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ABSTRACT

The Development of Elementary Education in Sunderland, 1870 - 1902

Christopher J. Turner.

During the nineteenth century, Sunderland had at one point become the centre of the shipbuilding world. Soon afterwards it began to vie for supremacy in the export of coal. The town pulsed with success. Any obstacles or setbacks were simply removed or overcome. The aim of this thesis, therefore, was to show how Elementary Education developed within such an atmosphere.

In fact, education had grown as a priority within the town during the nineteenth century. When the time came to implement the 1870 Act, a mature decision was taken and in spite of political discord at the first election the School Board began the work of preparing the ground for a provision of education to include all those who would need it. There was no undue haste, nor was the Board slow. Each school was planned with care. As the period progressed the educational needs of the town were met in an orderly sensible manner. Throughout changes in the political nature of the Boards there was a continuity of intent. The existing provision was not interfered with, nor put under undue pressure. The internal and external planning of buildings was unusually varied. Each School had an individual flavour. The accommodation target set in the very beginning was adjusted throughout and reached by the end. The strong religious atmosphere of the town existed alongside and within the Board schools. This background had also helped to provide a continual flow of teachers which, if as elsewhere were largely untrained, compensated by their dedication to the pupils. The curriculum expanded very slowly following a national pattern. Throughout, important local figures guided and advised. Attendance, though only

average, did improve gradually. Most importantly, the child was being put at the centre of consideration. In the end, there had been a marked improvement in the attitude towards education in the town and this was most noticeable in the adequate supply of good schools which existed by the first years of the twentieth century. Reassuringly, therefore, a successful industrial town had kept educational priority throughout and mirrored commercial with educational success.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF ELEMENTARY EDUCATION IN SUNDERLAND

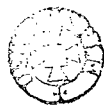
1870 - 1902

Christopher J. Turner, B.A., Dip. Ed.

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A thesis presented to the School of Education
of the University of Durham for the degree
of Master of Education

September 1984



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CHAPTER 1

Sunderland - shooting-star: a social, economic and political investigation of the town in the nineteenth century.

A. B. Granville, on his tour of England visited Sunderland in 1840,

'In a couple of days I made myself master of everything worthy of note in the place, which from a commercial point of view, particularly as to shipping interests, must be regarded as the fourth seaport in the United Kingdom; a rank to which it has risen from that of fishing hamlet in the course of little more than two centuries.'¹

Many towns and cities rise in importance due to geographical and historical reasons, not relying on individual or corporate efforts to do so. To some extent these factors might well apply in the case of Sunderland; except that on first appearances its position in competition with a regional centre, tucked away on the coast, off the major trunk routes, hidden behind the coastal hills - would all appear to belie claims to importance. Granville suggested,

'The good people of Sunderland, interested in the preservation of their noble estuary have every reason to expect that everything is satisfactory; and they truly need it now that Hartlepool is preparing to dispute, in a few years, the palm of export trade from County Durham and other districts North.'

The suggestion here is that Sunderland was in competition with neighbouring ports on the coast, also.

Indeed the town of Sunderland - once it had been stimulated to consider its future - was able to call upon many positive advantages. For the moment, however, it is relevant to consider more of the reflections of Granville, an objective traveller, who by this point in his sojourn had visited a large part of

1 A. B. Granville, The Spas of England and principal sea-bathing places, 1971 (first published 1841) p. 267.



Plate 1

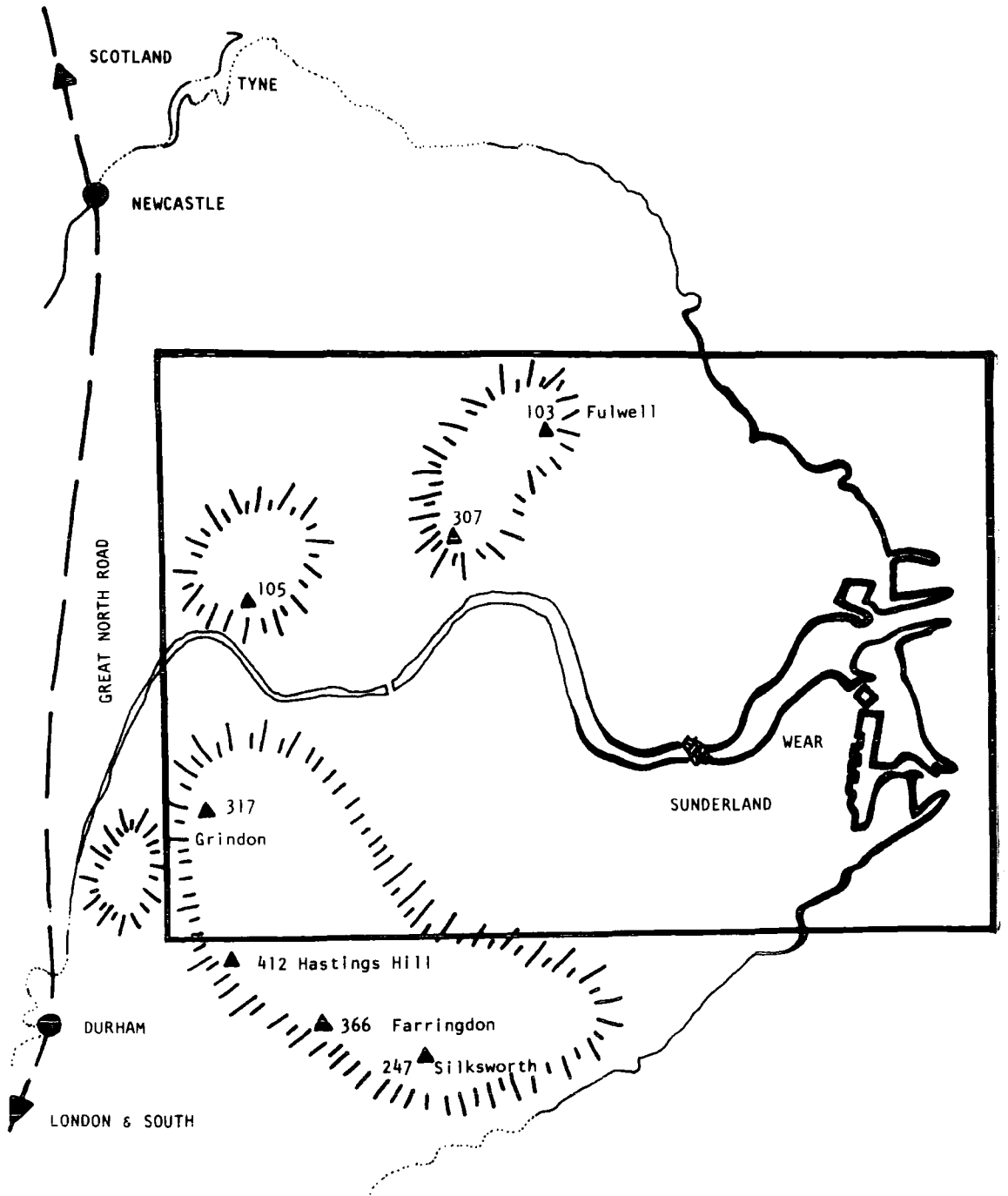
Sunderland in its regional setting

(ref. p.1.)

Plate 1

Sunderland in its regional setting

(ref. p.1)



Britain, much of it coastal,

'The approach to the pier from the upper part of the town, unfortunately is through a long, dirty street (the prolongation or tail of High Street, inhabited by the lowest class of people, principally mechanics and sailors) and from which street branch off to right and left many narrow passages or alleys; those of the latter lead down to the waterside; and all present at the time of my visit, the very sink of gloom and filth - an apt nest or "rendez-vous" for typhus or cholera.'

It was of course, easy to state this, since eight years previous to his visit in those streets cholera had made its first confirmed fatal appearance in Britain. The fact also that Sunderland was the 'fourth seaport' had contributed greatly to this event.

Not that Sunderland had failed to prepare itself for such a possibility. In the June of 1831 the town had formed a Board of Health under Dr. Clanny. The Board spent the Summer seeking more information about cholera, recommending various sanitary measures and making sure that anyone in the town with medical connections would cooperate and have sufficient information if the epidemic came. Unbelievably it was the medical profession which proved the biggest factor in spreading cholera from Sunderland throughout Britain. Without their connivance the town might have been quarantined and the disease slowed down. However, their privately-financed interests in the continuing shipment of coal (since they had investment in the companies) combined with early-century misunderstanding over contagium, and both eventually prevailed to allow entry to the disease - but not at first,

'The commander of the naval sloop stationed at the mouth of the river was a man of irritating energy and firmness. He fired a shot ahead of any ship which left the Wear and attempted to ignore his orders thus forcing the ship to turn back. Several surgeons were none too pleased for they had shares in local shipping.'²

It had been suspected that workers in the Far East, in the sweat and toil of handling flax, might be passing the disease around within that material which was then exported throughout the world. In 1825 quarantine had been imposed on seven to eight hundred ships from Riga delivering flax into Britain. There were, however, many ships which came from the Baltic to North-East ports. Trans-shipment there, or elsewhere, could hide the exact origins of imports. In June 1831 the Sunderland Board of Health had engaged J. Butler Kell, surgeon to the reserve division of the 82nd Regiment of Foot. He had seen and treated cholera in Grant Port. Kell thought that he had diagnosed a cholera death on the 12th of August when a pilot died two days after escorting in and out a ship from the Baltic. At a later date the surgeon on that ship, having seen more cholera by then, acknowledged that it had been cholera. Without the strictest control it was probably inevitable that the disease would come ashore. Customs officers were supposed to lead quarantined ships upto Deptford anchorage, but there was little guard to ensure this. Therefore, the inevitable happened. Sailors jumped ship and walked through the crowded port area of Sunderland. As if to reinforce this, Isabella Howard, a 12 year old publican's daughter died within twenty-four hours of showing symptoms. Vomiting, punging cramps and cold skin were the familiar signs; but the case was still not confirmed.

Historically, Sunderland must have been a prime target for infectious and contagious diseases by reason of its trading nature. Combined with trans-shipment of far-eastern products in the Baltic and the inevitability of a north-east port in Britain receiving them, the chances were always high. Due to Sunderland's high rate of coal export to the Baltic, foreign persons must have been constantly drifting through the town.

Yet as Granville had stated, this bustling port had once been a fishing hamlet. This successful rise in its fortunes had not come from initiative within the town - not at first anyway. In the twelfth century Hugh de Puiset, a forthright, ambitious bishop responsible from Durham for the Palatine area was seeking to increase the wealth of his property. Seeing the advantages enjoyed by Newcastle as a borough he sought to create an outlet on the coast for Palatine commerce. As a borough, Sunderland would have had extra freedom and priveleges. Merchants, traders and skilled men would be encouraged into an atmosphere where entrepreneurship would bring some handsome profit in terms of tolls and dues. With this in mind, the Wear was granted the same rights and priveleges as the Tyne. Some of these were: Civil courts for debt, dealings with any ship, the right to put up land for sale, an end to long-standing bishop's dues and fines, ownership of private mills and ovens, sale of cut-timber and corn and also the right to pasture cattle on the Town Moor. For his part the bishop would rake in the dues from fish brought in and sold and he still retained a claim to the courts and to justice. By the fourteenth century, however, such potential in Sunderland had not even been approached. Of the three settlements that make up Wearside none had grabbed the opportunities. Bishopwearmouth, the furthest inland, was too rural. Set around St. Michael's church, that is how it wanted to stay. In Monkwearmouth, the settlement established by the Venerable Bede, north of the river, the monks rented a coal staith and took mineral from Lambton, Harraton, Fatfield and Biddick but not apparently looking for profit therein. Old Sunderland (the land 'sundered' by the river from Monkwearmouth) with its two-score population did not even increase its meagre fishing trade. Meanwhile, Newcastle,

protected from the Scots by its walls and from competition by its burgesses and guilds was picking up any new business. Disappointment by the Church in Durham over Sunderland's poor response was shown by the later acquisition of Hartlepool, Stockton and Gateshead with the hope of more promise.

This early reluctance to take the initiative by Sunderland left the town free from control, making it a suitable location for the surge of industrial expansion to come in later centuries. Old Sunderland had not been dominated by the Church as the subsequent falling-away of the charter indicated; and unlike Newcastle where the wealthy merchants and Hostmen had a stranglehold, there was opportunity for young entrepreneurs in Sunderland. There were also men of experience who could offer guidance when such time arose.

Mention has been made of the geographical features which can project forward a town. Old Sunderland, on the southern bank of the estuary had further advantages over the other two townships beside the Wear and over other parts of the North-East. There was common land at the sole disposal neither of private individuals nor of the Church, but of the corporate behest of the town. It so happened that unlike other Town Moors this one was on the coast, south of the entrance to the river. In other words there was room to expand exactly where it was needed. Granville's observations on the town had been made just as the town was expanding its harbour and port facilities,

'Like [Hartlepool], Sunderland has a tidal basin attached to the dock and lately constructed by a private company, but whereas the dock and basin of Hartlepool will be capable of floating 400 sail of colliers, this

of Sunderland holds only the fourth part of that number.'³ Granville was referring no doubt to the North Dock built by Williamson, a landowner of Monkwearmouth. This dock was completed in 1837 but was never seriously expected to take the type of growth that was coming to Sunderland. Fifteen years after Granville's visit the South Dock was completed. This was a huge complex and was to put Sunderland ahead of the competition. The Town Moor was used for the Dock and also for a large rail-siding in order to allow for the off-loading of coal. Without the physical amenity of the Moor the town would never have reached the immense heights of coal exports.

Another physical attribute of the town was the availability of land for shipbuilding and shiplaunches. The meander of the river just before it meets the sea and the steep banks upto the town above create a fairly broad riverside area which is in reality doubled because of the river's course. In later years this was to allow shipbuilding of considerable size, well up the river. The high cliffs also allowed high level bridges. It was 1796 before a bridge spanned these cliffs. Apart from showing the relatively separate identities of the town it also allowed the technology of the nineteenth century to catch up and provide what was reputedly the largest-span bridge of its kind. This high bridge allowed even the tallest ships to sail right up the river with only the gallant mast lowered, thus making use of all the available river space.

Therefore in two ways the internal geography of Sunderland pushed it forward, allowing growth. In a third way, also, the town was able to respond physically to its growth-needs . . .

³ A. B. Granville, The Spas of England, p. 268.

