done. The vast majority of the Irish were Catholic, unemancipated and a threat to the stability of the state. The reconciliation of Catholic and Protestant traditions was a constant obstacle to educational developments, a religious divide which was more accentuated in that province than in mainland Britain.

The variety of educational establishments dated back to an Act of Henry VIII, which had required the Irish clergy to teach an English school¹ but the first schools actually created under the authority of the State by Act 12 Elizabeth c.1, were the Diocesan Free Schools. Like the English public schools, these became classical in character. A subsequent Act of William III provided for their maintenance at the expense of Protestant clergy, with the Lord Lieutenant holding power of appointment over masters.² During the reign of George II, grand-juries in Ireland, were authorized to provide money for building Diocesan School-houses, to be raised by a county rate. Although this instituted the unprecedented principle of local taxation for public education, which

would have been unacceptable in England, apparently it was not utilized to great advantage.³

The Incorporated Charter Society, founded in 1733, began to establish Charter Schools with the benevolence of government aid supplementing the donations of private individuals. Their prime purpose appeared to be to gain converts to Protestantism⁴ as an attempt to combat the dominance of Catholicism. A later organisation also turned to educational foundations, despite a misleading name. The Association for the Discouragement of Vice, established in 1792, directed its energies towards educational priorities. Its initial role was similar to the British and Foreign Bible Society,⁵ the distribution of Bibles and religious tracts, but then the Association progressed to aiding the foundation of schools, to build schoolhouses and to grant salaries to teachers. Its institutions were supposed to be 'open to all' but in fact they became exclusive since the schoolmaster was invariably Protestant, appointed by the Protestant clergy of the parish. Further deterrents to Catholics were the compulsory reading of the Scriptures and the inclusion of the catechism of the Church of England for examinations, which, in turn, were conducted by Protestant clergy. Again, the main sources of income were Parliamentary grants and other subscriptions.⁶

The Brothers of the Christian Schools, a Catholic order, from 1802 and the Sunday School Society, 1809, added to the variety of institutions and there was one organisation which never received Parliamentary aid, possibly because of its place of origin and inappropriate time of foundation, during wartime. This was the London Hibernian Society, formed in 1806 for the purpose of establishing schools and circulating the Holy Scriptures in Ireland. Religiously controversial books were avoided and proselytism disavowed but the Bible was required reading.

The masters were not obliged to be Protestant but the resident parish clergy were the permanent visitors, which would have influenced appointments. Although a grant from Parliament was not received directly, the Hibernian schools eventually attracted some allowance from the Lord Lieutenant's Fund.⁷

As well as the facility of Parliamentary grants without administrative responsibility, which was not extended to English organisations, around the turn of the Century Ireland was already pressing the government for legislation. A leader in these affairs was Richard Lovell Edgeworth, an established educationist in terms of his writings,⁸ but now elected to Parliament. He entered the Irish and English House of Commons in 1798 and thence worked for the advancement of elementary education in Ireland. In the same year, he sat on a Select Committee to inquire into the state of elementary education in that country. He defended the Report of the Committee in February, 1799, moving that "the state of public education in this country is highly defective, and requires the interposition of Parliament."⁹ The establishment of at least one school in each parish and efficiency tests for teachers were advocated but, when leave was given to introduce a bill "for the improvement of the education of the people in Ireland" it was never carried into law.¹⁰ Parliament was not ready to accept government control of education in either Ireland or England.

Nevertheless, in 1806, a new Board of Commissioners was appointed to inquire again into the state of education in Ireland. The members included Edgeworth, Dr. Stuart, Archbishop of Armagh, Dr. Broderick, Archbishop of Cashel, Dr. Verschoyle, Bishop of Killala, Dr. Elrington, Provost of Trinity College, the Rev. James Whitlaw and John Leslie Foster, M.P.,¹¹ Rather like the later, Brougham-initiated inquiries in England,¹² the Commission examined the foundations and, where necessary, pointed out weaknesses.

For example, the 1809 Report criticised the Carysfort School in Wicklow. There had never been a school-house or master's residence attached to this endowment, but there was an old schoolroom usually attended by fifty boys during the summer and no more than a dozen during winter.¹³ It was discovered that the current master of the school might have had distractions which prevented him from devoting his full attention to his school duties. The Rev. Sir Thomas Forster had two church livings, one in Armagh, the other in Dublin and "did not attend the duties of the school in person nor reside at Carysfort." This induced the Commissioners to express the hope that "no instance will occur in future, of any persons being appointed to be Masters of Public Schools, or being suffered to continue to hold those situations unless they reside and discharge the duties thereof in person."¹⁴ They went further to suggest the redirection of the income of this endowment towards the building of a large day-school for the instruction of the poor.

After examining all their evidence, the Commissioners produced a final report which contained broad recommendations for a national policy, the spirit of which was to guide future considerations. The conclusion on the existing institutions was that "the present Establishments for the Instruction of the lower orders, though extremely numerous, are inadequate as a system of general Education"... "and their insufficiency, ... is very imperfectly supplied by the un-endowed Schools."¹⁵

The teachers were "very ill-qualified"¹⁶ to give even the limited instruction provided in schools while the poverty of the lower classes incapacitated them from improving themselves. Their minds were allegedly corrupted by the circulation of books whose content was calculated to incite to lawless and profligate adventure, encourage superstition, or dissension and disloyalty.¹⁷

To try to remedy these faults and conscious of the divisions of Irish society, the Commissioners deliberated upon a system which they hoped would afford educational opportunities to all members of the lower orders while avoiding "all interference..with the particular Religious tenets of any."¹⁸ By adhering to the latter, it was hoped that any endeavours might prove attractive to all sections of society so that separate denominations could be educated in the same school. There was an important economic consideration, to avoid the burdensome expense of creating separate institutions, but even this was outweighed by the potential for improving social harmony. The Commissioners regarded the neutrality of religious character in schools as crucial to further expansion. They believed that their proposals for the education of the lower classes would be more acceptable if interference in the religious tenets of prospective pupils were unequivocally disclaimed and carefully guarded against.¹⁹

The Report envisaged a new administration for education, namely a Board of Commissioners appointed under the authority of an Act of Parliament. This Board would be empowered to supervise the distribution of Parliamentary grants for building and endowing schools, to purchase or approve the sites for schools, to have responsibility for the appointment and conduct of teachers, to prescribe the actual syllabus of education, to provide for the expense of furnishing books and "to have a general control over the whole of the prepared Establishments and for the Instruction of the lower classes."²⁰

Typically, no act was passed to provide these recommendations. The government was probably spared from involving the Legislature by the convenient existence of a voluntary organisation which appeared willing to fulfil most of the requirements of the Commission of Inquiry. In this

there could be found some English influence. The Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor in Ireland known as the Kildare Place Society, was assisted in its foundation in Dublin on 7th December, 1811, by Joseph Lancaster.²¹ (Veevers, one of Lancaster's disciples, was the first head of the Model School in Kildare Place.) This society was a voluntary association of people from various religious backgrounds united in an undertaking which they perceived as "of the first importance to the moral and political improvement of Ireland." The foremost principle on which they pledged themselves to proceed was in keeping with the Commissioners' Report, "to afford the same advantages, with respect to Education, to all classes of Christians, without interfering with the peculiar religious opinions of any."²²

The Kildare Place Society proposed to establish schools throughout Ireland and also to erect model schools to train the teachers. Its members had struggled along with voluntary contributions but found their plans restricted by financial limitations. Therefore, in 1815, the Society petitioned Parliament²³ for assistance and, in the light of the Fourteenth Report of the Commissioners, the Government proved willing to pass responsibility to them. The Kildare Place Society had clear aims to which the Government was prepared to accede.

The policy was

- 1) To assist by pecuniary grants, the improvement of existing schools and the establishing of new ones upon condition that the principles of the Society be adopted for their regulation;
- 2) To maintain two model schools in Kildare Place in which to exhibit the plan recommended and to train masters and mistresses of country Schools;
- 3) To receive masters and mistresses from the country in order to qualify them for carrying the plans of the Society into effect;

- 4) To publish moral, instructive, and entertaining books fitted to supplant objectionable ones then in use;
- 5) To supply to schools in connection with the Society gratuitously, and to all purchasers at cost price, spelling books, stationery, and other school requisites;
- 6) To maintain a system of annual inspection in schools connected with the Society;
- 7) To encourage by gratuities but not by salaries such masters and mistresses as appear to be deserving.²⁴

This success of the Irish sister organisation inspired the British and Foreign School Society to hope that similar benefits might be extended to themselves in England.