'Sunderland has become one of the easiest and safest ports of access in Britain. There are no dangers to navigation and ships arrive in the heart of the commercial centre in a few minutes after passing Roker Pier lighthouse.'⁴

Old Sunderland burst into life in the eighteenth century. The fishing hamlet became at one point the very centre of the shipping world. The area where all the coal was shipped, all the commerce took place and virtually all the people involved in it lived was at the southern tip of the rivermouth. By the nineteenth century, however, some of the property was very old. What had been burgesses' houses were being subdivided for tenancy. Normally the township might have sidestepped onto the Moor to allow reconstruction of the area. However, the Moor had been used for the town's industrial expansion. Thus with no alternative Old Sunderland crept westwards, up High Street. The construction of the bridge further westwards was another drawing influence in this direction. So, the commercial centre left the port area and wandered up the road. The influence of the new bridge then re-directed it southwards.⁵ This rather unusual 'vagrancy' of a town-centre allowed, once more, the town of Sunderland to adapt and move on.

Before Sunderland Parish 'flitted' up the road, it had left behind it a rather dirty household. Some of the origins of this are set in the geography of County Durham. Apart from the important internal physical advantages of Sunderland, nature had not laid out north-east Durham to the town's advantage. It is small wonder that Sunderland felt unable to

4 W. C. Mitchell, A history of Sunderland, Sunderland, 1919, p.75.

5 D. J. Blair, The spatial dynamics of commercial activity in central Sunderland (Durham Univ., M.A. Thesis, 1977) Chap. 1.

Plate 2

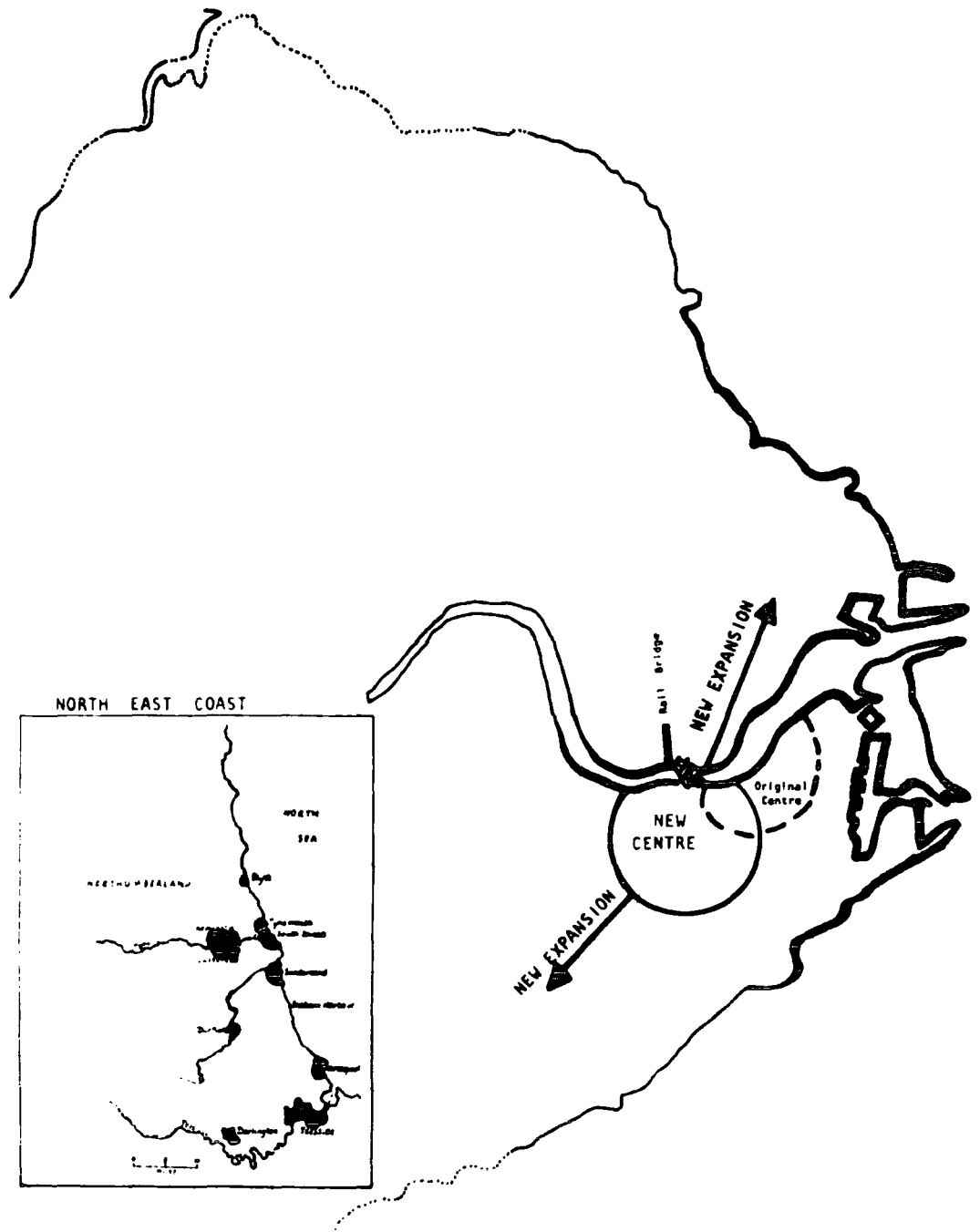
Movement of the town centre of Sunderland

(ref. pp. 7, 22-23)

Plate 2

Movement of the town centre of Sunderland

(ref. pp.7, 22-23)



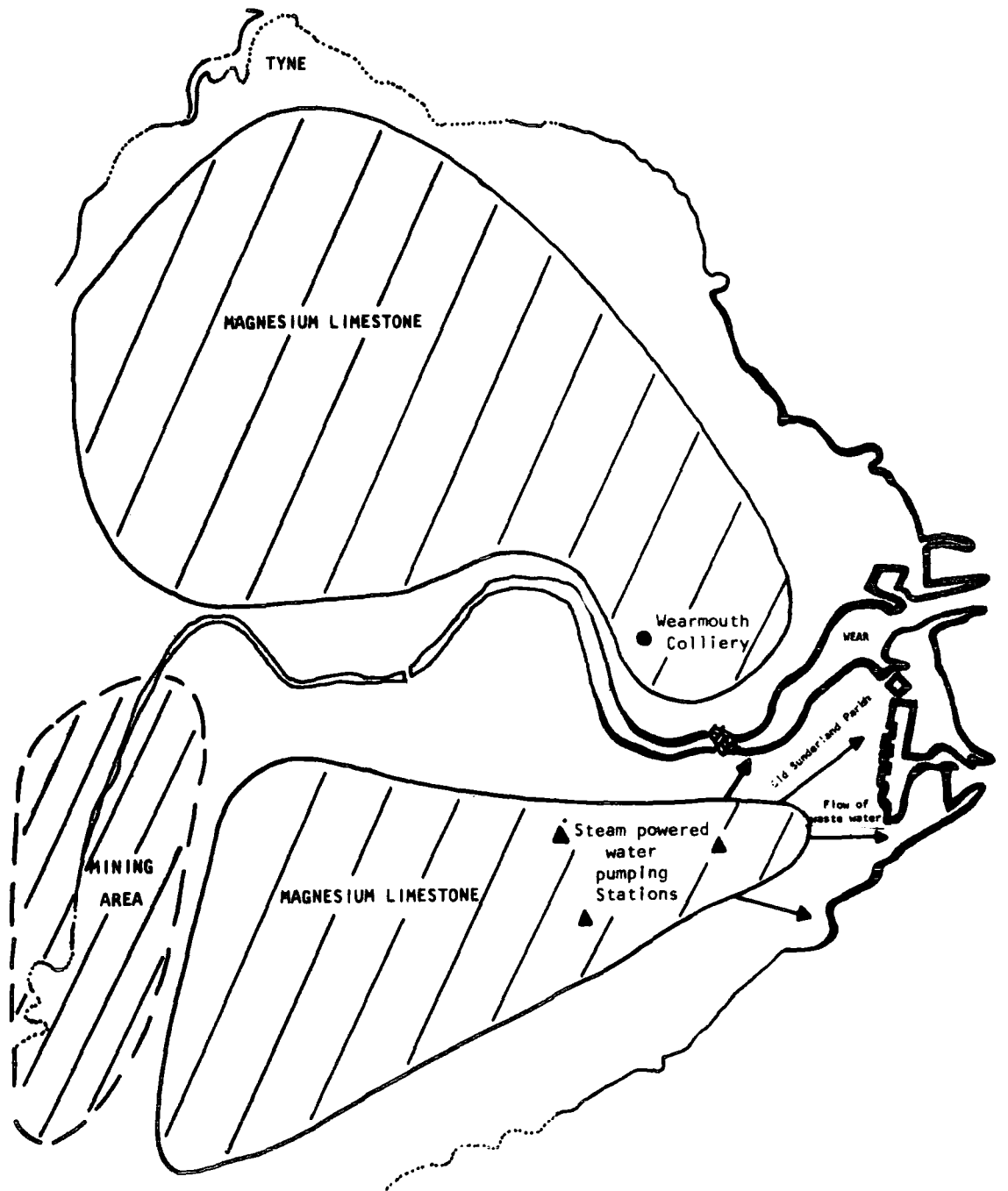
respond as an outlet for the commerce of Durham since it is totally cut off from it by steep magnesium outcrops at Ryhope, Silksworth, Penshaw, Hylton and Boldon. The gaze of the traveller from the bustling Great North Road some ten miles inland is caught by white rock faces on the perimeter of Sunderland where inroads have been made into these surrounding obstacles for profit or for access. Centuries ago, however, in order to pass these hills, it meant strain and toil. The cruel irony was that the hills flattened inland allowing easier access to the coal; but once on the surface it then had to be hauled over the hills to reach the ports. As the potential of coal became clearer so too did the need to transport it to places of maximum profit. Since long-distance, overland transportation was then still hazardous and inadequate, seaport access was essential. For the collieries of north-east Durham, Sunderland was the automatic choice in terms of distance. Just as water always finds the easiest and flattest course through its obstacles, so too at first the river Wear offered the only route to Sunderland from inland until steam-engines brought relief. The peculiar qualities of the geology which cut off Sunderland from its hinterland produced also within the town a gentle slope from these hills towards the sea. This provided a natural drainage of surface water; unfortunately Old Sunderland was the gutter at the end of it. Nor was there any hope that these Stygian stables might be flushed clean since the narrow alleyways and tall subdivided houses simply held the filth and did not allow the sun to dry it. In spite of the abundant fresh clean water which lay below the rock, the dirty dot of nineteenth century Sunderland Port festered on.

High mortality rates were to be a problem which haunted

Plate 3

The Geology of Sunderland and its surrounding area

(ref. p.8)



Sunderland for some time. Even as the town expanded the better areas were affected by Old Sunderland Parish death rates when all were averaged out for the town. As if it were a forewarning of the disease which eventually brought notoriety to the town, Wearmouth appears to have been badly affected by an outbreak of the bubonic plague in 1349. It was no understatement that,

'Because of the attention which it demanded, the terror it evoked, because of its unpredictable nature and because we know that it was relatively simple to stop - cholera was well-qualified to reveal the morbid pathology of British society in 1832'⁶

There is no doubt that physical health and survival were important factors in the lives of ordinary folk. People lived with death. Longterm, languid illnesses were features of many families. There was some sort of passive acceptance that contact with a person suffering from classic, major complaints might draw that new person into the same sickness. Cholera, however, was more like having a wild 'Ripper' loose in the community. People fell victim to cholera when they had apparently been nowhere near a vulnerable person or place. Not only was that unnerving; once they started to show the symptoms they might die within a few hours. The cholera germ embeds itself in the lining of the intestine of the victim. So ferociously does the intestine try to eject it that the whole body moves into spasm. The stomach and the bowel empty themselves of everything in order to free themselves of the alien. Once the yellow bile has been sucked out of the liver the body then rips away at the intestinal tissue - the 'rice water'

6 R. J. Morris, p. 19.

evacuation of the moribund,

'To see a number of our fellow creatures in a good state of health, in full possession of their wanted strength and in the midst of their years, suddenly seized with the most violent spasms and in a few hours cast into the torment is calculated to shake the firmest nerves and to inspire dread in the stoutest heart'⁷

Thus cholera's total unpredictability, the agony of its effect and the speed of consequent demise left the whole community feeling stunned and vulnerable. Without proper advice from the medical profession the people adopted a type of fatalistic approach similar to the lonely despair of the final holocaust. As if this were not bad enough the reaction of the community as a whole positively encouraged cholera,

'The day-to-day relationships, the fears of unemployment, the commercial greed and professional pride in the insecure prosperity of a major port gave cholera the perfect means to enter and spread through Britain.'⁸

To most onlookers at that time it seemed that those who were in a position to alleviate the problem, the doctors and those with power or money, were deliberately prevaricating. Because there was little local power to enforce a response, it was left to the individual. Quarantine, cleansing, medical provision, prayer and inertia offered one set of possible responses. Alternatively flight, anger, alarm might be another. People trying to survive the normal misfortunes of nineteenth century life had to make value-judgements between life, property, work, safety, amateur-charity advice or government agencies. Suddenly the whole system of priorities was shaken.

7 Fraser's magazine, Vol. IV, 1831, p. 613; Methodist Magazine, 1832, p. 449, quoted in R. J. Morris, p. 16.

8 R. J. Morris, p. 39.

Individual resources of groups, individual material-wealth, value of labour, social authority, prestige, administrative and scientific skills, reliability - all were thrown into highlight.

It was stated that on appearances many of the more responsible members of the town were not taking a moral response to this problem. Yet Old Sunderland actually had a very lively parish council. For that is what Old Sunderland eventually became - a parish. As the size of the port community grew people felt that the distance from St. Michael's, Bishopwearmouth was too great, so Holy Trinity church was opened in 1719. For the first time in the history of the three townships the Established Church had stationed a permanent parish church in Old Sunderland, many hundreds of years after it had in the other two parts of Sunderland. It is a simple classical brick building. With its large plain windows it could have been mistaken for a Dissenting Church. Indeed, it had taken the Established Church so long to establish a church in the Port of Sunderland that the dissenters had a plethora of chapels by then. Possibly Holy Trinity had made some concessions in its style as a reflection of this. Certainly it was to be no contemplative enclave of mystery and ritual. Indeed, 'rangers' would have felt quite at home in the pulpit addressing the gallery. However, it was the enlarged vestry which offered the most opportunity for thought. For that was the meeting-place of those who would take on the responsibility for the parish. Twenty-four gentlemen of the town duly elected by the ratepayers of the eighteenth and nineteenth century, met together with the rector who was in the chair. Nor was this some empty resort for those with too much free time. The council of this port which rose like a shooting-star, had urgent

business. Street surfacing, drainage and cleansing; care of the poor and sick; assessment and collection of rates; fire-safety; construction of a workhouse and charity school; the supervision and pay of officials, overseers of the poor, church wardens, constables - all came within the responsibility of the parish council.