"It is a matter of exultation to the British and Foreign School Society to find that the Legislature has sanctioned the fundamental principles on which the Society is established, viz. The Education of children belonging to parents of all religious denominations. The debate in the House of Commons (June 16th, 1815) on the Irish Budget, when a sum of 6,980l. was voted to the Commissioners of Public Education in Ireland and in particular the speech of Mr. Peel, is so conclusive on the subject, that the sentiments then expressed only require to be read, in order to convince every unprejudiced mind that no Society can be efficient for the education of the poor of the United Kingdom and the British Colonies, which does not extend instruction impartially to children of all religious persuasions."²⁵

Already entangled in disputes concerning the exclusivity of National Society schools, the B.F.S.S. appreciated Mr. Peel's acknowledgement of the advantages of education in Ireland and his acceptance of the principle "that the benefit ought to be restricted to no particular sect - no distinction whatever ought to be observed."²⁶ While seeming to vindicate the policy and work of the B.F.S.S., Mr. Peel also revealed the reason why the Government had opted to invest responsibility in the voluntary Kildare Place Society rather than take the direct control recommended by

the Irish Commissioners. The decision had stemmed from the common laissez-faire policy, not any insensibility to the advantages of education, but an apprehension that the plan of education advised by the Commissioners would not be advantageous. Their report had recommended that the Lord Lieutenant should appoint Commissioners to superintend education. The government had feared that direct interference on their part would only have excited jealousies which would have counteracted any benefits.²⁷

The acceptance of a policy of grants to the Kildare Place Society did not preclude the continuation of existing aid to other educational institutions. No money for the general diffusion of education was, in fact, given to the Society in 1815, because it was not fully prepared to commence the foundation of schools. A grant was made for the purchase of a site and to erect their buildings in Dublin. In 1816, a further £6,000 was then provided to enable the Society to print and distribute moral and instructive books and to extend its system of education among the poor.²⁸ As well as this increased source of income, the Society still received substantial funds from private donations, legacies, subscriptions and now the sale of equipment and books.²⁹ To illustrate the broad appeal of the Irish exertions, the B.F.S.S., while disseminating the growing success of the Kildare Place Society,³⁰ recorded one £70 donation from "that truly philanthropic Institution 'The Edinburgh Society for promoting the Education of the Poor in Ireland...'"³¹ Such generosity was expected to "awaken the attention of the most heedless in this country to the subject of National Education."³²

The Kildare Place Society was not ready to begin its work until 1817 so that the full impact of its work stemmed from then. The B.F.S.S. was pleased that the foundation work had been completed and anticipated successful developments.

"The Society of Dublin having received a considerable parliamentary grant of money will now be enabled to prosecute the system with vigour."³³

The alliance with the Kildare Place Society was a welcome extension to its own schemes since "the British and Foreign system is alone admissible."³⁴ The problem of attracting all religious groups was thought to be overcome because the Catholics were reported to be supporting the Kildare Society schools. This assumption later proved erroneous. The work of the Irish Society made quite an impression on the committee of the B.F.S.S. William Allen visited the establishment in Dublin during the 1820's and found the books published by the Society particularly in accord with the British Society's philosophy.

"I was particularly pleased with their system of publishing small interesting books for school libraries, which are intended to supersede those pernicious publications, that are at present so generally circulated amongst the poor. In the books issued by this society (80 volumes), everything sectarian is avoided."³⁵

The publishing activity was probably the longest surviving influence of the Kildare Place Society for, even in the 1830's, a major portion of the B.F.S.S. library stock consisted of publications from the Irish Society.³⁶ There was also the possibility that the success of this Irish initiative to combat the spread of pernicious ideas gave a little inspiration to the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge in England.³⁷ The initial enthusiasm which surrounded the foundation of the Kildare Place Society schools was soon muted when they were found still to 'exclude' a major portion of Irish society.

The determination to maintain a neutral religious policy proved counter to the very object it was designed to achieve. The decision to enforce in all schools the reading of the Holy Scriptures without note or comment was taken with the purest motives, to connect religious with

moral and literary education. It was apparently overlooked, however, that the principles of the Roman Catholic Church were totally at variance with those of the Society.³⁸ The Catholic Church did not allow indiscriminate reading of Scriptures with unguided interpretation and, despite the initial success of the schools, once the Catholic clergy became aware of this weakness, they exerted strong influence against the new system. When this opposition became manifest and successful, it became clear that the Kildare Place Society's system could not become one of National Education.³⁹ The character of the schools was Protestant, most established in Ulster, and the majority Catholic population stayed away. This led to another Select Committee on Education in Ireland, which reported between 1824 and 1828.

The Government was evidently under pressure because they knew that they would have to make some concessions to modify the plans in Ireland. Correspondence between Mr. Peel and H. Goulburn revealed that Government circles were aware of the Select Committee's conclusions before their recommendations were published in the final report. There was some reluctance to abandon arrangements already established to support schools in Ireland. Peel wrote to Goulburn -

"I am very much disposed to agree with the opinions which you and Lord Liverpool have expressed. I think we should not hastily relinquish the practical benefits that are now received from some of those Establishments for the purpose of education which are at present in existence- *in the too confident expectation that another and an untried scheme will be successful.*"⁴⁰

The Prime Minister, Lord Liverpool, was concerned that an embarrassing situation would arise because the Commission, he thought, could be dangerous unless the men conducting the reports could be absolutely relied upon. He anticipated the outcome, but expected to have to act, even though he wished for alterations.. He made Peel aware of his feelings on the subject.

"It is scarcely possible to refuse to act upon their Opinion, at least to a considerable extent, and however you may wish to qualify it, you will always find you stand upon very disadvantageous Grounds, in a contest with those whose policy or Interest it may be to support the Récommendation without limitation.

The Report of the Commissioners has evidently a Tinge of Roman Catholic Feeling - It was not likely it should be otherwise."⁴¹

Liverpool was aware of the extreme difficulty of achieving a balance which would please all sides and wary of showing too much favour to the Catholics. He was not opposed to concessions to one Faith, provided similar favours were also granted to the other. Regardless of the outcome, he did not wish to abandon the schools and other organisations already in receipt of Parliamentary grants. Liverpool believed the Kildare Place Society and other establishments were working advantageously and wanted them to continue until the Government had had time to judge the effects of the new experiment about to be instituted. The Prime Minister accepted that Parliament had sanctioned the recommendations of the Select Committee but he hoped to obtain some modifications and discussion upon the mode of their adoption. He was ever mindful of the complications which could arise and was not optimistic.

"We must always recollect that to do what we will, we are attempting an Object very difficult, if not impracticable ...the Education of two Branches of the Community, of entirely different Faith under the same Roof and according to one System.

"Such a scheme will necessarily be subject to much jealousy... In some instances it may succeed... In more I feel it will fail; but Parliament has determined, perhaps wisely, that the Experiment should be made."⁴²

To effect any alterations before release to the public, Peel favoured personal communications with members of the Select Committee. He considered only selective application of any proposals in places where the absence of any other system would avoid petty obstructions and, ultimately, he even suggested that the Commission of Inquiry could be

vested with superintending any of their proposals.

"There would be great advantage in that... From the knowledge they have acquired, and the personal communications which they have had, they would be more likely to succeed than any other Commissioners that could be selected...

"If they failed it could not be imputed to the Government that the failure of the plan was owing to the bad selection of the Instruments by which it was to be executed."⁴³

The Select Committee, perhaps unusually, did not examine witnesses but re-examined previous reports. When their deliberations were made public, they re-affirmed the principles of the Fourteenth Report of the first Select Committee, 1806-1812, thereby concurring with the suggestions of a common education for both Catholics and Protestants and a Board of Commissioners to administer any Government grants.⁴⁴ The intimation of a National Board had been revealed in the first of nine reports and so the apprehension of Peel and Lord Liverpool suggested that the Government, too, were abiding by an earlier principle in trying to avoid direct interference if possible. It is difficult to ascertain whether or not the personal communications from Cabinet had any effect because the final recommendations of the Select Committee did not appear to waver from the 1812 Report.

With the amount of money consumed in Government grants, the 1828 Report of the Select Committee stated that

"it is indispensably necessary to establish a fixed authority, acting under the control of the Government and of the Legislature, bound by strict and impartial rules, and subject to full responsibility for the foundation, and management of such Public Schools of general instruction as are supported in whole or in part at the Public expense."⁴⁵

Under this authority, teachers would be appointed without religious distinction but they would have to prove their qualifications by instruction and examination in a Government-directed Model School. The teacher would also need a certificate of moral conduct from his particular

clergy. Scholars were expected to attend their respective places of worship on a Sunday and the responsibility for religious education would rest with the clergy. The conditions for granting Parliamentary aid were to be restricted by the following criteria. Assistance to parishes, local subscribers or charitable societies for the erection of schoolhouses would not exceed two-thirds of the total cost. The schoolhouse and site were to be conveyed to the Commissioners and the managers of such schools would have to guarantee to conduct their establishments according to the prescribed rules. Gratuities to teachers were not to exceed £5, exceptionally £10, the remainder of any funds to be raised locally. Books for the literary instruction of children would be furnished at half price. School requisites, stationery and books for the separate religious instruction would be furnished at prime cost. A model school for the training of teachers was an important requisite of the new administration, together with a system of inspection, either by the Commissioners or their appointees. All public aid would be dependent upon private contributions and an adherence to the rules of the appointed Commissioners.

For their part, localities would be expected to provide the site for a school, be responsible for repairs and supply one third of the initial building expense, plus books for general instruction. Applications would be entertained from individuals, charitable committees, associations, or select vestries of parishes.⁴⁶ To emphasise their proposal of a proper government body to supervise these arrangements, the Select Committee conclusively resolved:

'That a Board of Education should be appointed by the Government receiving Salaries and holding their Offices during pleasure; all persons being eligible, without reference to Religious distinctions."⁴⁷

The Government's response was to defer matters and to appoint another

Select Committee to examine the state of the poor in Ireland. Reporting in 1830, this Select Committee urged the Government to act upon "the practicable recommendations of the Select Committee of 1828". The Government however, was still reluctant and uncertain that all denominations would be satisfied.⁴⁸ It was then left to a new Irish M.P. to take up the cause and persist with it.

In 1830, one year after emancipation, the Tory Government fell and Earl Grey formed a new Whig administration. Thomas Wyse, representing Tipperary, was one of eight Catholic members who now entered Parliament. One of his first engagements was to present evidence to the Select Committee on the Poor in Ireland.⁴⁹ Wyse had already decided to make education in Ireland his prime crusade and made contact with many influential people, including frequent meetings with E.G. Stanley, Secretary at the Irish Office. To Dr. Doyle, Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin, Wyse expressed his determination on the education question.

"I am anxious to press the consideration of this great National want, in every possible shape, upon the House; I shall pursue it without remission, and, if defeated in the first instance, shall not lose courage, but continue earnestly in the good cause until something useful be at last done."⁵⁰

Wyse submitted a detailed plan for Irish National Education to Edward Stanley on 9th December, 1830,⁵¹ but time passed and the Government showed no sign of adopting any of his suggestions. So, in August 1831, Wyse planned to introduce a Bill but, because of a delay caused by faulty drafting, he was not able to do so. Then, unexpectedly, on 9th September, 1831, Stanley announced that the government intended to withdraw its support from the Kildare Place Society and to establish a system of national education by transferring the authority for the disposal of Government grants to the Lord Lieutenant.⁵² Parliament was presented with a number of petitions criticising the administration of the Kildare

Place Society. Though there were replies in support, the Government had now realised that this voluntary body could not supply the needs of a truly national system. The Edinburgh Review summarised the reasons for the forfeiture of the Parliamentary grant as "too scrupulous an adherence to exclusively Protestant practices, in a scheme professing to be for the benefit of a population chiefly Catholic."⁵³ The bulk of the Society's schools were in Protestant Ulster, 1021 compared to 60 throughout the other three provinces. Catholic opposition had produced an attendance disproportionately small compared to their number in the population.⁵⁴

Wyse was still keen to bestow the scheme with the character of permanence and duly introduced his Bill to Parliament on 29th September, 1831.⁵⁵ It did not receive a second reading, not because it was opposed but because Wyse was ousted from Parliament in the 1832 election and was unable to continue its promotion.⁵⁶ Nevertheless, the creation of the Irish Board proceeded, based upon the conditions set out in a letter from Mr. Stanley, in October 1831, to the Lord Lieutenant (Letter from the Chief Secretary for Ireland to His Grace the Duke of Leinster, on the Formation of a Board of Commissioners for Education in Ireland). This virtually followed the previous recommendations of the 1828 Select Committee, but while it informed the Duke that he would be President of the Board, the letter also used the ominous phrase "as an experiment"⁵⁷ which suggested less than total commitment.

The letter gave clear guidelines, however, on the composition of the Board. Its success "must depend upon the character of the individuals who compose the Board"... "the most scrupulous care should be taken not to interfere with the particular tenets of any description of Christian pupils." To attain the first object, it recommended the appointment of

men of high personal character, associated with individuals of high station in the Church; to obtain the latter, persons of different religious opinions were also advocated.⁵⁸ This seemed to be achieved for the Board, apart from the Duke of Leinster, who was a Protestant of the Established Church, eventually consisted of Richard Whately, Archbishop of Dublin, and Dr. Sadleir, also of the Established Church, Dr. Murray and Mr. A.R. Blake, Roman Catholic, with Robert Holmes and James Carlile, Presbyterians.⁵⁹

Absolute control over any funds from Parliament was bestowed upon the Board together with the power to make further regulations to clarify details, provided they stayed in keeping with the Government's intentions.⁶⁰

With the constitution of this Board, the opposition this time seemed to come primarily from members of the Established Church who feared too much influence would be given to the Catholics. Archbishop Whately had to fend off petitions from his own clergy. The criticism centred upon the surrender of what they saw as the church's prerogative to control education but there was also concern about the selection of scriptures to be used as common books in the schools. The latter was the main complaint of the clergy of Derry.

"Independent of all objections to the subordinate details of the education measure, the ground of our protest is simple and plain: as ministers of God's word, we cannot, we dare not become a party to any system of parochial instruction, in which the Bible, as given by the Spirit of God through the prophets and the apostles is to be considered as a book outlawed and exiled for its dangerous tendencies to the commonwealth, and in which its place is to be supplied by partial selections framed at the discretion, and accommodated to the expediency or the worldly policy of men."⁶¹

The Dublin clergy also petitioned Whately not to participate in the system on the same religious grounds but added their displeasure at what they perceived as concessions to the Roman Catholics. They feared that

the new central control would remove authority from local patrons and guardians of institutions.⁶² A joint statement of the Archbishops and Bishops of the United Church of England and Wales expressed their "unfeigned regret"

"that the proposed plan of national education, instead of producing these salutary and much-to-be-desired effects, would tend rather to embitter existing animosities, by marking more distinctly the difference of Creed in the public school, and by pointedly excluding, as a common source of instruction, that Volume which authoritatively incubates and by the most awful sanctions, universal charity, mutual forbearance, and the cultivation of order and peace."⁶³

The Bishops were worried that the trust of caring for national education had been removed from their hands and the balance of influence transferred to the Catholic clergy. The situation was almost the opposite of the circumstances in England in 1820 when Brougham's Education Bill failed to reach a suitable compromise between the religious parties, and was defeated by the Dissenters.⁶⁴ In this case, the Established Church was on the defensive. The Bishops thought that there were too many differing religious voices on the Board and that it was "impossible to conceive an unity of operation, without some surrender or suppression of important points of revealed truth." For such reasons, they were prepared to forego government patronage.⁶⁵

During the time it had taken for the opposition to present itself, Whately had had a period in which to assess the impact of the system. It was then largely due to his personal trust in the Board that it survived and he was able to defend its work. "I for one, am free to confess that I did not; at one time, anticipate results so satisfactory as have taken place; though I thought myself bound to make the trial." In negotiation, he had been surprised at so large a portion of Scripture accepted into the system of daily common instruction in the school. The result "has far surpassed my most sanguine expectations."⁶⁶

Whately tactfully explained that no principles had been surrendered that there was no compulsion involved in the use of such texts and neither could compulsion be used to overcome Catholic demands. Church schools had not been abandoned. The new Board essentially was there to supplement them with new schools. This again was akin to the principle of the 1820 Brougham Bill. The Board schools were not offered as a more suitable alternative to existing schools. They would only be planted where people, through whatever fault, could not be brought to avail themselves of any other plan.⁶⁷

Whately carefully affirmed that he had not betrayed his principles but generously acknowledged that it was only logical to expect the Catholics to have more influence in localities where they formed the majority of the population. He was encouraged by the level of agreement achieved between sides and felt that the system should be given a chance. Furthermore, in what might have been a polite rebuke to his critics, Whately pointed out that no one was offering anything better than the system devised. He stated that the best that could be hoped for was to fix on a plan which was open to the fewest objections and that criticisms levelled at it would receive more attention if less objectionable options were proposed.⁶⁸

Opposition was evident in England, too. In the House of Lords, the Earl of Roden referred to an

"infamous system of education from which the unmutated word of God was excluded... and hoped that it would never be said that any Protestant government... but above all, a British Government - united with Popish priests to withhold from the people the unmutable word of God."⁶⁹

There were petitions against the Irish System from both Liverpool and Manchester, where there were large numbers of ex-patriot Irish who retained their sectarian jealousies.⁷⁰ Occasionally, a favourable

petition emerged such as one agreed by some Dissenting congregations in Liverpool.⁷¹

The Board had to issue clarification on the rules regarding religious instruction as that appeared to be the most contentious aspect of their domain. The controversy continued, as evidenced in their reports, but, on the other hand, they were able to claim a good deal of success. The Board commenced receiving applications from January, 1832 and by the time of the first official report in 1834, a total of 1,548 applications had been received. The Board appeared to operate with due discretion, not acceding to all requests and withdrawing assistance if the institution did not comply with standards. In 1834, 789 schools in full operation were receiving assistance. Grants had been made to 52 others but they had since broken their connection with the Board, who had discontinued aid in consequence of the reports of inspectors. The Board had rejected 216 and were still considering 292 others.⁷²

With the publishing of books and scriptural extracts also commenced, the Board felt that the "success which has attended our labours, as appears, by the progress we have made, abundantly proves that the system of education committed to our charge has been gratefully received and approved by the public in general."⁷³

With the number of schools increased from 798 to 1,106 by the following year and applications bearing signatures from different religious backgrounds,⁷⁴ the Board appeared to have gone some way towards solving the divisions in society. "It thus appears that the system has already been very generally adopted under the auspices both of Protestant and Roman Catholic clergymen" so that "we may safely conclude, that the new system of Education has proved generally beneficial and acceptable to Protestants and Roman Catholics according to their wants."⁷⁵

Confident of their success, the Board were looking optimistically to expand to 32 district Model Schools, one for each county of Ireland and envisaged some 5,000 National Schools within a possible timescale of 9 years.⁷⁶ Always, constant regard was made to the spirit of the 1812 and 1825 Commissioners.

The action of Richard Whately in accepting a role in the new scheme seemed vindicated, despite continuing religious problems, and his stance earned a creditable acknowledgement in the Westminster Review in 1834. English supporters of a national system of education had observed the Irish progress. In an article on "National Education", Arthur Symonds wrote:

"One beginning has been made in Ireland in this work; and the archbishop of Dublin has earned immortal fame, for popularising for the use of the Irish peasant, the truths of political economy, which are unknown to nine-tenths of the enlightened classes of England. Such moral boldness is worthy of all praise. Can it be hoped that England will ever be helped so effectually?"⁷⁷

The progress of Ireland towards a central authority for education was in advance of England. The Irish Board was created two years before the British and National Societies received the government's £20,000 grant. Awareness of the Irish developments could have inspired John Roebuck to suggest a move towards a national scheme in England.⁷⁸ Since both Roebuck and Thomas Wyse were followers of Radical policies, there could have been an exchange of ideas. Wyse returned to Parliament in 1835 as M.P. for Waterford and tried again to give the Irish Board permanence by returning to the Bill previously lost in 1832. On Tuesday, 19th May, 1835, he moved for leave to bring in his Bill for establishing a Board of National Education and the advancement of Elementary Education in Ireland.⁷⁹ Although this received the unanimous agreement of the House, it still failed to reach the statute book.⁸⁰ Perhaps the reported

progress of the Board under its current status was satisfactory enough to the Government without the necessity of making a permanent commitment. With the recent introduction of the grant system in England, the Government was reluctant to set a precedent of administrative control.