With all this welfare how could it be that Sunderland parish was deprived of care at a time of national urgency? It has already been stated that as the property decayed in Old Sunderland, the town moved westwards and then southwards since industrial and commercial expansion had cut off the Moor. This gradual movement of the town's commercial centre was matched by another - that of the 'nouveaux riches' who swiftly departed the port area as soon as possibly they were able. It was this lack of 'weighty' inhabitants which was to allow the crisis situation to be manipulated with minimum loss of profit. A Government observer at the time of the epidemic also noted this imbalance,

'The most intractable problem of all in Sunderland was poverty. The Government was alarmed and its agents shocked by what it found. Sunderland as an economic and social unit consisted of three parishes: Sunderland itself down by the river, Bishopwearmouth on higher ground south of the river and Monkwearmouth across the bridge to the North. Sunderland (parish) contains almost exclusively the working poor with their parents, wives and children, many of whom disease and age render incapable of earning their own subsistence. They live in crowded dwellings and are most strikingly disproportionate in numbers to those capable of paying parish rates. The rate-assessable in the parish are chiefly composed of shopkeepers, lowtraders, incipient speculators and others of small and uncertain incomes. As soon as a man who has himself commenced as a labourer feels that he can live at ease he retires to the parish of Bishopwearmouth which composes the elevated part of the town; wide clean streets, grand houses - in short the west end.'

He then applies this to the logic of the parish system,

'Thus the parish system of caring for the poor, originally devised to ensure that a community took responsibility for its own poor, was being used by the wealthier inhabitants of Sunderland to avoid their responsibilities.'

He noted the social imbalance and suggested a reversal of the injustice by extending the rate,

'The rich would thus be obliged to preserve from starvation and premature decay the very instruments by which their fortunes reached a certain bulk.'

Thus wrote Dr. Barry who had arrived from London bringing direct experience of Europe to the North-East. He was writing to Sir William Pym Superintendant general of Quarantine.

As may be gathered, the situation in the town had by now progressed from the undiagnosed deaths of the pilot and the publican's daughter. Nine weeks after the pilot and two weeks after the young girl, William Sproat senior had been feeling off-colour (from a few days previous) but felt that it may simply have been Summer-sickness. Against the advice of his doctor he decided to eat a cold mutton chop since he was feeling slightly better. Almost immediately he was feeling slightly worse. Within hours he was an international statistic - the first confirmed case of Asiatic cholera in the British Isles; and so it continued. There might be a delay of weeks then, to the horror of everyone, a group of unrelated deaths would take place in isolation or in clusters. By chance, a correspondent of The Courier in London reported that cholera was in Sunderland. Thus the news was out. With so much national, public attention on Sunderland as the first cholera-town it is difficult to understand why the town was not cordoned off. Yet even in the autocratic society of Russia, which the disease had visited, strong measures had not been altogether successful. Much less likely was it, therefore, that such could prevail in Britain

with its tradition of freedom. The pressure against quarantine on Sunderland came from the commercial interests within the town. The Bishop of Durham went furthest towards attempting segregation. He asked the people of Sunderland to limit contact with the rest of the country. Immediately he received a deputation from the town which told him that the danger was small. The Marquis of Londonderry, no less, persuaded him that no restrictions were necessary. He was accompanied on that visit by a good number of shipping managers; it was these people who had worked upon the medical profession in order to discourage them also from 'precipitate statements'. Put under pressure, both the Church and the medical profession fell easy prey. It is also necessary to remember that there was then no officially-sanctioned nor centrally-enforced procedure. Any action was voluntary: and the Sunderlanders also had interested parties in County Durham,

'The internal pressures of the commercial community of Sunderland were backed by the work of the mine-owners of the surrounding countryside. These were men led largely by the main landowners who based their power and fortune on the royalties and profits of the mines. The coal-owners did not watch the imposition of quarantine regulations with the same calm as the cloth men [flax]. The coal-trade needed the steady flow of colliers down the east coast to major markets in London. The coal-owners faced falling profits on their massive capital investment and the risk of discontented unemployed colliers, casters and keelmen.'¹⁰

The strongest objections, one should note, were coming from the people who did not live where the deaths were occurring. The medical profession was treated with scorn. The higher echelons of the latter could at least gain some comfort from knowing that their coal-investments would not be affected. Their delay in making positive diagnosis was thrown back in their

10 R. J. Morris, p. 46

faces in just the same way as if they had precipitously identified it too soon. 'Were these supposed to be professional men who admitted that a disease with the same symptoms as Asiatic cholera was in the town but that it was not necessarily the same?' They had of course, by now made the doctors back-track from firm diagnosis. Playing on the uncertainty at every opportunity, the business pressure-groups finally managed to let the disease run rampant. Thus they accrued impressive returns considering the rundown on capital and labour. After seasonal adjustments, profits before tax for the year ending April 1833 were 179 deaths out of 368 disease-stricken, agony-racked victims. The next financial year brought a lower return of 36 deaths. Fortunately (for all except those who actually handled the mineral) there was not undue interference with coal-shipment orders.

It is obviously important to look at the dominance of the shipment of coal in Sunderland in order to know how so much of the population could be affected by it and earn their living from it. One must bear in mind that Sunderland itself was not a mining town. A second independent observer on tour (it would appear that the more fortunate in society could visit and write profitably about other peoples' misfortunes) was R. Warner. His itinerary in 1801 had included Sunderland. His description of an approach to Sunderland from inland is interesting since it shows how small the town was in that year only a few decades before reaching national supremacy in shipbuilding,

'Sunderland is situated on a tongue of land descending steeply to the river; it is not seen 'til it be nearly approached and offers a handsome entrance through a street of modern houses - a new creation grown out of the

improving trade of the place . . . An immense increase of population has arisen from the successful prosecution of the coal-trade which was rapidly increasing 'til the war checked the spirit of speculation.'

Warner continues with a description of the commercial considerations involved in the movement of coal from coal-face to fireplace. One senses in his description a suspicion of the justification of the profits earned through the rôle which Sunderlanders played in the movement of the coal,

'Four different bodies of people extract a profit from the Sunderland coals before they appear in a foreign market:- the colliers who dig them; the proprietors of the mines who sell them to the third; the fitters, a sort of middle-men who bring the articles from the mine and destine them to the fourth description - the merchants. The largest profit is derived from the fitters who risque nothing and obtain payment prompt. They receive about a shilling a chaldron for coal sold and for the trouble of providing keels and keelmen, who, however are paid for by the shipowners; the fortunes acquired are generally by them.'¹¹

Sunderland appears in this light as an eighteenth century, profiteering service-industry living off the toil of north-east Durham colliers. However, all types of speculation require capital investment in men and machinery; and although life could be good in prosperous times it could be equally harassing in adversity. One starts to feel some of the pressures experienced by the shippers during a trade dip,

'... of late the trade altogether was rather losing concern; during the Northern disagreement when parts of the Baltic were shut, many of those concerned in the coal trade were compelled to live upon their capitals. In truth a very large proportion of the coals are taken off by the Northern ports; but by being excluded from sale there the merchants were under the necessity of sending them to London. Here the market was overstocked and the article remained consequently unsold or at least was disposed of to disadvantage. The merchants, therefore, as the lesser evil relinquished their speculation and laid up their ships but still continued subject to a considerable loss in maintenance of crews who as apprentices were to be kept in food and clothing; notwithstanding they could make no

11 R. Warner, A tour through the northern counties of England and borders of Scotland, 1802, p. 306.

return by their labours.'

Such vicissitudes might for the larger shipper have meant simply delaying a move to a house even further away from the port area of Old Sunderland. For the owner of a single ship it probably brought bankruptcy. Fortunately for Sunderland there appeared (at least in the eighteenth and nineteenth century) to be a wax for every wane,

'On the opening of the Northern ports, however, trade found its level again and is now as brisk as before. The Sunderland coals are very good but so slow to combustion that they are proverbially said to make three fires.'¹²

Sunderland's increase in coal-shipments was fairly dramatic. By the 1740s it was exporting half of Newcastle's total, by the 1770s it was up to two thirds. Other ports in the North-East started to catch up in later years:

	1828 - 1831	1832 - 1835	Decrease	Increase
Newcastle	5,178,255	4,641,724	536,531	
Sunderland	2,241,207	2,691,124		214,456
Stockton	110,413	795,765		685,352

quantities shown in
Newcastle chaldrons.
¹³

Some of the Stockton increase can be attributed to the Stockton-Darlington railway. The Sunderland increase was also a lower level of increase than previously.

During the difficult years it was actually the miners who bore the main burden of the suffering. In 1825 the newly-formed Association of Colliers of Northumberland and Durham was crushed by the owners. The owners used the yearly bond as a means of reducing production. New technology was pushing up production, but into a reducing market. Between 1829 and 1833 the owners admitted that production was only one half or one third of what

12 R. Warner, A tour, pp. 306-307.

13 P. Cadogan, Early Radical Newcastle, 1975, p.60.

was easily possible. In Newcastle the price of coal dropped from 36/6 to 24/4 between 1828 and 1830. Groups of miners marched around the two counties to ensure solidarity of protest. In 1831, however, it was clear that the strike of one year was to be followed by the lock-out of the next. 'Blacklegs' from Wales and Alston were drafted in. Eventually the miners conceded; yet, the massive working-class support for electoral reform which had gone arm-in-arm with this cause had been clearly visible. The Northern Political Union was formed out of the mood of power which the people felt swelling up. Unfortunately, as has been shown, that is not all that was swelling up at the beginning of the 1830s in the north-east tip of Durham. Four days after the Lords had thrown out the Northern Political Union Bill, Isabella Howard had died of cholera in Sunderland. The continuation of events has already been shown. By the 6th of December 'contagion' in Sunderland was even mentioned in the King's speech. Northern hopes of an immediate democracy died below the posters on walls warning of the health dangers of assemblies of persons during the epidemic. These posters appeared more willingly, needless to say, in Newcastle than in Sunderland. It is not difficult to imagine the wrath which could have turned on Sunderland if almost exactly six months later the First Reform Bill had not received Royal Assent. In spite of these difficult years (1839-1845) of over-production in the coal industry, an advance had begun which lasted until the end of the century.

Sunderland's own shipbuilding industry was also expanding whilst all these large quantities of coal were passing through the town and shipping agents were busy looking for the best market. After all, no self-respecting Sunderland coal-shipper

would have liked to see his coal disappearing over the horizon daily with 'Yarmouth', 'King's Lynn' or 'London' below the ship's name. Flat-bottomed keels had been slushing down the Wear for centuries. These keelmen would have brought tears of joy to the eyes of the twentieth century unions to see the strength with which they smashed the wooden waggonways along the banks of the Wear - these waggonways which competed so economically with the growing wage demands of the keelmen. In the same way that keelmen could not stop progress, so the sailors on the colliers boats saw, with frustration, the trains chugging down the coastal line to London in competition with their unmechanised sail-boats. Like the keelmen they would have to adapt to the technology. Thus with both raw materials easily-available and an abundance of the fuel to work them, and also with sea-access providing fairly easy and stable markets abroad and in London, Sunderland's shipbuilding industry continued apace. Lloyd's Register had marked Sunderland as the number one shipbuilding town in Britain in 1834. The physical features of the river-bank had helped greatly to facilitate such a large number of shipbuilders. The 1834 honour had been earned in the production of traditional sail and wooden ships. However eighteenth and nineteenth century Sunderland was reaching financial buoyancy with coal - the 'steam-product'. It was the technological revolution which was going to spur on this town. Simply making more wooden sail-ships was a case of producing more of the same. Changing from wood to steel and from sail to steam was to be the real test. The 'Lloyd's Register' reputation was to be simply a marker. Although such individual note was never reached again it sufficed to provide a base from which to attack the nineteenth

century. The carriage of coal by rail did not compete for long with Sunderland's boats. Figures, tonnages launchings and the like become confusing when trying to compare the new ships with the old. It was continuing sales which were to prove whether they had the formula correct. Obviously there had to be casualties in shipbuilding as there were in coal-shipping. In the shipbuilding revolution the small firms closed. However, engineering grew in the vacuum.

The swell of Sunderland's shipyards continued with the demand for ships. Wages rose (reputedly above other areas¹⁴) even at a time of falling prices. It was estimated that in the 1860s some 7,500 men might be in employment in the shipyards (climbing by the end of the century to some twenty thousand). Inevitably there were periods of recession, hardship and unemployment. Strikes were not uncommon but expansion continued so that approaching half of the town's workmen were involved in shipbuilding and coal shipment by the very late 1880s.

The obvious reaction to such concentration of effort onto shipbuilding and coal-shipment was that the balance of industry would suffer in later years. The immovable mover (coal) had offered its opportunity to boost other industries. Salt-burning, chemical-production, glassmaking and pottery had all been offered the opportunity to progress. Unlike shipbuilding and coal-shipment, however, these former industries had not changed with the progression of new methods. The more specialised of these industries were held in strong grip by the unions. The closed shop (with its automatic progression into employment

14 D. J. Dougan, A History of North-East shipbuilding (Durham Univ., M.A. Thesis, 1968) p. 50.

of workers), inflexibility of processing, the refusal to change combined with the open-trading conditions of the United Kingdom - all worked to the disadvantage of these trades. Failure of workers to adapt resulted in imported copies from other countries competing against British equivalents, often through lower foreign production-costs. The other main vulnerability of the minor industries was that they were in fact minor and not major. The in-built magnetic forces of coal-shipment, iron-working and engineering sucked investment and labour from the minor industries.