As Roebuck's proposal was deflected into committee, so Wyse also obtained the alternative to the Bill, a Select Committee on Education in Ireland on 22nd June, 1835. This was re-appointed on 15th February, 1836 and also on 5th December, 1837.⁸¹ Wyse was chairman and took a keen interest in the examination of witnesses and in the compilation of the evidence. A wide range of educational experts were invited to be interviewed and the first two reports were simply an exposition of the evidence. As well as leading to a permanent Board of National Education, the motives behind the Select Committee's work might have included a revision of the use of endowments in Ireland. There had been frequent reference to the abuse of endowments in England, a theme which Henry Brougham had revived during 1835.⁸² The Charity Commission had illustrated the availability of unused or misappropriated charitable funds.⁸³ Now, perhaps, the focus was upon Irish endowments.

The situation in Ireland was different. From the early 19th Century there had existed a separate Board of Commissioners regularly reporting upon the progress of the major endowed schools of Ireland. This Board had preceded the Brougham Commissioners and, distinct from the English problem of unearthing a multitude of obscure benefactions, the Irish Commissioners were able to report on the progress of institutions and building programmes from year to year. Nevertheless, there appeared to be a similar inclination to seek the use of their money for greater benefit.

One of the witnesses called to the Select Committee was John D'Alton, an Irish barrister, who had been investigating the original foundations

of the Diocesan, Royal and other public schools. Although he had received accurate figures and statements as far as the administrators were aware, he discovered that there was more money available than the Commissioners realised. "I think they who returned them were not aware of all the funds given to those establishments; but as far as they profess to state, I think them pretty accurate." He felt that particulars had been "suppressed" from the Commissioners. "I think there has been a great deal of concealment as regards charitable bequests in Ireland."⁸⁴

Wyse prompted the suggestion that these institutions could be placed under the more effective control of a Board of National Education, to guarantee better supervision of the private bequests. D'Alton concurred with his opinion. He thought this would represent considerable savings in the administration of the funds and a central Board would create a more effective diffusion of education. The arrangement would prevent abuses and consolidate the educational charities belonging to each locality. The existing conditions allowed the endowment of one place or region with several separate sums, which then necessitated distinct, expensive and conflicting establishments. D'Alton believed that a central government body would be a comparatively smaller administration with proportionately reduced expenditure. It would remove the wasteful foundation of competing institutions and bring greater advantage to the progress of education in general.⁸⁵

By far the most important witness was James Simpson, an "Advocate at the Scotch bar", an educationist and author of The Necessity of Popular Education as a National Object, who was examined most thoroughly on 31st July, then on the 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, and 10th August. Simpson offered opinions upon the whole range of education, from infant to academic level. His references to Ireland were secondary to his general appreciation of education as a national concept with a national,

central administration. To assist with the financing of education, he also favoured the re-allocation of charity money towards the national benefit. Because Simpson's evidence had implications beyond mere Irish concerns, in addition to the Irish Select Committee Report, it was immediately included, in its entirety, as an appendix to the equivalent English Select Committee of Inquiry Report, published in 1836.⁸⁶

Simpson's ideas were aimed primarily at the seat of government and the publication of his examination in two reports was an attempt to maximise their impact. He proposed a central administrative framework, which would incorporate Ireland and Britain.

"I should wish to see, 1st., a Minister of Public Instruction, as the organ of the Government and the general superintendent of the national system; 2nd., I should wish to see a Board of Commissioners appointed by the King's Viceroy, which should be constituted upon a very impartial and liberal choice of highly-qualified persons."⁸⁷

This went beyond the Irish experiment of a Board of Education. Simpson's scheme proposed to vest education with the importance of a Government office. The Board of Commissioners were to be responsible to Parliament and obliged to report to the House at pre-arranged intervals, upon the progress of education in the country. The Board would have all the expected powers to establish schools, subject to conditions to be defined, including Normal Schools for the training of teachers. Teachers would receive their certificates of qualification from the Board but Simpson suggested that it might be better to appoint independent examiners directly by the Crown, through the Minister of Public Instruction. The Board would still retain the authority to appoint inspectors of schools.⁸⁸

Simpson, in addition, promoted with open enthusiasm the intrinsic value of schooling and encouraged its expansion. "I hold that education

should be free to all ranks of the community who choose to accept it."⁸⁹

"Education is not merely a direct benefit to the individual, who receives it, but it is an inestimable, though indirect blessing to the public."⁹⁰

His proposed structure for the administration of education in part vindicated the Irish experiment by the inclusion of a Board of Commissioners and an inspectorate. The final report of the Select Committee, presented on 9th August, 1838, and composed by Thomas Wyse was critical, however, of the existing school system in Ireland.⁹¹ The report recommended a National Board, which would be an improvement upon the system in operation at the time. The proposals suggested that in addition to the honorary members, there should also be a certain number of salaried Commissioners, one for each department of the Board's activities. To the Board would be conferred the publishing, purchasing, training and supervisory powers⁹² embodied in most suggestions since 1828. These regulations would be brought into effect by a series of bills:-

1. A Bill to dissolve the present Board of Commissioners entrusted with the management of the Diocesan, Royal and other schools of public foundation, and to constitute a Board of National Education;
2. A Bill for the establishment and maintenance of elementary, education in Ireland;
3. A Bill to establish and maintain academical, collegiate and professional education in Ireland.
4. A Bill to establish and maintain libraries, institutions, museums, etc., or of subsidiary education in Ireland.⁹³

No immediate action was taken and the current Irish Board continued to function. There had been a parallel Committee of Inquiry instituted by the House of Lords, which might have reduced the impact of Wyse's

Select Committee. The demand of the Select Committees had certainly averted the attention of the Board, who were unable to make their normal report.⁹⁴ There had also been some self-examination and recommendations for changes from within the Board. They had suggested administrative improvements and in a paper, presented to the Irish Government in 1834, proposed the division of Ireland into school districts, a Model School in each, a strict system of local superintendence and the abolition of the existing plan of inspection, which they thought expensive and defective. The creation of a Normal Establishment was deemed essential if the National Schools were to be placed under persons of a superior class.⁹⁵ Grants were allocated but the Normal School was not expected to be complete until 1839. The Board were still looking to the future and, in 1838, went through a close examination of their whole administration by a special committee, which found very little cause for complaint or alteration, the main advice being the institution of a standing committee of finance, to provide a tighter rein on expenditure, instead of vesting all in an individual.⁹⁶

The Board produced some figures which showed that the Government was receiving better value for its expenditure than had previously been the case. In 1826, the Report to the Commissioners gave the attendance in schools to which the state gave aid as 69,638. The amount in grants the previous year was equal to £68,718 "whereas the number of children in education under us is upwards of 169,000 and the grant for the year (1838) is £50,000."⁹⁷

These considerations might have contributed to the inertia which greeted Wyse's Irish proposals. On 23rd March, 1836, his third attempt to pass a bill to regularise the Irish National Board, suffered the fate of the previous attempts, despite a cordial reception and apparent

Government approbation.⁹⁸ By this time, Wyse might have realised that he was unlikely to make any more headway in Ireland and would need to diversify his promotion of education. He was very active in England during the mid-thirties. Wyse attended British Association meetings and in 1836 his book Education Reform was published with its strong advocacy of a national system of education. The Select Committee was in progress and Wyse was rising to prominence. With the decline of Roebuck as Radical leader on education in Parliament, the experience gained in Ireland allowed Wyse to move to the forefront of the Radicals' promotion of a national system. This increased in momentum with the formation of the Central Society of Education,⁹⁹ in which Wyse was instrumental again.

The membership of the Central Society included a strong contingent of Radical colleagues from Parliament, all committed to a policy to promote national education. Wyse was able to bring the strength of his Irish experience to combine with strong Radical support. From this point, 1836, he began to push more and more for a Board of Education in England.¹⁰⁰ He must have realised that the Radicals offered greater political influence for the creation of a Board in London and that once the Government could be persuaded to assume central control, this would inevitably incorporate Ireland or necessitate a separate government department.

Notes to Chapter Ten

1. G.L. Smyth, Ireland: historical and statistical, Vol.III, p.211.
2. *ibid.*, p.218.
3. *ibid.*, p.218-219.
4. *ibid.*, p.224.
5. See Ch.1, p.17.
6. G.L. Smyth, *op.cit.*, p.228.
7. *ibid.*, p.229.
8. Edgeworth was a Rousseauist and his Essays on Practical Education, gained prestige on the Continent. With Priestley and Thomas Day, he advanced radical educational and social ideas in The History of Sandford and Merton 1738-89.
9. A. Paterson, The Edgeworths, p.17.
10. *ibid.*
11. G.L. Smyth, *op.cit.*, p.217.
12. See Ch.7, p.194.
13. P.P., 1809, VII, p.470.
14. *ibid.*, pp.470-471.
15. P.P., 1814, VI, Fourteenth Report of the Commissioners of the Board of Education in Ireland, pp.221-222.
16. *ibid.*, p.224.
17. *ibid.*, p.225.
18. *ibid.*, p.221.
19. *ibid.*, p.222.
20. *ibid.*, p.226.
21. H.B. Binns, *op.cit.*, p.48, also J.J. Auchmuty, Irish Education: A Historical Survey, pp.60-61.
22. P.P., 1814/15, VI, Report from Committee on Petition for promoting the Education of the Poor in Ireland, p.1749.
23. For the full text of the Report, See Appendix IV.
24. J.J. Auchmuty, *op.cit.*, p.61, and G.L. Smyth, *op.cit.*, pp.229-230.