The eventual collapse of the minor industries of Sunderland and other areas was thus due partly to inflexibility and consequently to their inability to overcome foreign competition. Also, however, it was due to the osmosis influence of the main North-East industries which absorbed the potential of minor industries. It must be remembered that during most of the nineteenth century the Government did not have economic strategies for the growth of commerce and industry; industry and commerce relied entirely on the investment choices of local entrepreneurs and historically-guided institutions. Market forces determined direction. Inevitably the direction was that of minimal loss of profit and maximum reliance on time-proven ventures. For all the predominance of the North-East in world trade, the industrial and commercial base was narrow. It was dependent on insecure markets. Without the basic commitment from world capitals to a personally-secured, long-term future the North-East found itself with the right product at the right time - but possibly being in the wrong place by the time the twentieth century came around. Also, with so much money moving through the hands of so few owners in so few

industries, managerial skills were held by few people thus restricted in experience.¹⁵ The North-East capital investment in a few growth sectors has by the twentieth century proved to be the wrong emphasis for the longterm. Yet for the generation born in the mid-nineteenth century it must have seemed to be a just reward. Within the lifetime of the ordinary individual it is a rare character who would sacrifice present good for future gain. Thus shipbuilding provided the improved transport for coal - the product which, itself, had brought growth already. However, combined with coal-shipment the two industries sucked dry possible expansion of any other potential enterprise within Sunderland.

With the expansion of the town's business interests came a rapid growth in population. The totals for 1801, 1851 and 1901 were 24 Thousand, 64 Thousand and 146 Thousand respectively. The port of Old Sunderland soon proved to be inadequate. The decay of domestic property and the expansion of industry had simply pushed the commercial centre westwards. Some might argue that it ought to have been pushed eastwards into the North Sea since it tended to infect adjoining parts of the town with its high mortality rate. It has been stated that the building of the bridge at the end of the eighteenth century tended to change the axis of the town. This was part of an unusual but totally logical change of emphasis of the town's development. A new line had been drawn vertically North and South from Monkwearmouth into what became the new commercial centre and which stayed there into the late nineteenth century and through-

15 A. Thwaites, *Entrepreneurship in the Northern Region* (Durham Univ., M.A. Thesis, 1977). p. 189.

out the twentieth century. The addition of the rail bridge eighty years later (1879) and a Central Station to the West of the commercial centre only served to consolidate this situation. Business, commerce and the town's station now revolved around an axis having its centre on the two bridges. North Bishopwearmouth became central Sunderland.¹⁶

Whereas the man-made bridges and station had changed the centre of axis, artificially, a natural centrifugal force was also at work slowly forcing the town further out from the centre in all directions.¹⁷ Only the industry hidden under the high bridges escaped this force which affected both sides of the river. The second half of the nineteenth century saw an ever-increasing network of new roads and housing in these areas north and south of the river hitherto unclaimed by gentry, industry or commerce.

The next most noticeable factor was the type of accommodation. Tyneside had built terraced houses and flats, which being two-storeyed, created a tunnel-effect and also inhibited the dispersal of smoke and pollution. In Sunderland, single-storeyed cottages were built in the new suburbs. The advantages of one-storeyed accommodation are great. They offer a total contrast to the tenemented property so common hitherto. A terraced cottage is at the other end of the spectrum from the mighty Scottish tenement buildings in many cities. These latter and the long Tyneside terraces sweeping down to the river in rigid lines are

16 D. J. Blair. The spatial dynamics of commercial activity in Central Sunderland (Durham Univ., M.A. Thesis, 1977) Chap. 1.

17 B. T. Robson, Urban Analysis: A study of city structure with special reference to Sunderland, Cambridge, 1969, p. 101.

an equally uninspired planner's response to population increases as are the high-rise twentieth century flats. Cottages are flagrantly luxurious in their use of land. They must have been, however, the very spearhead of the workers' newly-acquired desire to emulate the property-ownership of previous generations. Cottages offered almost immediate social uplift. These sturdy but not unimpressive houses were a product not of a single builder nor in response to local byelaws but, it would seem, a visible record of the mood of Sunderland towards the end of the nineteenth century.¹⁸ These houses were self-contained units with a back yard and a services road at the rear. They epitomize the mood of the town which knew it had been successful and wanted to offer to its citizens a respectable form of accommodation. Home-ownership gave both respect and pride, and there is no doubt that Sunderland in the last quarter of the nineteenth century was proud of its winning formula.

The population total of the town was certainly increasing throughout the first three-quarters of the century in common with other towns and cities of Britain. Sunderland also had a particularly young population.¹⁹ The growth-rate tended to increase and decrease according to the fortunes of the major industries.²⁰ As the century progressed attitudes were also changing. Previously the population had been divided into the first group able to direct its lifestyle by inheritance and power and the second group held in place by lack of these same

18 N. Dennis, People and Planning: the Sociology of housing in Sunderland, 1970, p. 145.

19 B. T. Robson, Urban Analysis, p. 81.

20 B. T. Robson, Urban Analysis, pp. 78 - 81.

factors. The push of social reform through the Reform Acts and also the pressure of voluntary groups for Government intervention let the people see that their position in society was becoming more important and that the Government was trying to improve the society in which this new life-style would take place. It is unlikely, in reality, that anybody saw the situation as clearly as that but different individuals were sensing changing nuances of emphasis; the new voters sensed that someone was fighting for their vote. Encouraged by Housing Acts, the property demolition and the creation of healthier suburbs produced visible signs of improvement. Workers saw their ability to use the power of their labour to talk on more equal terms with the owners. Readers of Sunderland newspapers were treated to charts showing that far from just being a town which had featured cholera, by later century the death-rate per thousand was steadily decreasing. They also saw and at first resented the education of the next generation taking on greater importance. Although all of these events were themselves taking place during the space of one or more generations they created a mood which permeated society. When one sees the town's population growth-rate accelerate faster than the national average one must bear in mind the fortunate situation of Sunderland which had the right product at the right time. When one sees the population trend start to reverse one must consider that the world's fortunes were changing the fortunes of Sunderland. It must be remembered, also, that the inhabitants of the town had developed different attitudes towards raising families. In early century it was necessary to go for numbers in order to obtain infant survivors. Improved conditions in later century altered this. As health and education improvements slowly grew, the attitudes towards family numbers altered. A relaxation of

family strain gave a breathing-space. Thus, in common with other towns, Sunderland increased its population rapidly but by a reducing rate in the last quarter of the century.

The rate of immigration was also playing an important rôle in the growth of population. People came to seek work in Sunderland from the countryside of Durham, from established areas of Britain, from the mining valleys of Wales, from the tin-mines of Cornwall, from Scotland and more heavily in mid-century from Ireland.²¹ Again one must turn to the development of the town to see what attracted outsiders. Even before the improved facilities, Sunderland had an important harbour, exporting vast quantities of coal. The many collier-boats which people saw by day and night moving up and down the east coast originated or were built in Sunderland harbour, thus expanding its reputation around Britain. Some of the immigrants came to County Durham pit villages, especially those villages between Sunderland and Durham City. They regularly saw the keelmen paddling upriver to Sunderland. The town's pulling-power extended well beyond its boundaries and past its surrounding hills.

As coalshipments and shiplaunches rose, so the immigrant population rose; and one of the largest identifiable immigrant groups was the Irish. There were 4,000 Irish and 2,300 Scots in the 1831 Census Report.²² Until 1846 the North-East had not been a major Irish immigrant area. After this point it was soon to reach fourth most important in Britain. Apart from coming voluntarily in search of its reputation the Irish came to Sunderland and elsewhere for another reason. The potato blight

21 D. J. Dougan, (Durham Univ. M.A. Thesis, 1968) p. 146.

22 D. J. Dougan, (Durham Univ. M.A. Thesis, 1968) p. 26.

in the decade upto mid-century forced many Irish families to look for a new life-style elsewhere. Yet from 1851 to 1861 Sunderland's Irish immigration was lower than that for County Durham. It obviously took time for the town's reputation to build. Yet the reaction of different British communities to the Irish was vastly different from area to area. Newspapers and chronicles of the time give some mention of the Irish in the community in the North-East. In comparison with other groups it would seem that they settled reasonably well.²³ On the West Coast, closest to Liverpool the response was more turbulent. Any over-concentration of a particular group could produce this. Once away from the immediate ports, they blended more easily. Occasionally a concentration might occur for local reasons. In the North-East, however, the Irish appeared for the most part to absorb quite well into the community, sometimes to their disadvantage. The unskilled often accepted less sought-after employment. They might go to less popular pits, to the dirtier or more laborious aspects of chemical or steel-handling. They often formed the major part of navigation teams, cutting rail-routes. Before 1860 there were few Irish in the small shipyards. Hartley's glassworks, until its collapse mid-century, employed Irish. Their strength and industry also made them a popular choice for work in lime-kilns and the quarries of Sunderland. Least contentiously and most appealingly to British life-style, they were often self-employed as shoemakers or tailors. At the bottom of this scale, some became tinkers.

Far from producing resentment, the Irish provided a rich source of, often, cheap labour. It might be said that it was to

23 R. J. Cooter, *The Irish in Co. Durham and Newcastle c. 1840-1880* (Durham Univ., M.A. Thesis, 1972) pp. 22-61.

their discredit to let themselves fall into such a situation. Yet until they had established themselves it was obviously a more sensible posture. Living within the fluctuating fortunes of Sunderland's world products the Irish provided a readily-employable but easily-disposable labour surplus. That unpredictability of North-East industries might well account for the successful integration of the Irish there. Their acceptance of poorer conditions of work, their non-controversial attitudes (even in the rare instance of union representation) must have surely accounted for some of their success; unfortunately it was not to be based on equality at first. The tradition in the town for Irish education and almsdeeds assisted in speeding up this process. Furthermore, pro-Irish sentiment in the Sunderland newspapers of late-century was discernible in the form of editorials encouraging Home-Rule.

One aspect of Irish life threatened to spoil this situation. Separated from parochial influence some of the Irish had a tendency towards intemperance. Even much later in their integration into other areas it was a common problem of newly-arrived immigrants. Elsewhere, the incidence of unlawfulness in towns was often higher than their numerical representation. It sufficiently concerned the Catholic Church for Cardinal Manning to establish a League of the Cross in the North-East in 1882. This allegiance of the Irish in a foreign land also helped to alleviate a socially less-noticeable problem, that of drift from the faith. An 'Irish Collection' of one halfpenny per week was taken in the churches.²⁴ This brought financial support.

24 J. F. Heyes, Roman Catholic Education in Co. Durham 1580 - 1870 (Durham Univ., M.Ed. Thesis, 1969) p. 240.

Ironically, the poverty of the Irish, unhappily experiencing intemperance and loss of faith, served as a source of inspiration to English Catholics. The Christ-like poverty fitted in with the mood currently running through the Church. There is no doubt that within the mid-century town of Sunderland, the Irish arrived at a fortunate moment and had a fortuitous reception and influence.

Politically, by late nineteenth century, Sunderland was fairly calm. Just like other areas it had had its share of outspoken leaders. Lilburne was one such person. Strong religious adherence also affected political attitudes. So, too, Sunderland's connections with mining brought it into immediate contact with the workers' movement. Yet in a successful town like Sunderland personal gain was often readily-available; earnest political struggle was not always necessary in later century. There were even those who felt that since the town experienced such trade fluctuations they could not afford to let political causes predominate over the good fortune which they might experience in their lives,

'This is an important part of the background to the region's economic development for such growth would have been much less likely in a society obsessed to any marked degree with revolutionary fervour or beset by a continual stream of political disturbances. The relative social tranquillity was maintained during a period of arguable achievements of regions such as the North-East during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.'²⁵

Life in the town was, of course, a patchwork of conflicting emotions. Yet conflict and violence did in fact exist alongside cohesion and mutual sympathy,

25 N. McCord, North-East England, The region's development, 1760 - 1960: an economic and social history, 1979, p. 193.

'In a variety of ways the history of this period saw an advance in the position of the workers. Their trade organisations had as it were come of age and there was the beginning of penetration into positions of influence in regional and national administrations. During this period of great economic development it had been easier for some workers to rise further and faster than in other periods.'²⁶

The two counties of Northumberland and Durham had, in general, greatly differing Parliamentary allegiance. Durham was mainly a Liberal county. Northumberland was mainly Tory. In spite of these historical connections individual interests often prevailed over national and local efforts to exercise interest and control; and local control grew into a formal superstructure in the second half of the nineteenth century. As in other parts of Britain there was great suspicion and resentment when local rates were increased to cover growing administration costs. In the case of a ratepayer who just barely qualified for franchise, rates could be a crucial factor in domestic expenditure especially in times of recession. Shopkeepers, in particular, were reluctant ratepayers. Local government workers were resented; cases involving them in corruption tended to be overemphasised. Nevertheless in spite of all these obstacles the century saw considerable increases in Government activity by agencies of both central and local government.

Of the later century Parliamentary representatives from Sunderland mention should be made of two because of their personal importance for the town but also because of the contrast between them. George Hudson was the first. It has been mentioned that the extensions of a harbour and rail network were crucial

26 N. McCord, North-East England, p. 198.

to the development of Sunderland.²⁷ Just so, he was crucial to the development of the former. He is a classic example of an influential outsider using personal and Parliamentary experience to gain a seat on a restricted local platform in pursuit of his own career. All involved, the politician and the voters, were fully aware of 'the deal'. They neither expected more than promised, nor got it. Several years before the end of his period of office (1845 - 59) his dealings in the Company, created to accomplish the harbour and rail-yard, were called into question. By that point, however, the work was mostly completed. His powerful efforts had been successful. The inevitably tangled details of such strain were only minor to the accomplished task.

The other member of Parliament, John Candlish, was a Trojan worker in the cause of local and national politics, for its own sake. He cared passionately about the fortunes of Sunderland. He was present at most public meetings, most Council meetings and most Parliamentary sessions. In the Sunderland Times during the short period of his office (1871 - 72) one could read in the Parliamentary section of his statement in 'the House' and in the same twice-weekly newspaper, his opinion at local council meetings. He by far outstripped North-East MPs in Parliamentary attendances, was passionately committed to education and eventually gained a seat on the School Board. The town needed men of both types and fortunately they, too, were there at the right time. The influence of Candlish (and others like him) on education in Sunderland will feature in later chapters.

Another example of the fortunes of Sunderland in appointing

27 H. Bowling (ed.) Some chapters on the History of Sunderland, 1969, Sunderland, pp. 74-75.

the right men at the right time can be seen in the Medical Officers of Health. Health, it has been shown, was a dominant feature in the lives of people of the eighteenth and nineteenth century. Sanitary problems affected rich and poor and thus also did disease. A mid-century report on the town (1848) indicated typical gaps in rate-collection and consequential shortfalls in drainage, watching, lighting and cleansing. Large privies next to houses, streams running through graveyards and all the usual abhorrent aspects of urban, industrial life were put into print. It has been stated that the very hills which provided obstacles to coal-movement from inland were also the source of abundant pure water. This obviously became more important in the fight against bad health.