25. B.F.S.S. Report, June 3, 1815, Appendix K "Extract from the Debate in the House of Commons on the Irish Budget, June 16, 1815", pp.67-68.
26. *ibid.*, p.68.
27. *ibid.*, p.69.
28. P.P., 1824, XXI, Account of the Expenditure of the various Sums granted by Parliament... for the Purposes of Education in Ireland, p.406.
29. *ibid.*, p.408.
30. B.F.S.S. Report, December 12th, 1816, p.7.
"The Society for promoting the Education of the Poor of Ireland, established in Dublin in the year 1811 under the patronage of the Duke of Kent" had limited funds originally but "has already extended its beneficial operations over a wide field." More than 100 schools had been established or assisted and 18 masterstrained during the fourth year of its existence. The last report had shown increasing funds but also "the liberal parliamentary grant of £6,980 to be applied to the formation of a Model School, and the establishment of a Seminary for the Instruction of Masters," which was "in a state of progress."
31. *ibid.*, p.73.
32. *ibid.*, p.74.
33. B.F.S.S. Report, May 1817, p.29.
34. *ibid.*, p.28.
35. William Allen, Life, Vol.I, p.169, 24th April, 1820, "With Samuel Bewley to school society house in Kildare Street." Vol. II, p.425, 6th November, 1820, "Visited the school at Kildare Street. Met Samuel Bewley, and went over the whole educational establishment, great additions have been made. It is now very complete and a noble concern." 200 masters and 100 mistresses were sent out last year.
36. P.P., 1834, p.21, Henry Dunn, questioned before Roebuck's Select Committee, explained that "the children have access to a school library, of which they avail themselves with great avidity. That library consists of books published by the Kildare-street society, and such others as may be approved by the committee.
37. See Ch.3, p.84, Ch.6, p.173 and Ch.8, p.222.
38. P.P., 1831/32, XXIX, Copy of a letter from the Chief Secretary for Ireland, to His Grace the Duke of Leinster.
39. *ibid.*
40. Add.Mss., 40331 f167, Peel Papers CLI, Letter to H. Goulburn, Whitehall, Oct. 7th, 1825.

41. Add. Mss., 4033, f.171, Copy Most Confidential, addition to Letter to Goulbourn.
42. *ibid.*
43. Add. Mss., 40331, f.167.
44. P.P., 1828, IV, Report from Select Committee on Education in Ireland, p.225.
45. *ibid.*, p.224, from the same Report, p.224, Parliamentary Expenditure

	£	s.	d.
Charter Schools	1,105,869		
Foundling Hospital	820,005	3	4
Assoc. for discountenancing Vice	101,991	18	6
Kildare Place Society	170,508		
Lord Lieutenant's Fund	40,998		
Maynooth College	271,869	18	6
Belfast Institution	4,155		
Cork Institution	43,710		
Hibernian School	240,356	1	6
Marine School	64,262	10	9
Female Orphan School	50,414	10	9

46. *ibid.*, pp.226-227.
47. *ibid.*, p.227.
48. James Murphy, The Religious Problem in English Education, p.23
49. *ibid.*, Also J.J. Auchmuty, Sir Thomas Wyse 1791-1862, p.135.
50. John Cosgrove, *op.cit.*, Quotation of Letter to Mr. Doyle, 30th November, 1830, p.97.
51. J.J. Auchmuty, Sir Thomas Wyse, p.152.
52. James Murphy, *op.cit.*, p.23, also R. Whately, Tracts, p.226.
53. E.R., 1833, CXVII, October, p.16.
54. R. Whately, *op.cit.*, p.227.
55. James Murphy, *op.cit.*, p.24, P.P., 1831, I, 491, Bill for the Establishment and Maintenance of Parochial Schools, and the Advancement of the Education of the People in Ireland. "That a Board, to be called or designated 'The Board of National Education' shall... be established in Dublin, to which shall be entrusted the superintendence, controul (sic) and direction of all and every the Schools which may hereafter be established or maintained in Ireland under the Provisions of this Act." The Board was recommended to constitute "of one moiety Protestant, or of Protestants, Presbyterians, and other Dissenters, and the other moiety Catholic, that is to say,

of the Protestant Archbishop of Dublin, of the Catholic or titular Archbishop of the same, of the Provost of the College of the Holy and Undivided Trinity near Dublin, of the President of the Royal College of Maynooth, and of the Moderator of the School of Ulster - laymen from Dublin and - from each respectively of the four provinces of Ireland". pp.491-492.

56. J.J. Auchmuty, Irish Education, p.90.
57. P.P., 1831/32, XXIX, p.757.
58. ibid., p.758.
59. P.P., 1837, IX, Report of Select Committee on Plan of Education, Ireland, p.8.
60. P.P., 1831/32, XXIX, p.759.
61. R. Whately, op.cit., Memorial of the Clergy of the Diocese of Derry, p.210.
62. ibid., p.205, Address of the clergy of Dublin.
63. ibid., p.213, Observations of the bishops.
64. See Ch.1, p.21, and Ch.2, p.48, and Ch.6, p.171.
65. R. Whately, op.cit., p.215.
66. ibid., p.218.
67. ibid., pp.159-160.
68. ibid., pp.152-153.
69. James Murphy, op.cit., p.28.
70. See Ch.9, p.255.
71. James Murphy, op.cit., pp.28-29.
72. P.P., 1834, XL, p.55, First Report of the Commissioners appointed by the Lord Lieutenant to administer the Funds granted by Parliament for the Education of the Poor of Ireland.
73. ibid., p.56.
74. P.P., XXXV, Second Report of the commissioners of National Education in Ireland, p.37. The signatures were broken down into... "140 are those of clergymen of the Established Church; 180 of Presbyterian clergymen; 1,397 of Roman Catholic clergymen; 6,915 of Protestant laymen; and 8,630 of Roman Catholic laymen."
75. ibid.

77. W.R., Vol.XX, No,XL, April 1, 1834, p.323.
78. See Ch.1, p,22 and Ch.3, p, 89.
79. E.R., Vol.LXV, April, 1837, No.CXXXI, p.246.
80. J.J. Auchmuty, Irish Education, pp.91-92.
81. *ibid.*, p.92.
82. See Ch.6, p.183 Speech in the Lords.
83. See Ch.7, p.194.
84. P.P., 1836, XIII, Report from the Select Committee on Foundation Schools and Education in Ireland, p.77.
85. *ibid.*, p.78.
86. See Ch.3, p.93.
87. P.P., 1836, XIII, p.226.
88. *ibid.*,
89. *ibid.*, p.215.
90. *ibid.*, p.217.
91. J.J. Auchuty, Irish Education, p.94.
92. *ibid.*, pp.96-97, 1) The power to purchase, lease and hold land for public use;
 2) The power to build schools, houses for teachers, school offices etc.;
 3) The power to outfit - at least in the first instance;
 4) The power to prescribe regulations for the management of the schools;
 5) The power to educate teachers;
 6) The power to act as publishers, and in cases of necessity, to distribute school requisites gratuitously.
93. *ibid.*, p.99.
94. P.P., 1837/38, XXVIII, Fourth Report of the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland, p,51.
95. *ibid.*
96. P.P., 1839, XVI, Fifth Report of the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland, Appendix I, Report of the Committee appointed to Inquire into the Liabilities of the Board, and the Funds applicable to the Discharge of them, and to report thereon, and to state the purposes to which the Surplus at the Command of the Board should be applied. p.361.

97. *ibid.*, Report, p.353.
98. J.J. Auchmuty, Irish Education, pp.99-100.
99. See Ch.3, p.97, and Ch.9, p.268.
100. See Ch.11, p.322.

CHAPTER 11

Conclusion

Amid the writing and comment upon education during the first four decades of the nineteenth century, it is possible to identify specific groups which united people of similar sentiments to pressurise government for a permanent national system of education. Each represented a segment of public concern for the dissemination of education which gradually built up over the years. As isolated organisations, the government could afford to ignore them but the cumulative effect of their agitation eventually produced results. Support for education came from the highest in society, witnessed by the royal patronage of the British and National Societies, as well as from the more intelligent of the working class. The smaller groups sometimes gained weight to their opinion by uniting within larger bodies such as the British and National Societies and the later Central Society of Education.

Primarily, the extension of education was directed in favour of the poor, who could not afford school fees, would not pay them, or who took no natural interest in the possible benefits of education. Religious, philosophical, political or philanthropic motives then presented the nation with a pre-occupation with the problems of the expanding population of the poor, needing periodic revision of the Poor Law. Historically, education had been viewed as a partial remedy for the crime and excesses of the ignorant. The eighteenth century Charity Schools and many endowed schools were established mainly to provide for children of the poor. Sunday Schools were another attempt to instil some religious and moral standards among the undisciplined lower orders. Major surveys by Sir Thomas Gilbert in 1786 and Sir Frederic Morton Eden in 1797 attempted to catalogue the state of provision for poor relief with a view

to a reform of the law. The Pauper Returns of 1803 estimated an annual expenditure on the poor, combined with Church and county rates, of £5,302,071 2s4½d¹ which represented a considerable financial strain upon the system of poor relief. Therefore, it was essential to seek some method of reducing the problem without increasing expense.

The speculative suggestions among Continental writers for national education were too revolutionary for the English establishment, which responded with a defensive attitude to educational expansion. The French Encyclopaedia, for example, recommended the replacement of Church control with a state system. In England, the Church closely guarded her prerogative to guide the education of the people.² Although many literary men expressed opinions upon education, few presented practical recommendations which the administration could adopt without creating alarm that the balance of society would be disturbed. Among the writers in the early years of the century was one who offered a pragmatic attitude to the poor as a whole but concluded that an essential ingredient for any solution had to be a government controlled system of education.