The Medical Officer of Health was quick to spot the problems of immediate concern. He drew these problems to the attention of the public in his annual reports on the town from 1873 - reprinted in the town's newspaper; he helped to create bye-laws to make people take him seriously and finally offered assistance in alleviation of such. For example, lime was available in cleansing areas of health-risk. He also published handbills and established medical aid and dispensaries. He rounded on the dairies and butcheries, being large-scale distributors of food for general consumption. Mr. Yeld was a perfect choice in his ability to relate to the public; it was important that the new Government powers should be introduced with subtlety. As the earliest Medical Officer of Health Mr. Yeld was ideal for this post. By contrast, his successor Mr. Harris was more academic and had a very pervasive mind. He studied records and health statistics. To his credit he identified an unhealthy piece of ground, on which houses were

built, at Monkwearmouth; he pinpointed outbreaks of enteritis to certain foods during certain climatic changes. One of his main areas of concern was the health of babies and children. He was very critical of unqualified midwives who delivered babies. He attempted to fight strong traditions of 'hardening up' and parental aversion to washing children. He pointed to the dangers of incorrect feeding, often made worse by good wages which afforded the wrong diet. He also issued handbills on feeding and cleansing. For his part he represented the Health Act in his contact with the School Board members - representing, for their part, the 1870 Education Act. He criticised the movement towards the creation of larger Board Schools. He also criticised the habit of sending pupils to enquire after sick absentees. In general, however, the two departments, Health and Education, had a concordant relationship. In the same way as the politicians, the officers of Health responded to the towns needs; they were the right men for the right posts at the right time.

So it was that a sleepy fishing hamlet by a combination of circumstances burst into the nineteenth century. The circumstances all combined at the same time to allow the town to dominate in coal-shipment and shipbuilding. As the need for expansion grew, the town had the facilities to let the growth take place. The only casualty in the whole process was the sleepy fishing hamlet which had started the whole transformation. It eventually could not take the strain; but unfortunately in one of its moments of greatest need (under pressure of epidemic) those who had benefitted from its facilities were unable to relieve its torment. Even so the old port area was eventually dispensed with and Sunderland gushed into the unknown of the twentieth century on a wave that had already peaked by the earliest years of the new School Board.

CHAPTER 2

A fair effort : existing educational provision in Sunderland
before 1870

During the nineteenth century Sunderland attracted great wealth and profit from its increasingly successful coal-shipment and ship-manufacture. Unfortunately, certain parts of the town had to suffer hardship in order to sustain this profiteering. Amongst this poor community in Sunderland was a proportion of Catholics. Most of these were Irish who were to accommodate themselves well into the North-east community. The Catholic poor were probably the largest single group amongst the lowest stratum of society,

'In the larger towns, for example Sunderland, they were a much higher proportion of the destitute poor.'¹

Roman Catholic clergy had, however, for some time seen the importance of the education of the young; education of future generations offered hope for a group such as Catholics which had suffered to re-emerge into British society. The Catholic community, therefore, learned to appreciate the value of education from early in the century. Even so, its inherent poverty held back its enthusiasm,

'The poverty of the Roman Catholic communities was the main impediment to progress. Even the Catholic Poor Schools Committee could make little impact.'²

Not only was the Catholic community poor, but before mid-century it was proving difficult to try to urge the clergy to apply for the grants to which they might be entitled,

'The mistrust of State inspection in the nineteenth century meant that the actual school buildings were

1. R.J. Cooter, (Durham Univ., M.A. Thesis, 1972) p. 29.

2. J.F. Heyes, (Durham Univ., M.Ed. Thesis, 1969) p. 206.

entirely provided by the managers because of the fear of permanent inspection that acceptance of a building grant entailed.'³

From very early in the nineteenth century, thus, there had been Catholic education in the town of Sunderland. As early as 1813 Rev. Father Wilcock began a day school for girls. In case it may be imagined that this does not represent any significant lead in Catholic education it should be borne in mind that there were no more than ten Catholic Elementary schools on record in 1800 and most of these were in London.⁴ Even by 1818 only 31 Catholic school-rooms were recorded in the whole of England for only 7,000 pupils. Yet this school of 1813 was not to be the main starting point of Sunderland's Catholic education. It was an Irish priest Father Kearney who arrived in 1829, with his knowledge of the power of clerical education then building up in Ireland, who was to be the prime mover. He built the Church of St. Mary's in central Sunderland. From this important site next to the new bridge – which had altered the town's commercial axis – he set about bringing professionalism into the town's Catholic educational system. He adamantly demanded, from the founder of the Christian Brothers in Ireland, two teaching brethren,

'Mr Rice I will not leave this room 'til you promise me two brothers.'⁵

The demands of the founder himself, however, were difficult to meet. From the impoverished Catholic community in Sunderland Father Kearney had to find a furnished house and £50 per annum. He managed to do this and also to raise a further £20 to cover travel expenses. In June 1836 the first two Christian Brothers

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3. J.F. Heyes, (Durham Univ, M.Ed thesis, 1969) Introduction.
 4. J. Kitching, Roman Catholic Education, 1700 - 1870, (Leeds Univ., Ph.D. Thesis, 1966) pp. 200-201.
 5. W. Gillespie, The Christian Brothers in England, 1825-1880, Bristol, 1975, p. 65.

arrived. The insistence on these conditions of service was, however, to sow seeds which bore a bitter fruit in later years. Nevertheless the Brothers came and with their conspicuous black robes rustled and flapped a new confidence into the Catholic community.

Whether it was the absence of schools which the poor could afford or the reputation of the Irish teaching force (especially in a formal 'uniform'), the school soon filled. Yet the Catholic pupils were in the minority. Before the great Irish Immigration of the 1840s the Catholic population of the town was not high. Thus even from the earliest days the Sunderland schools of the Christian Brothers were to be unique by their minority of Catholic pupils. Thus also the poorest, single group in the town was helping to fund education for its fellow-poor. The local newspaper took up a non-Christian argument, speaking of the iniquity of two Irish monks teaching 250 Protestant boys and converting them to the popish religion. The Protestant poor, though, did not seem to have been bothered; this was in spite of the fact that their own children received Religious lessons, learned Catholic prayers and were taken to the Catholic Church. There were some incidents of 'culture-clash', but even these have their equivalents in modern parent-teacher relationships. The Brothers had to overcome the initial problem of discipline and found the Sunderland pupils,

'.... Some of the most unmanageable that they ever had to teach. It gave them enough to do for some months to keep them from fighting and quarrelling, not to speak of teaching them.'⁶

Faced with such a situation the Brothers had to have recourse to some very firm handling,

'I remember one incident.... one of the boys got a few slaps and when he went home made his case

6. W. Gillespie, The Christian Brothers, p. 66.

known to his mother. She met the Brothers in the street and abused them telling them they had run away from the bogs of Ireland and had come to kill their bairns.'

Even so, the school continued to thrive. By 1839 there were 300 scholars even though only 73 of them were Catholic. This feature of Catholic clergy ministering to temporal needs in the town, irrespective of the religious beliefs of the receivers, was to last for many decades into the present century.

During the 1830s and 1840s, however, voluntary schools in England were moving towards the grant-earning system. They were gaining respectability, also, from better-quality pupils and often raising fees in the process. This was to bring a headlong clash with the tenets of the Christian Brothers' organisation. Their brief rules and vows mentioned only gratuitous education and by refusing to take more than 1d per week from any child they acted from conscience and principle,

'It is unanimously decreed that none of our day schools shall be part of any Government system without the approbation of a future General Chapter.'⁷

This crisis of conscience combined itself with a period when Reverend Father Kearney was having great difficulty in maintaining the housing allowance and all other expenses. The bank in which he had invested money in return for a regular interest was having problems. He wrote to ask for an alleviation of the terms of service. This was denied. He knew also that not only could he not raise the pupils' fees but he would not get very far in applying for a Government grant. Firstly, the General Chapter had shown disapproval; but secondly the Privy Council would probably not be willing to grant it. It had only been in 1829 that the

7. W. Gillespie, The Christian Brothers, p. 130.

Catholic Emancipation Bill had been passed. So soon afterwards, public opinion would have possibly frowned upon a Government, granting aid to a Roman Catholic School run by male Religious. In 1848, therefore, Father Kearney was left with no alternative but to inform the Brothers that they must leave. Thus after twelve years of breathtaking ecumenism, this exciting venture appeared to be at an end.

Yet the wheel of fortune was to halt favourably for Sunderland many times in the nineteenth century. So it was that during the period of the Christian Brothers' stay, in 1843, the Sisters of Mercy had come to the town to serve the sick, the poor, and the ignorant. Six nuns had come to Sunderland from Cork. From that year they had organised and run the Girls' and Infant Schools. They had built up these two schools with the same care that the Christian Brothers had built up the Boys' school. Therefore, they also took over the daunting task of the boys' education.

One sees a very interesting contrast between the Boys' and Girls' schools in the report of an Inspector who visited about the time of the departure of the Christian Brothers,

'Several of the boys have acquired an amount of knowledge rarely attained in primary schools particularly in the elementary branches of mathematical science which the master, who has obtained a First Class Certificate of merit and who possesses the combination of gifts so necessary in his profession, is eminently qualified to teach. The welfare of the school which appears to be highly appreciated in the neighbourhood is carefully cherished by the resident clergy of whose ardent and enlightened zeal in the cause of education and intelligent cooperation with the Committee of Council, it is impossible to speak too highly.'⁸

The inspector was obviously greatly impressed. One also gets the

8. M.C.C.E., 1850, pp. 524 - 525.

same impression from the inspection of the Girls' School. However, in the case of the latter one sees a higher social level of pupils. This would enable the Nuns more flexibility in maintaining income and responding to the grants' system.

'The Girls' School which is divided into 16 classes and superintended by a large body of teachers trained in the institute of the Sisters of Mercy, is the most interesting of all those which I have had the pleasure to visit. Many of the girls appear to belong to the middle classes and reflect in their whole deportment the happy influence of their teachers....Upon the whole, I conceive that in these schools, which reflect the highest credit on their managers and teachers the most important objects which are included in any system of primary education, are fully realised and they cannot but, exercise in the course of years an immense influence upon the moral and social condition of the population to whose highest interest they so essentially minister. Such schools deserve to be ranked amongst the most valuable institutions which a nation can possess.'⁹

This last phrase was to be prophetic for the town of Sunderland. By the last year of the School Board, the Sisters of Mercy who had moved from strength to strength, transferred to larger premises which they named St. Anthony's. Here they made part of the site into a Catholic Pupil-teacher centre. Ten years later it was to move to the present site at Oak Lea. Eventually, also, the Christian Brothers returned and took over the Jesuit-run St. Mary's Grammar (opened in 1927). This formed the basis of St. Aidan's Boys' School. This redoubtable pair of Catholic Secondary Schools, run by clergy, spread the academic excellence of Sunderland's Catholic Education to many distant corners and placed them veritably 'amongst the most valuable institutions which a nation can possess'.

The strength of the schools had come as much as anything from the strength of the teachers. Catholic teachers within the town

9. M.C.C.E., 1850, p.525

proved time and time again their ability to obtain honours in their professional training. Mr. Andrew Weir the head master of St. George's R.C. was stated to be the first certificated teacher in the town.¹⁰ In the 1856 report on the North, the inspector states that pupil-teachers were not forthcoming. Of those that were, it was to be the Catholic Candidates who moved onwards,

'In Durham and Northumberland the managers seem to have been unable to fill the vacancies for pupil-teachers. At the Summer exam of mistresses held in Sunderland, out of very few candidates two were successful.'

These two were, in fact, from Catholic schools. The progress of educational provision, in general, was to be constantly held back, amongst other things, by the shortfull of pupil-teachers,

'The supply of boys as pupil-teachers is falling short.... The Government allowance.... is hardly sufficient to maintain a boy of 13 or 14 years. [The teacher] apprenticeship takes rank amongst the least remunerative employments... Gray School Sunderland:

<u>Boys leaving</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Wage</u>	<u>Employment</u>
Snowden	12	6s.	Rigger
Smiles	12	4s.	Office
Guest	10	2/6 at first	Sail loft
Harrison	11	6s - 10s	Ballast Crane
Wellerell	13	6s.	Docks ¹¹

Boys in pits earn 1s to 1/6, for 10 to 15 year olds, (day work).

Alternatively, it is 2s to 4s for 11 to 20 year olds, (piece work).

'There is a constant demand for the labour of young children in a variety of dirty employments which afford much higher immediate pay than a teacher-apprenticeship. Boys' parents prefer to sacrifice the education of their children. There is no doubt that eventually the wages of these boys will not be equal to those of the schoolmaster.... Railway offices in some parts of England are managed mainly by boys.... There are railway stations in this district where the whole work is done by boys whom I have known as scholars in a neighbouring school.... and the young

10. L.P. Crangle, The Roman Catholic Community in Sunderland from the 16th century, Sunderland, 1969 (pamphlet) p. 72.

11. M.C.C.E., 1855, p. 568.

clerk has not to wait 12 months for his pay. The low number of applications create poor choice. There is also a deficiency... in supply of candidates for admission to Queen's Scholarship.... There is no Training School for Mistresses in the four Northern Counties but there is one for Masters at Durham.'

Out of 28 males who started Durham Training School, four kept small schools, two emigrated, two work in Engineers' yards, two in farming, twelve were clerks in Railway or clerks' offices and six were unknown.

'I am inclined to believe that this deficiency in the supply of candidates.... may be traced.... to the abundance of all kind of employment in this part of England.... In this district there is no doubt that during the last two years the standard of instruction and the average age of children in schools under inspection has steadily declined:

	<u>THE AVERAGE AGE OF BOYS PRESENT IN CLASS</u>			
	I	II	III	IV
Newcastle	10.5	9.2	6.7	4
Durham	11.0	10.4	9.8	9
Shields	10.2	9.7	9	8.2
Sunderland	10.3	9.7	9	8.5
	I	II	III	IV

In pits the average is lower.... the 1st class is commonly 9.2 Thus irregular attendance and early employment are the two evils.'¹²

Against these descriptions the good progress of Sunderland Catholic pupil-teachers is doubly remarkable. Since they often came from the poorest families, the alternative attraction of a good regular income from an adolescent must have been great. Obviously the Catholic parents were often determined to let their children pursue a longer term goal with short-term disadvantages. The young pupil-teachers certainly received plenty of guidance and leadership from their own teachers in the Catholic schools. In the 1848 report on the North, honours flowed towards the Catholic teachers. In the

12. M.C.C.E., 1855, pp. 569 -576.

examinations for Catholic Teachers a 1st and 3rd class certificate were awarded to the Christian Brothers from St. Mary's.¹³ The year after this, Sunderland received special mention in the report on regional examinations. In 1850 at St. Mary's Training College, Hammersmith a Sunderland teacher obtained a 1st Class merit. It was the only one awarded that year.

One cannot help but admire the spirit and determination of the whole Catholic movement as it emerged from its years in the wilderness at the beginning of the nineteenth century. It is almost as though it had gained strength from this period of retreat. No longer predominant by royal right and protection, it was reborn into an age of evangelism. The image of poverty and humility acted as a further lubricant in order to assist it into public acceptability. Obviously much resentment still existed and was to exist, as was seen in the early Board years of many districts. Fee-payment for poor children caused a stir in many areas. Often this meant payment of fees for Catholic children. Often also local fears proved to be unfounded since the amounts paid over for such children were minimal. Besides, in the North East the Catholic Community was to gain acceptability and to put down deep roots. This acceptability of the immigrant Irish into this region was crucial. Also crucial was the benign humility with which the Catholics accepted and worked for their achievement. For all their success with early century schools of quality, they kept the situation under control at all times. Hard-headed, realistic priests and canons pushed relentlessly, but without creating animosity, in order to obtain staging-posts for future expansion. The Catholic community in Sunderland chose carefully where it was to position its schools. It selected four main areas and worked at these to create quality and excellence. In many large towns

13. J.F. Heyes, (Durham Univ., M. Ed., Thesis, 1969) p. 240.

and cities of Britain, Catholic Schools, often few in number, were to stand out for excellence and reliability. This position was not reached by accident. Conversely nor was it reached simply to put Catholic schools above all others. The situation arose because of the wholehearted commitment of the Catholic Church, often supported by Irish religious. This commitment of the clergy transferred itself to the Catholic population which responded, as one can see in Sunderland, by making sacrifices in the present for future gain. In the same way that the poverty and humility of Christ echoed the belief that 'Blessed are the poor in Spirit for they shall inherit ...'; just so the whole Catholic movement felt that self-sacrifice in order to promote education would bring future benefit to the entire community.

Another main group at work nationally was of course the Established Church. In Sunderland by 1808 two parochial schools were in existence. Only one of these was in the district of Old Sunderland. By 1832 these schools were providing places for 570 boys and 230 girls for 1d per week. North of the river in Monkwearmouth one of Durham Diocese's proudest schools had been built in 1855. This was to be the only voluntary school accepted as a permanent Board School - Monkwearmouth Colliery School. In the same category of quality schools was Gray School run by Reverend Peters. It is interesting to compare the report of the Boys' with the Girls' School. In the two Catholic Schools, reported on around the same time, one felt that the girls were from a slightly higher social level than the boys. Certainly the life of the teachers did not seem as fraught in the Girls' school. Yet, if the female teachers were under less strain from the female pupils they were certainly under equal strain from the sewers.

This is how he saw Gray Boys' School. There was a fair supply of books and apparatus. Two classes of children sat along the walls who did not know their letters. The fair discipline had improved since the previous year. The teacher had been there for $1\frac{1}{2}$ years and there had been an improvement. He had a certificate of merit. A so-called classroom had been added since last year. The building was enclosed by high houses on three sides. The teacher was not in the school house—due to the badness of the site. The general progress of the boys was as creditable as could be expected under the circumstances.

Gray Girls' School: There was a good supply of reading books, maps and boards. Seven classes were under one mistress, three pupil - teachers and several monitors. The children were clean, neat and generally attentive. The teacher had been there $4\frac{1}{2}$ years, was amiable and highly-respected but not physically and intellectually equal to the charge of the school. Her health suffered due to the insalubriousness of the school in narrow, filthy streets in the densest part of Sunderland. The girls had made fair progress but it was difficult to hear. Local ladies showed an interest and visited.¹⁴

If one assumes that these local ladies were not the cleaners, it is an indication of Anglican middle class concern for the education of the poor. Indeed, it is extremely laudable that persons of standing should venture into places whose physical description fits that given above. Reports on other National Schools that year display similar problems of site and condition of property. The east wall of Bishopwearmouth Infants was shored up. The Boys' and Girls' School building stood on vaults of stagnant water. At Monkwearmouth Boys' School one regular teacher was teaching 308 pupils.

14. M.C.C.E., 1858, p. 459.

In newer, expanding areas conditions were not as bad. Deptford National had much lower numbers with around 100 boys and girls in both departments. Of these National Schools only one was in the parish of Old Sunderland where the Catholic teaching clergy had established their earliest schools. However, although the National schools started to recruit from the better families as the century progressed, there is no hiding the fact that many of their schools were in a distressed state. In 1852 it was stated that at Sunderland Gray National School 220 girls shared one privy which was at one end of the Schoolroom. The headmistress became ill because of the effluvia flowing from the 'offices' - whether by looking at or being infected by the filth it is not stated.

As the Board period approached the Anglicans expanded into the newly-forming suburbs of artisan dwellings. The records in the directories show an interesting pattern. Once the suburb had expanded beyond a reasonable walking distance from the nearest Church, a Chapel was built. After a few years a schoolroom would appear in the same location. It was almost as though the Established Church was dipping its toe into the non-sectarian waters of the new estates. The abundance of non-conformist chapels in these areas gave evidence of this. Using this method the Church in fact reached a total of twelve schools by the start of the Board period. These were spread evenly around the town. Whereas the Catholic schools had tended to stay within 'tiny-feet' walking distance of the poorer areas, the Established Church was most markedly fighting for the new estates. Possibly they were simply trying to stay as far away as possible from their dark, dank, infested National school predecessors.

It has been stated that the Anglican and Roman Catholic schools had provided the most clearly-identifiable pattern of schools. Both groups, incidentally, continued to provide extra accommodation during the Board's life. However, the third main provider of schools was the group of non-conformist religions. In a strongly non-conformist town like Sunderland it might be expected that this type of school would predominate. In fact, the quantity and variety of non-conformist beliefs undermined the overall strength. In the forty years upto the Board period, from the time of first grants, many of these churches opened schools. Out of all the Presbyterian, Primitive, Baptist, Bethany, Friends, Union and Smyrna Chapel Schools which opened and closed it was the Wesleyan Methodist Schools which rode out the storm. In fact many continued to stay open well into the Board period. In 1850 one of the Wesleyan Schools assumed the title of British School. In spite of the general move of the non-conformist Schools to close when the Board started, the one in Nicholson Street stayed open until 1884.

The non-conformist religions involved themselves in a surge of school openings between 1850 and 1870. Many of these schools were not purpose-built, substantial properties. In many instances another building or church might be rented or acquired. Only the Wesleyan Church built its own schools with fervour and conviction. By the time of the commencement of the Board it had five substantial schools. Also, whereas the other non-conformist religions tended to close their schools with the arrival of the Board, the Wesleyans retained theirs often well into the Board period. Today, these nineteenth century areas of Sunderland are peppered with non-conformist chapels. Sometimes it is difficult even to identify them. They are built in the same red brick as the terraced cottages and are no higher than the apex of these latter. Nor do they

occupy much more ground-space. The directories of the town from mid-century upto the Board period portray an endlessly-changing range of church names and their addresses. The same applies to the schools. Obviously many of these remaining chapels have been schools at some time. In contrast with the dedication of the Catholics, and with the courage shown by the Anglicans in surviving their time-worn place-of-work the non-conformist attitude to education can only be judged as changeable – except for the Wesleyans. Yet non-sectarianism was predominant in the town. This gives a hint that many of ordinary people in Sunderland were happy to let the educational 'status quo' remain, although not necessarily out of disinterest; it was just as likely that they felt quietly confident that it was in safe hands. Equally importantly the population had shown that it was quite willing to cross religious barriers in order to send children to school.

Another group of schools was that which offered special provision. Within this category a Wesleyan School of Industry appeared in Nicholson Square just before the awarding of the first grant. By 1844 this school for 86 girls was being described as 'an excellent establishment'.¹⁵ After that date two other Schools of Industry appeared, one in Monkwearmouth and another called the Smyrna School. Towards the end of the Board period a Reformatory was also established. In Sunderland the Industrial Schools appear to have been very efficient and popular. There is frequent reference to them in the newspapers; and reports on them appear as glowing testimonies. Later in the period these comments went into the Board's Minutes. In June 1871 in the midst of total uproar the Board calmed temporarily to hear the Industrial School annual report.

15. Vint and Carr, Directory of Sunderland, Sunderland, 1844, p. xxix.

The report was universally accepted as a good one. Subjects taught were woodwork, tailoring and shoe-making for which they received 5s per week from the Government. There were 86 inmates. Six months later the Board's General Purposes Committee recommended Government inspection for the Industrial School and also that the 'ex officio' members of the Industrial School be Board Members. They also wanted: the right to visit at any time, quarterly returns, reports (back to the Board) of entries and leavers and no outside boarders. In return the Board agreed on a grant of 2s 6d per week.

A ragged school opened in 1849,

'Ragged schools lay between the Work House and the Common Day School.... designed for street urchins; free meals of bread and soup enticed pupils.'¹⁶

Also at this lower end was the Workhouse School. In 1834 the Poor Law Amendment Act gave a push in this direction. It gave....

'Workhouse children an education in Workhouse or nearby schools. The Board of Guardians paid the fees. Sunderland built a school soon after the changes of the Act.'¹⁷

In 1851 there were 35 children attending. By the start of the Board period this had become 145. Similarly in 1853 an Orphan Asylum had been built on the Town Moor in the dock area. This provided a nautical education for the orphans of dead sailors. By the start of the Board period there were 40 boys in there.

The main charity school to continue in existence was the Donnison's school in Church Walk. This school (now part of a preserved sector of early Sunderland, including Holy Trinity Church and the Trafalgar Square complex) had been bequeathed around 1770 for the teaching of sewing and reading to 36 girls. They were to receive clothes at Christmas and Summer plus two pairs of shoes. In 1827 a school teacher's house was built next to it. Such

16. R. Pallister, Pauper schools for working-class children in Co Durham in the early nineteenth century, North-East group for the study of Labour History, 1977, pp. 9 - 11.

17. R. Pallister, Pauper Schools, pp. 9 - 11.

charity schools 'screened' entry of pupils for health, attitude, attendance-potential and honesty. Thus it was often the 'super-pauper' who gained entry. It is interesting to note, nevertheless, that by the time of the Board's arrival out of some 11 thousand or more existing school places, in efficient schools, less than three hundred were for the very poor by implication of their school title. Nor during the Board's life were any applicants for fee-payment logged. Perhaps some of Sunderland's profitability was actually making its way down to the poor to make life a little less destitute.

An important contribution towards the town's education was the Sunday School movement. Not that it offered great advances in education but it helped to introduce a learning environment into the lives of children. Sunday Schools offered a tenuous, yet useful educational contact for many children who would otherwise have had none. In common with other types of provision it was only those parents who were interested who sent their children. 'Sunday School', however, raised the problem of 'Sunday best'. Yet in Sunderland the movement was quite strong. The Sunderland Sunday School movement had 72 schools and 1,766 teachers. In April 1871 they marched through the streets of the town to show their allegiance. Some 7,000 children were in the march. Numbers attending from four schools in particular were quite impressive: Hood Street, 250; Dock Street, 500; Maling's Rigg, 250; Flag Lane, 300.¹⁸ The names alone of the Streets are formidable. Perhaps Sunday afternoons was the only time when it was safe to step out in such areas. It does confirm, though, the type of area where these schools were having most influence. Such large numbers on the march might lead one to wonder whether part of the town had simply

i8. S. H., 11th April, 1871.

decided to 'take the air' that Sunday afternoon - especially if a special tea had been arranged for its conclusion. However, evidence was also provided of actual attendances. Teachers' attendances of 70% indicate the strong level of commitment. 93% of the teachers had been to school themselves. Also three quarters of them were Church members. This indicates a healthy flow of new, non-confirmed teachers. Pupils' average-attendances were 77% a.m. and 81% p.m. Also, 17% of the pupils were aged 14 years or more. Furthermore, in that year 77% of pupil-attenders became Church members. Obviously the Sunday School movement in Sunderland was not to be ignored - for who could ignore such assiduously collected statistics. It shows that there was at the very least a positive attitude to religion and education. The Sunday Schools helped to sow the seeds of a formal learning-situation and even at the lowest level brought the word 'school' into regular use in the homes of the poor. Their educational value was not high but their social contribution should not be underestimated.

The Private Venture Schools are another category of schooling which should not be overlooked. In the 1870 census of existing efficient schools drawn up in the Board's first year,¹⁹ there were some 700 boys and girls at four adventure schools. The -inspectorate included these schools as part of the Town's provision.

'There is some doubt whether the Whitburn Street Wesleyan will be continued. If this school or either of the adventure schools in this district (Scotch Church, Whickham St, Salem Court) cease to be efficiently maintained, the deficiency will be still further, increased.'²⁰

In comparison with the other 25 schools in that list providing a further 11 thousand places, the private venture provision was small,

19. Appendix I

20. S.S.B.L.B., 7th February, 1873

at least officially so in the inspected schools: but there must have been much more going on between the lines of the directories. In the 1871 directory compiled before the start of the Board period there were 163 teachers listed in Sunderland. Obviously some of these taught in the 25 public elementary schools.... Equally obviously (judging by inspectoral references to pupil - teachers' ratios running into 1:300) many did not. In order to appear in a trade directory it is likely that many of them were available for and in the process of teaching at the time. A reasonable assumption would be that a number of the teachers used their own properties for teaching but were not listed in the schools' section. Of these 173 teachers, 71 were Miss, 76 were Mr, 20 were Mrs and two were Reverend. A good number of the addresses were in the areas of the town of better housing stock. It is likely therefore, that there was a small body of 'educational entrepreneurs' to match those of business and commerce, in this thriving town of Sunderland.