The Scot, Patrick Colquhoun, a Westminster magistrate, wrote A Treatise on Indigence in 1806, in which he examined the problem created by the poor and offered his solutions. He was clear in distinguishing between poverty and indigence. Poverty was not the evil. He thought it essential to any civilization that a level of poverty should exist for it was from that stratum that labour was provided. Poverty was defined as the possession of no property other than the fruits of labour, which occupied most of a man's life. Without that labour, no other members of society would benefit from the conveniences or luxuries of life. Therefore, the working poor were not the real problem. The level below poverty, which Colquhoun described as "indigence", was the major source

of all society's problems. The indigent were those who had dropped from the labour market, were totally dependent upon poor relief and among whom habits of crime and drunkenness were profligate.³

Colquhoun blamed bad education for the problems of indigence and was convinced that any system which sought to remedy the problems of the poor ought to include provision for national education. Any recommendations, he claimed, would be "nugatory and ineffectual, unless the general design shall comprehend the rising generation."⁴ The failure to provide that limited portion of education permitted the growth of social ills. Colquhoun offered a plan which did not pose a threat to the social hierarchy yet involved the support of the Legislature. He recommended the creation of a Board of Education, to establish schools in all parishes of the kingdom and to superintend all aspects of their administration, but some responsibility would be devolved upon a local management committee. The financial arrangements were such that a small fee would be charged according to the number of children sent to the school but the parish overseers would be able to pay part or the whole if some parents could not afford the levy. There was a proposed element of compulsion which would deprive persons of their claim to parochial relief if they neglected or refused to send their children to a national school. Their entitlement would be reduced to casual relief until they complied. General expenses were to be defrayed from the assessments for the poor in the parish and so no additional financial burdens were envisaged.⁵

Although the Board would be responsible to Parliament, its members would have been "the right reverend, the bishops and a certain number of laymen."⁶ The Church, therefore, would have retained primacy in the direction of affairs. This was reinforced by Colquhoun's advocacy of

Dr. Bell's Madras System, which he supported in a second publication in 1806, A New and Appropriate System.⁷ He envisaged some degree of uniformity in his proposed administration and nominated one system only.

Here was a clear set of proposals for a national system of education from a figure in authority. He offered no designs to disrupt society. In fact, Colquhoun expressed a Utilitarian⁸ perspective in accepting that the happiness of the poor depended upon the happiness of the wealthy ranks of society, too. Therefore, the level of education he anticipated would not be designed to elevate the position of the poor and upset their superiors. All that was required was sufficient instruction

"to give their minds a right bias; a strong sense of religion and moral honesty; a horror of vice, and a love of virtue, sobriety, and industry, a disposition to be satisfied with their lot; and a proper sense of loyalty and subordination, as the strongest barrier that can be raised against vice and idleness, the never-failing precursors of indigence and criminal offences."⁹

When Samuel Whitbread shortly followed Colquhoun with an attempt to introduce education through Poor Law legislation,¹⁰ he also hoped to educate the poor to such a standard that they would be ashamed to seek poor relief, but his key phrase to "elevate character" probably frightened potential supporters as much as consideration of expense or the replacement of Church control. Similarly, Robert Owen,¹¹ probably went too far for those in power with his proposals for the general advancement of the working classes. While successful in planting ideas, Owen's rejection of the role of religious organisations destroyed any prospect of the general acceptance of his plans. He presented such an elaborate alternative to the social norm that he overstepped Colquhoun's simple parameters of religious and moral education. Colquhoun had cautioned that "to exceed that point would be utopian, impolitic and

dangerous."¹² The Utilitarians were content with these guidelines with regard to children's education but, with Radical concern for political rights, pushed beyond this simple boundary to include adult education.

In suggesting the continued dominance of the Established Church, Colquhoun could not have appreciated the degree of interest among the Dissenter traditions, which led to division and the destruction of the idea of one system. The British and Foreign School Society was formed to protect the principles of the varied religious denominations outside the Established Church. After the rejection of Whitbread's legislation in 1807, education was left to the initiative of supporters to organise themselves. The National Society was formed to protect the interests of the Church of England in the increased establishment of schools, with both major societies relying upon the ability of localities to raise their own finances. Colquhoun had warned that the objective of a national system was "too gigantic for the efforts of private benevolence" yet this was the principle upon which societies proceeded to operate. Their existence represented a half-way measure between supporters of National Education and government reticence to become involved.

While the National Society was content with its dominant position, the rival B.F.S.S. challenged the strength of the Church and provided a focus of unity for the smaller, separate groups. The joining forces of religious, Utilitarians, Radicals and Members of Parliament under the banner of the B.F.S.S. gave strength to the society's progress and pressure for government support. When Brougham's Bill failed in 1820,¹³ however, the B.F.S.S. withdrew from political pressure, affirmed its confidence in the voluntary principle and settled down to establish its share of the educational field. The government was content to leave education in the hands of the British and National Societies but this

policy only created problems for the future when intervention would prove necessary. By allowing the two societies to establish a firm grip on schools, there were difficulties in government taking over these developments and in reconciling religious differences.

For more than twenty years, the expansion of the two societies represented the main educational provision in England. Their successful development and organisation for a time persuaded Brougham that government intervention was unnecessary. In 1833, the Government acknowledged the ability of the British and National Societies by delegating to them the responsibility for the distribution of the Treasury grant. Despite their good work, however, the concession of the £20,000 to assist the development of schools was also an acknowledgement that the limited resources of the societies presented difficulties in maintaining expansion to meet the growing needs of the country. The government grant only favoured affluent, energetic country areas whose Anglican parsons and squires had more substance to spend than Dissenting ministers and entrepreneurs.¹⁴ By comparison, the poor in towns and cities could not raise funds for an equal share of the facilities of the British and National Societies. The Societies could only teach the children whose families could afford the fees, valued education and, therefore were not the major concern. The indigent had neither the means nor the intention of paying school fees and did not attend. Since most social problems concerned this group, the work of the Societies still failed to reach the people they aimed to educate. In 1833, the Edinburgh Review verified Colquhoun's earlier prediction with the conclusion that "the exertions of the two societies" had "scarcely kept pace with the increase of the population during the last 10 years."¹⁵ The inadequacy of the voluntary principle alone became a theme in the renewed debate on education during the 1830's.

Colquhoun also represented those who regarded education as a useful

instrument to safeguard the security of the state. In which case, he was adamant that developments should be carefully superintended, particularly when governing the levels of "vulgar life." It necessitated the attention of politicians. "It is one of those regulations of internal police, which, in the present state of society, can never be safely left to the operation of accident."¹⁶ This advice was not heeded. The administration of education was left to local committees of education societies or whoever could organise themselves.

The working classes acquired knowledge without a formal educational administration, relying upon the organisational initiative of a few of their number. The poor were not a single group and the simple education available did not satisfy the interests of them all. An able minority made their own advances in learning. These men possessed skills, intelligence, discipline and material prosperity which separated them from the pauper class and the majority of the labouring poor. The leaders of Owenite schemes, working men's associations and the Chartists were craftsmen, artisans, journalists and publishers, not the ignorant poor who sank into habitual drunkenness and crime. The fear was that these skilled men would become susceptible to subversive ideas, use their learning to manipulate their fellows and disrupt society.¹⁷ The "accidental" progress of working class movements confirmed Colquhoun's forebodings as they fell prey to agitators and political aspirations. The working class adults organised their own short-term endeavours which, because of their threat to the established order, required a response from those eager to exercise more control over their minds. Therefore, during the 1820's, there arose the promotion of adult education through Mechanics' Institutes, the S.D.U.K., and the new university colleges in London.¹⁸ Colquhoun was sceptical of effecting any change upon the morals or habits of adults. He preferred to influence the infant mind¹⁹ and reap

the benefits when the younger generation reached maturity. While he did not hold much hope for the success of adult education, he felt, nevertheless, that it was "indispensably necessary to lead the human mind towards useful pursuits."²⁰ Therefore, he might have found some affinity with the Utilitarian and Henry Brougham-inspired campaign for the diffusion of useful knowledge, but the degree to which this influenced the expansion of children's education can only be speculative.

In the same way that the B.F.S.S. united the educational aspirations of several groups, there were key individuals who interpenetrated the various developments. Francis Place was the organiser of early working class activities and then the Radical movement. He drew the Radicals into the B.F.S.S. when he joined the committee. Place was involved in the promotion of the Mechanics' Institutes and the campaign against the taxes on knowledge. James Mill linked the Utilitarians to the B.F.S.S. and then the promotion of adult education through his support of the S.D.U.K. and University College. Thomas Wyse later provided the connection between the Radicals, Ireland and the Central Society of Education. The part played by these men in uniting supporters of education gave its promotion added weight.

Henry Brougham, sometime acquaintance and colleague of Mill and Place, was central to the public projection of pressure from different groups for the expansion of education. He was an important pressure figure until about 1830.²¹ His prominent role in the development of the B.F.S.S. was demonstrated when the Lancasterians called upon him to help solve their problems in 1810. He did much to fashion the organisation of the society and to draw in support. From the background of this society, he was able to provide an influential channel through which the subject of education was given a public voice. Through his writing and political badgering, he kept education to the fore. His work in

Parliament was invaluable in maintaining political attention and achieving government commitment to investigation of the subject. His 1816 Select Committee was a revealing examination of the state of schools in the capital and was an important breakthrough in uncovering unused and abused charitable endowments.²² The evidence of surplus funds was offered as an incentive to the administration to initiate central control without incurring further expense. The revelations of the Charity Commissions tempted some men to believe that the money tied up in endowments could finance a national system but pre-occupation with this idea probably delayed the intervention of government. By the end of the thirties, the Radicals and others realised that the charity funds would not provide sufficient investment. To attempt to interfere with endowments would have entailed legal tangles, delays and resulted in the alienation of a conservative section of society.

Brougham was instrumental in the development of different activities. As well as the B.F.S.S., he was a strong advocate of adult education, the expansion of Mechanics' Institutes, the S.D.U.K. and the broader education of the middle and upper classes with the foundation of University College. Some of the recommendations in his treatise, Practical Observations, for banks, friendly societies and circulating libraries were only a reflection of the ideas circulated earlier by Colquhoun²³ and Joseph Lancaster.²⁴ Colquhoun had acknowledged the ability of the labouring classes to organise themselves, for example, into friendly societies, but he was also conscious of their weaknesses. He feared that friendly societies permitted the rise of minor demagogues, interested more in power than the welfare of their brethren. Sometimes the poverty of organisation left the control of funds in the hands of landlords of public houses, which facilitated the growth of problems associated with drunkenness.

To some extent, Brougham shared another common interest with Colquhoun. In A Treatise on Indigence, Colquhoun made frequent allusions to the success of the Scottish system of education, which had received the approbation of the British Legislature.²⁵ His attempt to draw a similar commitment for the poor of England did not bring results. Brougham also spoke favourably of Scottish education and adapted the Scottish university curriculum to the new university in London.²⁶ Further Scottish influence was felt during the 1830's with the writings of the Scots Professor Pillans and James Simpson and their examination by Select Committees.²⁷

Brougham declined from his position of influence during the 1830's, primarily because he altered his belief in the necessity for government to take responsibility for education. Apart from the fact that his tenure of government office in Grey's administration gave him different responsibilities, he became convinced that government interference would be a retrograde step which would destroy the expansion which had progressed on voluntary assistance alone. Although he was probably the prime mover in the £20,000 grant to the two major societies in 1833, this could have been a diversionary move to delay government supervision by propping up the voluntary system for the time being. In a debate on Irish education in 1828, Mr. Spring-Rice proclaimed that "there was nothing more common in Parliamentary tactics, than to get rid of a troublesome question by moving for a commission."²⁸ The proliferation of select committees on education in the 1830's which led to nothing productive would seem to suggest that there were attempts to defer the necessity of government interference.

Brougham lost credibility with education supporters. Some Radicals were openly pleased at his fall from office and that he was overlooked by subsequent administrations.²⁹ Nevertheless, Brougham retained his

connection with the B.F.S.S. and tried to revive his reputation with renewed promotion of educational legislation. At the 1835 Annual General Meeting of the British Society, he could still provide examples of the unsatisfactory state of education, even among the alleged superiors to the poor. He spoke of a parish overseer in the West Country who could not read, write or cipher and was obliged to sign his name with a mark. The same man controlled £7,000 of parish money.³⁰ In the House of Lords in 1835, he called for a Board of Education and the use of surplus charity funds to finance his proposals. Later, he collaborated with Lord John Russell to try to formulate a Bill which would prove acceptable, but this was not successful. His sudden resurgence in the field of education could have been allied to his desire for a return to a position in government, but this he never achieved, while the major influences now came from other pressure groups.

The 1830's were dominated by the Statistical Societies,³¹ the Radicals, who were now politically stronger, the working class movements and the developments in Ireland. The circumstances of the thirties were beyond the vision of Colquhoun at the beginning of the century, for the political aspect of education had grown, particularly after the 1832 Reform Bill. The working-class associations illustrated the increasing political awareness of the lower orders, uncontrolled and, with the transition to Chartism, too dangerous a proposition to be ignored. The activities of the working classes in the provinces also helped to create the impression that a uniform system, with central administration, might bring about a level of stability.

The Statistical Societies were important to drive home to the Legislature the fact that its attitude to education was wrong, that it had an erroneous appreciation of the state of education in the country. The development of these societies in the provinces

made the capital aware that it was possibly detached from the reality of the nation's condition and was no longer the centre of initiative. The Statistical Societies united the religious and philanthropically-motivated educationists with men of learning and stature to impress the administrators with data on conditions which required the intervention of government.

By far the greatest impact, however, was achieved by the political wing of the Radical movement. The Radicals had increased their membership in Parliament after 1832. First, the more extreme John Roebuck fronted their political pressure for education, followed by the more rational Thomas Wyse. Roebuck revived Parliament's interest in 1833, occasioning the government decision to grant £20,000 towards the expansion of education, which he followed with two Select Committees. Thomas Wyse brought the experience of the Irish developments before the House and, from the experiment in that province, proclaimed the feasibility of a National Board.

Ireland had long experienced parliamentary assistance because of the peculiar circumstances of the country. Ireland had such an impoverished population and a society primarily based upon agriculture that there was a deficiency in men of initiative to help the country. In England, the transition to industrialisation had seen the rise of men with the philosophy and determination to give rein to their independent efforts. Ireland had been granted a Board of Education to make up for the weaknesses in voluntary provision. If Parliament hesitated in establishing a Government Board in England, it was probably because the country had no experience of a central system of administration for education. The propaganda regarding successful French and Prussian systems only contributed to the uncertainty and the fear of failure if an English scheme proved impractical. In the meantime, the religious societies

had established a major hold upon schools, which added the complication of how to unite religious differences under one system. The creation of the Irish Board provided the opportunity to examine the application of a system which would suite the administration of England and which attempted to reconcile different religious principles.

Thomas Wyse presented the Irish role model to Parliament. He thought it eminently practical to establish a government-controlled system in England as well as Ireland. He was so firmly convinced of the wisdom of this idea that he switched from trying to make permanent the Irish Board to concentrate upon promoting a Government department in England. Apart from engaging Parliament with the success of the Irish experiment, Wyse helped to build the Central Society of Education,³² whose primary aim was to promote the idea of a national system. This was by far the most influential pressure group, because, like the B.F.S.S. in earlier years, it united the main advocates of the establishment of a national system. The C.S.E. carried more weight than any previous group because of its single purpose and because it drew upon the major influences in the thirties, the Statistical Societies and the Radical politicians. The President and Vice-President of the Statistical Society, London, were members, a large number of Radical M.P.'s, too, and because there was no religious exclusion, the C.S.E. was able to unite any supporter of education. There was no partisan concern other than national and no intention to establish separate schools to be managed by the Society. The sole purpose of the C.S.E. was to see the creation of a national system. The Society also returned to Colquhoun's principle in rejecting the voluntary system. Although the British and National Societies had done much to provide education, the voluntary principle had achieved as much as it could. To create a truly national system of education, the C.S.E. demanded direct government involvement.

As leader of the C.S.E. and Radical spokesman in the Commons, Wyse presented several petitions for National Education in England.³³

There on 14th June, 1838, he moved

"An Address to Her Majesty, that she will graciously be pleased to appoint a Board of Commissioners of Education in England, with the view, especially of providing for the wise equitable and efficient application of sums granted, or to be granted, for the advancement of education of teachers in accord with the intentions already expressed by the Legislature."³⁴

By comparing the proportion of the educated with the uneducated in England and other countries, Wyse happened on the coincidence of recent unfavourable data on the educational standards of criminals³⁵ which emphasized the importance of his proposals for society.

The Government began to take notice. On 12th February, 1839, Lord John Russell, Secretary of State for Home affairs, announced to the House that the Queen had appointed a Committee of Privy Council to distribute whatsoever funds the House might see fit to set aside for the purpose of education. The timing took some of the wind from Wyse's sails as he was about to promote another Bill. His motion for the appointment of a Board of Education was made on 20th February, 1839 but he immediately withdrew it since the Government felt that it had already dealt with his request.³⁶

During the 1830's, government showed some inclination towards different attitudes. After declining political fortunes, the Whig party experienced a revival with the creation of Grey's administration in 1830. The passing of the 1832 Reform Bill aroused anticipation that more liberal measures would be introduced and the Poor Law of 1834 indicated that the administration might be more willing to intervene in social concerns. The Radicals took advantage to press the government to assume responsibility for education. The benevolence of individuals had achieved a good deal but the expanding population required the major

investment of government, financially and administratively, to keep up with developments. The Whig principle, however, was that the State should only encourage, not supersede, local efforts. While respecting existing institutions, they sought to avoid placing excessive power in the hands of the established Churches.³⁷

Against these criteria, the Whig administrations had to balance their desire to remain in power especially when their position in the Commons was weak. Grey's government began to lose control of the House of Commons after the Reform Bill was passed.³⁸ When Grey resigned in July 1834, the King, William IV, rejected Melbourne's reconstructed Whig government. From 1835, the Whigs remained in power, but precariously, not through a position of strength in the Commons and faced by a hostile House of Lords. In 1836, the Lords amended the Irish Tithes, Irish Corporations and English Municipal Corporations Amendment Bills so drastically that the government had to abandon them.³⁹

With the accession of the new queen, Victoria, in 1837, the Whigs only remained in power because of the monarch's patronage, despite the country's preference for a prospectively stronger Conservative administration. This culminated in the Bedchamber Crisis of 1839, when Melbourne resigned but the queen refused to accept Peel's Conservatives, preferring to retain her Whig favourites, in particular her Whig ladies at court.⁴⁰ Therefore, Melbourne continued in office until 1841.