Since elementary education began to extend into secondary education later in the century and there was some overlap before the Board period, it is useful to look at a few schools of this type which were in existence before the Board was established. Mention has already been made of Gray School which appears in the 1870 list. This opened in 1808 in Bishopwearmouth well away from the poor part of Old Sunderland. In 1812 it moved into a new school-house opposite the church in Low Row. The boys occupied the downstairs; the girls occupied the upstairs. It later took the site of Rectory Park. This school offered a general course in the 3Rs. In addition older pupils learned Grammar, History, Geography, Geology, Arithmetic, Book-keeping, Geometry, Mechanics, Chemistry and Vocal Music. In the Higher Course this extended to Higher Maths, Latin, French, German and Drawing. The **S**econd **S**chool

in this group was Grange School belonging to Dr. Cowan. The Grange School did not continue in its original form into the Board period but nonetheless left its mark on Northern England and Scotland. From 1822 onwards with the help of his sister who opened the Girls' School opposite, Dr. Cowan provided a rather special education. The hours were: 7 - 8 a.m. work; 8 - 9, breakfast; 9 - 1 work; 1 - 2 dinner; 2 - 5 work; 5 - 6, tea; 6 - 8, work. It was further described thus:

'There was no other school of the same kind in Sunderland or the immediate neighbourhood. Here used to be educated many boys (500 - 700) of whom some were sons of men of high rank. For many years Grange School stood almost on a level with Public school. The school met the need for boys living not only in Sunderland but from as far afield as Scotland. It was the most interesting school in Sunderland during this particular period. For some years the school was assisted by Professor Sandford, Professor of Latin and Greek at the University of Glasgow who visited and examined the boys.'²¹

Theatrical performances were given in Latin and Greek and the Professor's pupils won the prizes of the University. In the month of September there was an exhibition of fencing, drilling and gymnastics. Dr. Cowan also used to make journeys to Scotland to canvass for scholars for the schools. In 1846 the head of a Liverpool school took over. In 1860 the school closed after which it was reopened as the Boys' Academy as a preparation for commercial or professional careers. At a later date the Higher Grade school was built on top of the same site. One might take it as a compliment that the Board chose the site of this school with a special reputation for its own cherished Higher Grade School. Alternatively one can also sit upon something to show total rejection of all that it stood for. Whichever, it would have been strange if Sunderland did not have a quality school like this in order that the new,

21. T. Smith, Provision of Secondary Education in Sunderland since 1890 (Durham Univ., M. Ed Dissertation, 1969) p. 13.

wealthy inhabitants could indulge their offspring.

It was only natural that in a town like Sunderland, with a growing middle class society starting to spread its fine houses in any direction (provided it was away from the poorer worker), a private system of education, beyond elementary, would exist for those that could afford it,

'The middle classes and higher echelons of the seafaring community were catered for by private academies and organisations such as the Polytechnic Society established in 1838.'²²

Meanwhile at the lower echelons a similar type of arrangement was available; but in case they might not take it seriously it was spelt out for the ordinary man exactly what was on offer,

'To educate the illiterate, to direct the studios, to afford every necessary aid to the intelligent and ingenious and to assist every mind aspiring to knowledge.'²³

Either Sunderland had nobody answering that description or the organisation did not capture the enthusiasm of those that did; but after a decade the Polytechnic Society declined. On the other hand evening classes grew in its place. For the ordinary person in that period Technical Education was in fact Vocational Education. This meant the Teaching of Science and Art. The Government was possibly afraid that if it taught trades it might lose some secrets,

'The lack of basic scientific knowledge, the introduction of machinery, the division of labour, mass - production, large factories, capital in the hands of the few and the decline of the apprenticeship system - all brought about the Mechanics' Institute and so even greater the Technical Education Movement.'²⁴

Unfortunately the members were in fact often illiterate and the

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22. J. Makkison, The development of Higher and Further Education Sunderland since 1908 (Durham Univ., M. Ed. Thesis, 1969) p. 46
23. J. Makkison, (Durham Univ., M. Ed. Thesis, 1969) p. 46.
24. W.G. Hall, Provision of Technical Education in Sunderland prior to 1908, (Durham Univ., M. Ed. Thesis, 1964) Introduction.

facilities were used by the middle classes simply as libraries or debating societies. As a result many such institutions introduced day schools for the instruction of the 3Rs. In Sunderland the Mechanics Institute had opened in 1824 in Sans Street sharing with the School of Industry. At this latter establishment children could earn some money and not be as much a loss of income as at a day-school. By 1827 it had 250 members at 12s per annum and a library of 400 books. By 1831 the fee had dropped to 8s (Apprentices 6s) and 300 were on roll. With the expansion it moved out of shared premises to a new institute in Bridge Street. Twelve years later no reference to it could be found. Similar but even more ephemeral was the life of the School of Navigation in Hendon under the supervision of the department of Art and Science. It has no further record after 1863. Thus two schools which had humble beginnings met humble ends. It must have seemed at one point as if the town of Sunderland which was to make a fine income out of modern technology was never to have a technological base for future growth. Indeed, if it took so long to create a formal technological education establishment in the town how could the town ever hope to handle the next phase of technology in the twentieth century? Some of Sunderland's twentieth century fortunes must date back to these struggles from mid-nineteenth century.

Fortunately, for the whole effort not to be completely lost, in 1861 a school of Art and Science opened in Bridge Street. It closed in 1863. However, thinking perhaps that both Science and Art were rather too much for one tiny school, a 'last-ditch' attempt was made in 1869 with an Art School. As if to indicate that they should have tried initially with a less grandiose plan, the Art School held ground. After amalgamation with the Science and Art classes, from Monkwearmouth Colliery School it became (by the back

-door' method)the Government school of Science and Art in 1872, with premises in Fawcett Street. Classes were mostly Art but also included Science, Machine and Building Construction. After a few practice-hops around the town into different short-term premises it finally jumped to the top floor of the Town Hall. From its high perch gazing down onto the town fathers (or more importantly for the school, with them looking up to it) the School of Science and Art established itself well into the following century.

In reality, what appeared to be a failure on the part of the Mechanics' Institute, was a diversification later in the century. The central schools offered mainly day-classes; but the growing number of classes around the town-suburbs were in the evenings in local centres. By the last quarter of the century, of course, these were to take place in Board school premises; thus expansion was able to take place. Also by then the working classes were becoming more educated and able to take advantage of the extra education. From 1859 onwards payment could be made by grants for examination results. Thus, beginning within a decade before the Board period the central schools were being used during the day mainly by young women who were the daughters of shopkeepers and tradesmen (as a 'finishing establishment') for drawing and painting; whereas the growing number of out-lying evening classes were used entirely differently. In these sessions subjects included,

'Practical, Plane and Solid Geometry, machine construction and drawing; Naval Architecture; the Steam Engine. These lessons, however, were all theoretical. Apart from Drawing there was no practical work. The South Kensington Syllabus wanted useful knowledge rather than a liberal education. The teachers were: skilled men with local specialised occupational knowledge without a South Kensington qualification; Elementary School-teachers; former Science and Art class students; and educated workmen and foremen wishing to pass on benefits.'²⁵

25. W.G. Hall, (Durham Univ., M. Ed., Thesis, 1964) Introduction and pp.211-214

The prize for this nineteenth century battle for technology culminated at the turn of the century in the establishment of the Municipal Technical College. By this struggle the effort was worthwhile,

'The expansion that took place in Sunderland happened as a result of the perseverance of a few men, whose influence was far-reaching rather than a large group of convinced business-man.'²⁵

Even so, it was still not a case of attracting people to a new interest, mostly polishing up their existing skills.

'The average workman in Sunderland would not find the classes provided during the period of much use to him. Those who aspired to supervisory would be able to make most use of the Science and Art classes and Technical College especially in the student apprenticeship scheme.'²⁵

The inability of Science and Technology, generally, to attract recruits, clearly, has its origins further back than this century.

It can be seen from this fairly broad span of educational provision in the town that there was a complex system of provision nationally, since most of the groups and schools named were part of national organisations. The rôle of education in the life of the nation at the start of the nineteenth century had been seen by many ordinary people to be unimportant. This situation had arisen from the 'free-wheeling' nature of British industry and commerce. Yet as the nineteenth century progressed new social ideals began to form and a need was seen to respond to the way in which society was changing. Apart from those with the vision to see the value of education in its own right, philanthropical individuals, radicals and evangelists of the Established Church all exerted a pressure which brought forward education. 'Laissez - faire', it was seen, had for too long been allowed to hinder the education of ordinary

folk. Even so, a strong dislike of Government interference was to provide a brake on rapid progress.

At first it had been imagined that the Sunday School Movement had brought a compromise to the problem. Yet it was undeniably religious and reading of the Bible occupied much of the lesson-time. nor were the teachers uniformly experienced. The shortness of sessions, the poor quality of much of the instruction and the narrowness of the subject-matter began to become apparent. In disillusion the day school was looked to as a more sensible alternative. Thus, thoughts were applied to the best method of using the small number of teachers available in order to tackle the broad areas of ignorance. The National Society in 1811 and the British Society in 1814 both made use of the teacher as a central figure in the schoolroom supervising, examining and applying discipline whilst his ideas were promulgated by the monitors. This second alternative, of the main religious groups, to Sunday School teaching kept the concentration of the nation yet again on what voluntary effort could produce, thus releasing the pressure on the Government to innovate by itself. Furthermore, the secular-religious power-struggle between the two societies took away any remaining energy for alternative approaches. Adding support to the down-grading of the whole issue was the resistance to the whole schooling concept by industrialists and land-owners for whom school-attendance offered only interference to their work-schedules. Also, the more successful amongst these types could point to their lack of instruction and the little impact it had on their own lifestyles. The world renown of Britain had, it appeared, been gained without schooling. Natural enthusiasm and innate ability had been the most important considerations.

The explosion of urban population, nevertheless, was turning

eyes in a new direction with the passage of each new decade. Also, figures were coming to light which were difficult to ignore. Firstly, large proportions of children were receiving no education - the proportion deteriorated the worse the area became. Secondly, those that were being educated were being supported either by their parents or by the benevolence of the religious groups. The Government had virtually nothing to do with the whole process. The apparently impressive numbers in receipt of this voluntary effort were then put into proper perspective by comments which inferred that much of this education was worthless. In 1833 the Government gave out its first grant to the two main societies for education. In 1839 4/5 of the £30 thousand went to the National Society, 1/5 to the British and Foreign Society. In that same year a Committee of the Privy Council was established - the first central administrative authority - under Dr. Kay. He again reiterated that the figures given for pupils under instruction were deceptive. They were taught little, he said, and few attended. At this point inspection was a condition of the grants and certain standards had to be reached before the grant was paid. By this point, at least the Government was starting to influence the education of the populace. Even so there was a broad realisation that the needs of the country were not being satisfied. In 1856 the Education Department was created. Two years later the Government, starting to be more sensitive about expenditure, set up the Newcastle Commission. The range of schools (epitomised by the pattern in Sunderland) alarmed the Government. The low priority of education amongst the people alarmed them even more. A need was seen for regular attendance, better teaching and a broader span of subjects - especially for older pupils.

The problem of needy areas being unable to raise half the building cost and maintenance made matters worse.

Thus Robert Lowe introduced his Revised Code in 1862. Still retaining the denominational character of education, grants would be given from central office based on the attendance of pupils under a certificated teacher. The grant would be awarded subject to results of an examination of each child in the 3Rs by an inspector. In 1861 the grant had been £816,441. It dropped to £636,806 in 1865. Average attendance had been 888,923 in 1862. It rose to 1,048,493 in 1866. By the sixth standard a child would be expected to read a short passage from a newspaper, to take it down from dictation and to do arithmetic upto the bills of a parcel. The syllabus worked back down from this to age 6. At the end of each year the successful pupil would earn a grant but could not be presented more than once at the same grade. In addition there was for each pupil a capitation grant (a 5s grant based on school, average attendance figures)-and another grant. It was based on individual attendance figures. This was a grant of 8s for each pupil attending 200 or more morning or afternoon sessions. Although the Government obtained financial and numerical success, much anxiety was introduced into the classroom. However, the teaching of the 3Rs improved. In spite of all this, a large proportion of children was not at school.

By 1867 the second Reform Act had allowed many more people the opportunity to vote. Yet many were worried that a lot of these people would not have sufficient learning to appreciate this opportunity. Meanwhile, abroad, the advance of Prussia had been explained back in Britain in terms of their better education system. There was fear that U.K.'s industrial competitors France and America would take advantage. Disappointment with British performance at the

Paris exhibition underlined these fears. In Parliament, education produced more concern. There was indecision as to who was actually responsible for it. There was concern at the spread of agencies and authorities responsible for educational matters. The problem of rate-aid for education would not go away. There was concern at the large number of parishes not even receiving a grant of any sort. The change of Government at the end of the 1860s put in a Liberal Premier with new ideas. During this building of Parliamentary concern, the two main voluntary groups had formed their own Parliamentary pressure groups. The nonsectarian National Education League had been formed in Birmingham. The Anglican National Educational Union had been formed in Manchester. Both wanted every British child to be educated. The League wanted free, unsectarian, compulsory education from local rates. The Government should then supplement this with grants under local ratepayer-elected Boards. The Union preferred to keep an adapted, denominational system although it realised the need for a rate in very poor areas. It also wanted indirect compulsion. It had been noted by Applegarth of the Society of Carpenters and Joiners that in places such as America where there was a sufficiency of schools that without compulsory attendance, many pupils were not in school. This person also taunted the Government with the consideration that it would save money (spent on crime and poverty) if it heeded the League's suggestions. Thus it would appear that those people in a position to voice their opinions nationally were producing a climate for change.

Sunderland had a provision of education which represented many of these national organisations. There was also in the town the opportunity for those who had made profit to select a broader education. For the majority, however, education was what the churches had to offer. Inspectors stated that in spite of difficulties this appeared to be highly appreciated in the neighbourhood. The commitment of these clerics who taught all faiths with equal spirit must have had a marked influence on the town. The undaunted spirit of the National teachers working in difficult conditions similarly engendered appreciation. The informal local 'corner-shop' image of non-conformist chapels and their schools must have offered comfort. The people responded to the church organisations which were then able to expand into new areas. The teachers by their dedication and industry set a good example and laid the foundation for growing confidence. The Sunday School movement helped to retain contact with the 'missing pupils' until a more cohesive organisation could be established. Meanwhile, for those wishing to extend their technical skills there was the opportunity available. Nor had the town forgotten its more unfortunate members, with schools of special provision.

If there were parts of Britain without educational provision for those that wanted it, or where religious bickering held back schooling or where the Revised Code created unbearable tension or where people resented the educational, commercial and industrial advance of other countries to the detriment of their own progress — then Sunderland was not one of these.

CHAPTER 3A persuasive argument: the events leading up to the establishment of the School Board in Sunderland.