During the later years of the 1830's, in need of promoting practical domestic improvements to maintain the impression of an effective government, Russell, as Home Secretary, turned to education.⁴¹ The B.F.S.S. had petitioned for a fairer share of the government grant. The renewed vitality of National Society supporters in the Commons presented an obstacle but the moderate Radicals had also gained strength after

the 1837 elections. Through the 1838 Select Committee on Education, Robert Aglionby Slaney tried to obtain the agreement of both the British and National Societies to a board of education which would inspect schools and administer the government grant.⁴² Neither side accepted and therefore the Select Committee's report was inconclusive.⁴³ Nevertheless, the increasing likelihood of the National Society proceeding with its own national plan, based upon the domination of the Church of England, encouraged Russell to respond to the other pressures to propose government involvement which would balance secular and Dissenter interests as well.

Notes to Chapter 11

1. P. Colquhoun, A Treatise on Indigence, p.57.
2. See Ch.2, p.38ff.
3. P. Colquhoun, op.cit., pp.7-8.
4. ibid., p.140.
5. ibid., pp.153-155.
6. ibid., p.150.
7. ibid., p.157, and Introductory Advertisement.
8. See Ch.3, p.70ff.
9. P. Colquhoun, op.cit., pp.141-143.
10. See Ch.1, p.10.
11. See Ch.4, p.109.
12. P. Colquhoun, op.cit., p.148.
13. See Ch.1, p.20, Ch.2, p.48, and Ch.6, p.
14. D.G. Paz, op.cit., p.42.
15. E.R., CXVII, Oct. 1833, p.7.
16. P. Colquhoun, op.cit., p.149.
17. See Ch.5, p.
18. See. Ch.8, p.214.
19. P. Colquhoun, op.cit., p.256.
20. ibid., p.150.
21. See Ch.6, p.158.
22. See Ch.7, p.194.
23. P. Colquhoun, op.cit., p.259.
24. See Ch.2, p.33ff.
25. P. Colquhoun, op.cit., p.141 and 257.
26. See Ch.8.
27. See Ch.3, p.93, Ch.6, p.182 and Ch.10, p.299.

28. The Times, 12th March, 1828, 2d.
29. The Reformer, No.2, 23rd April, 1835, "That Lord Brougham has been passed over in the late arrangements is hailed by many Reformers with great satisfaction."
30. The Reformer, No.6, 21st May, 1835.
31. See Ch.9, p.242.
32. See Ch.3, p.97, Ch.9, p.268 and Ch.10, p.303.
33. J.J. Auchmuty, Irish Education, p.105.
34. *ibid.*, p.106.
35. *ibid.*, Unable to read and write 8,464
 Who read and write simply 12,299
 Who read and write well 2,235
 Who had superior ed. 101
36. *ibid.*, pp.106-107.
37. D.G. Paz, *op.cit.*, p.42.
38. See Ch.6, p.176 Broughams letter to Grey expressing concern.
39. Norman Gash, *op.cit.*, p.36.
40. *ibid.*, p.24.
41. D.G. Paz, *op.cit.*, p.78.
42. *ibid.*, p.67.
43. See Ch.1, p.24.

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APPENDIX I

British and Foreign School Society officers in 1814

Patron: Prince Regent
 V. Patrons: Dukes of Kent and Sussex
 President: Duke of Bedford
 Vice Presidents: Marquis of Lansdowne, Marquis of Tavistock,
 Earls: Darnley, Moira, Rosslyn, Fingall, Lords Byron, Carrington,
 Clifford, Eardley, Sir J. Swinburne, Sir S. Romilly M.P., W. Adam Esq.,
 and the following members of Parliament: H. Gratton, F. Horner,
 J. Jackson, J. Smith, W. Smith, S. Whitbread.

Members of the Committee:

David Barclay, Charles Barclay, Henry Brougham, Samuel Bevington,
 T.F. Buxton, Hon Robert Clifford, Rev. Dr. Collyer, William Corston,
 C.S. Dudley, John Evans, Samuel Favell, Jos. Foster, Rev. Alex Fletcher,
 Thomas Flight, John Fell, Sen., B.C. Griffenhoofe, Halsey Janson,
 Rev. John Jones, Rev. Thomas Jones, A.M. Rev. Dr. Lindsay, James Mill,
 Sir James Mackintosh, M.P., John Martineau, J.H. Marten, Henry Newman,
 F. Place, Wm. Prater, Daniel Ricardo, Robert Slade, John Sanderson, Jun.,
 James Skirrow, Knight Spencer, Thomas Sturge, Rev. S.W. Tracey,
 Jos. Fitzwilliam Vandercrom, Samuel Woods, Rev. Mark Wilks, Thomas Wilson.

From: H.B. Binns, A Century of Education, pp.72-73.

APPENDIX II

Extracts from the Memorial to Earl Grey - 14th February, 1834

(B.F.S.S. Minute Book, pp.245-247.)

"These operations having necessarily involved frequent enquiry into the comparative state of different districts of England with regard to Education and thus made your Memorialists acquainted with the actual conditions of the Country, they have from time to time by means of their Reports and other publications, declared their conviction that the existing supply of instruction for the poorer classes is deplorably deficient, both in the densely peopled manufacturing Towns and in the Agricultural districts, it being the firm belief of your Memorialists that the effort of voluntary Societies have not even kept pace with the increase of population.

"Entertaining these views your Memorialists heard with pleasure that the attention of the Government had been directed to this important subject, and hailed with satisfaction a vote which placed at the disposal of His Majesty a sum of money especially set apart for the Promotion of Popular Instruction and bestowed in a way calculated to encourage voluntary effort as well as to secure the faithful and hearty co-operation of the parties benefitted." (p.245).

"Your Memorialists feel they would be guilty of a serious dereliction of duty towards the large and influential body they represent, if they did not in connection with these statements earnestly call the attention of Your Lordship to the absolute necessity which exists that any public provision which may be made for the Education of the Poorer Classes from whatever source, should be based on principles calculated to benefit all classes of the Community without distinction of sect or party.

"So deep is the anxiety manifested on the subject throughout the Country and so painfully is the prevalence of an exclusive system felt, that in numerous instances a strong wish has been expressed that the Nation at large might be called upon to declare by Petition its sense of the inefficiency of any System of education which does not secure equal privileges to all classes of His Majesty's subjects, and provide for the instruction of the whole population on principles fully consistent with the rights of conscience." (p.247).

APPENDIX III

Report on the State of Education in Birmingham. By the Birmingham Statistical Society for the Improvement of Education. Journal of the Statistical Society of London, p.25, Vol.3, 1840.

Government Returns 1833

Description of Schools	Schools	Scholars		Total
		Male	Females	
Infant Schools	12		NOT STATED	781
Charity	21		NOT STATED	2,788
Private	149		NOT STATED	3,774
Total Day and Evening Schools	182			7,343
Sunday Schools	46	7,141	5,738	12,879
Total Number of Scholars	228	20,222

Results of Present Inquiry 1838

Description of Schools	Schools	Scholars		Total
		Male	Female	
Private Infant Schools	3	29	39	68
Dame Schools	267	1,829	2,071	3,900
Common Day Schools	177	2,007	2,273	4,280
Superior Private & Boarding Schools	97	989	1,177	2,166
Supported by Parents	544	4,854		10,414
Charity Schools	26	2,100	1,231	3,331
Infant Schools aided by Public	7	442	293	735
Total Day Schools	577	7,396	7,084	14,480
Evening Schools	36	367	196	563
Total day & Evening Schools	613	7,763	7,280	15,043
Sunday Schools	56	9,284	7,473	16,757
Total	669	17,047	14,753	31,800

APPENDIX IV

Report from Committee on Petition for promoting the Education of The Poor in Ireland. PP. 1814/15, VI, 1749-50.

A member present informed the committee, that the Petitioners are a Voluntary Association, consisting of Persons of various religious Commissions formed towards the close of the year 1811, and engaged in an undertaking, which they conceive to be of the first importance to the moral and political improvement of Ireland; and that the leading principle on which they are pledged to proceed is, to afford the same advantages, with respect to Education, to all classes of Christians, without interfering with the peculiar religious opinions of any: And that the Petitioners conceive that the most efficient means for attaining the object of the Society is to promote the Establishment of well-ordered Schools throughout Ireland; in which the appointment of Governors, Teachers and Scholars shall be uninfluenced by religious distinctions, and in which the Scriptures without note or comment shall be used, excluding all Catechisms and Books of Religious Controversy; And that the Petitioners have hitherto been indebted to the liberality of the Managers of a local School in Dublin, for temporary accommodation in an apartment of their house, which however is in a remote part of the City; yet several Masters have been trained during the last year; who are now introducing the improved System into different Schools scattered throughout Ireland, each of which may, in its turn, become the source of improvement to existing schools in its neighbourhood, and an incitement to the establishment of others upon a good foundation; and that the Petitioners are therefore extremely anxious to be enabled to erect a Building in a public and convenient part of the City of Dublin, adapted to the various purposes of their Institution, which shall contain a Seminary for training Schoolmasters, and also a model School, exhibiting in its operation, a specimen of the improved System of Education recommended by them; and they are desirous that it shall be sufficiently capacious (if hereafter judged necessary or expedient) to accommodate with lodging, such young men coming from remote places as may wish to be educated as Schoolmasters, so that their morals, whilst they are under instruction, may not be exposed to the snares and temptations incident to a Metropolis, and it is their wish also that the model School should afford the means of Education to the Poor Children of some district of Dublin at present inadequately provided in that respect; and that the repository of necessary Articles for the use of Schools should be under the same roof: And that the Petitioners have exerted themselves to obtain funds, from the voluntary Contributions of the Public, sufficient to meet their current Expenses, and also to erect the proposed Building; but in this latter object, they have altogether failed, nor can they indulge the hope of doing anything effectual in this respect without the assistance of Parliament, although they have every reason to expect that their ordinary resources will be adequate to all their other purposes, and it will be so far from diminishing the amount of voluntary Subscriptions, that it will materially contribute to the increase of their income derived from that source.

14 June, 1815