So it was, the people of Sunderland had seen from early in the nineteenth century a growing provision of education within the town. They had grown used to hearing about the brothers and the nuns, about the rather special teaching at the Gray School and the Grange and about the day and night classes on Art and Science. They had seen local chapels turned into schools and they had seen vagrants and orphans being given very special attention in a range of schools which gave them dignity. They had watched their local Sunday School classes being taken over by more and better teachers; and they had watched with pride whilst two thirds of the children in the town marched loyally behind each banner. The visible signs of existing education by 1870 were the end result of fraught struggles by voluntary groups. Their creations did not have the assistance of a major master-plan. Their buildings were the offering of charitable people trying to provide for other types of social welfare also, besides education. Their teachers were often people who had sacrificed a more lucrative adolescent wage to follow a vocation. Yet suddenly, from the mid-century period onwards, all of this charitable superstructure was subjected to the glare of reports and local child censuses, which because of the new awareness of education now drew more attention. The inevitable impression of an uncoordinated system appeared. Nor could it ever have hoped to be much more. It admitted its failings; indeed, it had no single spokesman to defend them since it was fragmented and involved nationally in internal dissension, to make matters worse. Therefore, the people of Sunderland did not feel so much in a state of frustration at lack of educational progress (with their fairly broad provision of schools)

that they thought something dramatic was needed. Balfour had looked back on this period in 1898 as though the system were on its knees,

'Times were ripening fast for a more complete change, a complete change of principle and not of detail.'¹

Yet, Harold Silver states,

'What fails to enter the analysis and presentation such as Balfour's (of the almost inevitability of the Bill that passed both Houses) is the complexity of the reality as seen by contemporaries... the nature and extent of the resistance to educational legislation pre-1870 and the weight of outright resistance and alternative strategies in the balance of opinion and policy - influencing processes in the late 1860s.'¹

Although the ordinary people of Sunderland would not have put it quite that way they certainly did not feel the need for anything too drastic - if anything at all.

However, there were nagging doubts about voluntary education and these led to a more critical appraisal of existing educational effort. Two of their most visible criteria for assessing this existing provision were the education being offered and the buildings in which it took place. In Sunderland the provision had been fair and parts of it were at a high standard; but to change this to provision for all children in the town was a different matter. It was also a different matter that the unwilling parents should have to send their children. An objective view, in architects' reports, of some of the buildings was to prove disappointing. Indeed, no voluntary school—except the Colliery School—wishing to transfer to the Board was structurally sound enough. Even St. Stephen's was handed back after two years. Most voluntary schools were small (except Rectory Park). Most had been added to piece-meal with different Acts; yards were half built-up, for example. Such schools were primarily for religion and were adjuncts to churches. They were

1. H. Silver, pp.74-82.

mostly providing education for the poor. Lack of money had hindered their progress. Many voluntary schools were upto fifty years old by the time the Board started building. Ventilators caused draughts; there were: no cloakrooms, poor lights, undivided privies, over - large class numbers and dark unattractive partitioned classrooms. Being built in 'need - areas' there was no room for expansion. The equipment was minimal and rooms were cheerless. Desks provided an unhealthy posture. St. Paul's improvements originated in concert money.

Apart from the school structures, those people in a position to assess the situation saw a rather doubtful pedagogy. Staff were sometimes dismissed for inefficiency. The system relied on a self - creative, pupil - teacher training system which allowed the mistakes of one teacher to spread like disease through many others. The subjects taught by these teachers were also being questioned. In 1870 Alderman Candlish asked the Council,

'How many of these pupils were being educated to the standard required by the Government?'²

The growing debate over the Education Bill in the years before 1870 had given an impetus to the already active voluntary building programme,

'The next best thing to the Government doing something about education is for it to threaten to do so.'³

There was indeed a rapid increase in the number of schools upto and around this point. Again it is seen that this was not so much as a result of national exertion but more often local initiative,

'Behind nearly all these schools stood someone who was prepared to make up chronic deficiency. Usually it was the clergyman.'³

2. S. H. , 22nd December, 1870.

3. M. Sturt, Education of the people, 1967, pp.160-162.

For all this increased activity throughout England, however, the apparent existing provision was not as impressive as it looked. Certainly it was not offering in noticeable quantities that which many were anticipating for the new 1870 Act. All of these points were put before the people of Sunderland in newspapers and at public meetings. Alderman Candlish said before the implementation of the Act in Sunderland,

'If carried out in the spirit in which it was framed the Act will be the means of elevating the standard of education all over the kingdom and within a short space of time it will extend the benefit of culture and training to every child in England and quite change the tone of feeling even in the lowest class with regard to the benefits and blessing attendant and flowing from a perfect knowledge of the 3Rs for present and all worlds.'⁴

Yet before such grand hopes could be realised it was widely accepted that it would be necessary to coerce the missing pupils into the schools. The origins of this problem of attendance will be taken up later in greater depth. They were attributed by some to varying groups in society, mostly by those who were furthest away from them socially. One of the targets was parents,

'The apathy of parents is a big disadvantage. There is an indifference to the spirit and intellectual welfare.... still many thousands of parents hindered their children from availing themselves of the opportunities never to recur. Parental neglect is the chief obstacle to attendance. Intemperance and poverty is not a reason by some. Parents wanted to make money out of children and kept them off.'

Employers were cited as another scapegoat; amongst other comments,

'Too early employment of children is an evident evil.'⁵

A third suggestion was that the choice of schooling was poor due to religious disputes,

4. S. H. , 26th September, 1870

5. M.C.C.E. 1868, pp. 178 - 182.

Plate 4

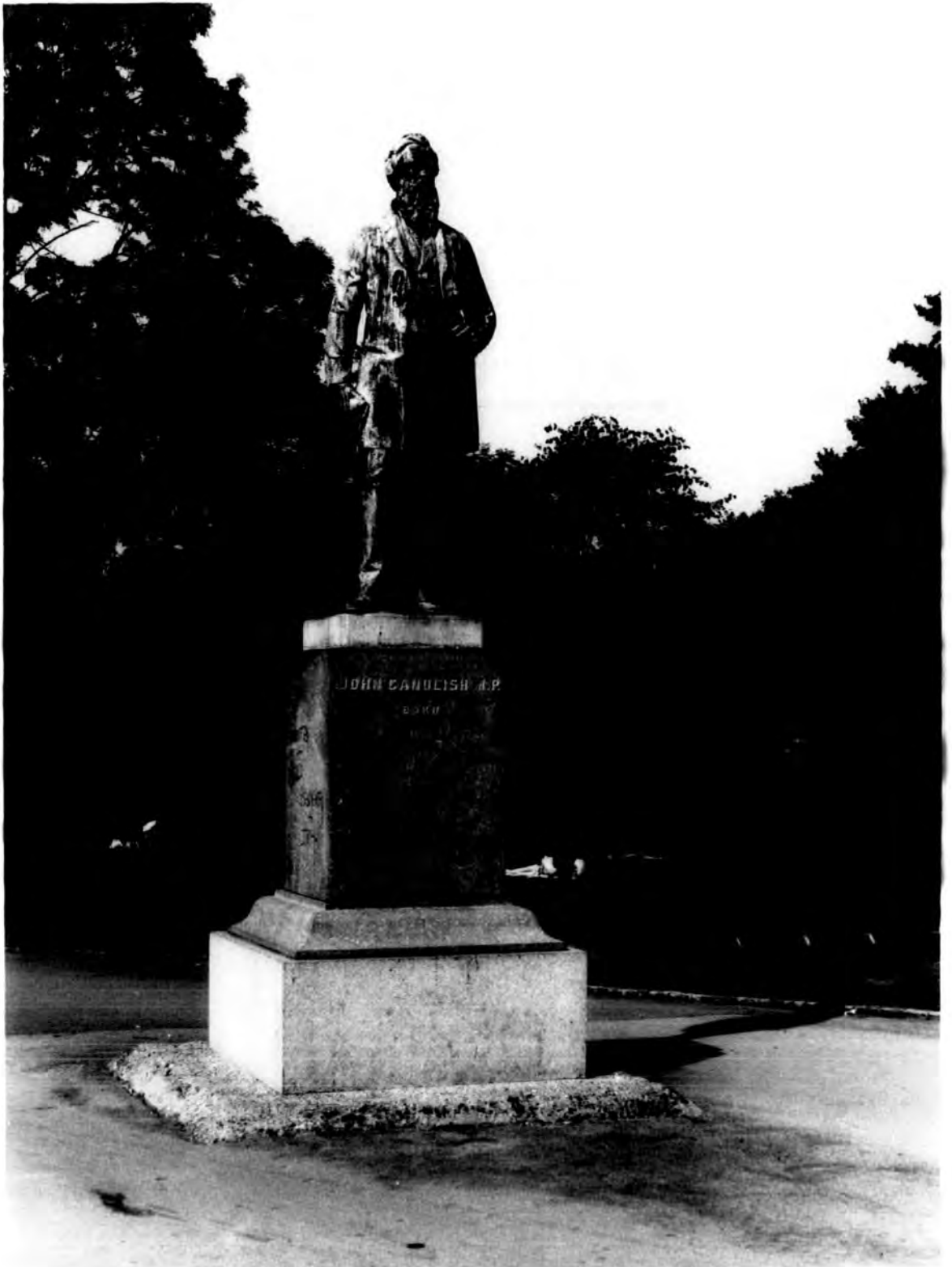
Alderman Candlish M.P.

(ref. p.66 and following)

Plate 4

Alderman Candlish M. P.

(ref. p. 66 and following)



'The fact is that while we are wrangling and jingling fiercely about secular as distinct from religious education.... foreigners are putting shoulders to the wheel.'⁶

In that same newspaper, one week before, a list was given of reasons for joining the Educational League. Thus national educational issues were being brought into the homes of ordinary people at different times during the months of Autumn 1870,

'1) Two million children were growing up uninstructed. 2) Existing instruction was miserably defective 3) It was the right of every Englishman to have the faculties given by God properly developed by the State 4) The voluntary system is unable to give instruction to the whole of the people 5) Education substituted mental for sensual pleasures 6) Drunkenness was reduced by education 7) An educated person considers a minister's teaching better 8) Ignorance taxes the increasingly enormous Poor Rate 9) Ignorance incurs loss of property and has created a nation of criminals. 10) There was the burden of supporting a criminal population 11) Our workers could rival continental and U.S.A. workers 12) Education allows one to be better able to fulfil public duties 13) A nation admitted to public rights should be educated to use them wisely 14) Education will eradicate the evils which ignorance of a large proportion of the community inflicts on all.'⁶

Poor parental control and religious wrangling fade into the background when hopes for education such as these are held forth. Indeed the burden shouldered by education becomes almost oppressive. The list appears to be a 'cri de coeur' by society seeking a single cure for its ills.

From around 1875 Sunderland's major industries were to experience the effect of foreign competition. Although, this was not pinpointed until later. This consideration, combined with foreign educational improvements, was not, therefore, simply of minor importance. However, after the successes of the town during most of the nineteenth century it was not going to be easy to put over that particular message. Yet there had been the year before a

6. S. H. 18-24th December, 1869

report of a lecture given by Scott Russell in Leeds,

'In technical education, were we truly behind other countries. We are being beaten by other countries in art and soon in commerce. Prussia has schools for practical men in business. Also, apprentices take half the time in their apprenticeship. In school they learnt the skill of their profession. Public Schools teach old education to the statesmen, not making the slightest pretence to education in practical skills. Switzerland, Belgium and Holland are all ahead of the United Kingdom. Italy has stolen the ribbon trade of Coventry and now France sends over Basle ribbons pretending that they are their own and charging 35% profit.'⁷

Even before this the National Educational League at its conference on National Education in Newcastle, in discussing the causes of society's ills stated,

'This is nothing new. All we are now ready to acknowledge is the paramount importance of primary education; that a great deal, if not, the whole of the crime and misery which afflict and disgrace the nation is due to ignorance....

It was a common case fifty years ago that a servant should not be taught to read and write and it used to be believed sincerely as well as maintained jocularly that ignorance is bliss, besides being the mother of devotion. We all know the facts of Dr. Faustus 400 years ago, criticized for inventing printing presses. The world had gone a long way ahead since then and progress within living memory has been rapid. So much so that we may be permitted to hope that a grand national scheme will be adopted, embracing all classes where the labourer's child will attend elementary schools not only as a matter of course but also when special talent is shown by enabling him to work through grammar school, finally participate in the advance of our magnificent universities.'⁸

Such then was the debate being put before the citizens of the town from September to December 1870 – at least that was how those in a position to participate were using up the space in the newspapers. A fascinating murder trial was also being serialised at the time with blood-thirsty linedrawings of macabre events. Never-

7. S. H. , 24th December, 1869.

8. S. H. , 27th November, 1870.

theless as the matter under discussion progressed the contributors to the debate became quite confused and contradictory as they looked for the reasons for poor educational performance,

'Two early employment of children is an evident evil. Yet pressure brought by employers is not great, nor inducements to parents so strong as to form a valid excuse for the apathy with which the subject of education is treated amongst the classes for whom schools are not meant.'

However, in spite of the confusion a clear message was being repeated for Sunderland,

'It is in this apathy that the great impediment lies to the success of voluntary education.'

For all the validity of the other claims for education and the reasons given for lack of success the overriding factor, as in all other aspects of life, was attitude. So it was that despite the moderate and reasonably broad provision of education in the town it was only those people who were interested in education that took an interest in education. The Government saw two main targets for the Bill; and when Forster introduced his Bill in February 1870 it was to cover the country with good schools and to get the parents to send children to schools.^{9a}

Section 74 of the Bill itself quite clearly stated,

'Every Board my make bye - laws.... 1) requiring parents of children [5 - 13] years.... to cause them to attend school (unless there be a reasonable excuse) 2) Determining the time they are to attend.'

Nor was it felt that the lack of provision and compulsion would be overwhelming obstacles,

'The alleged difficulty of there being insufficient schools and teachers is not a very formidable one; schools could soon be built and any number of trained teachers forthcoming.... if it were made worth their

9. M.C.C.E., 1868, pp. 178 - 182.

9a. J. Murphy, The Education Act, 1870: text and commentary, Newton Abbot, 1972, p. 46.

while. Nor.... is compulsion un-English. We have seen many so-called un-Englsih propositions become law.¹⁰

It was added, what could be more compulsory than the Vaccination Act, the Factory Act, the Workshop Act or the law requiring parents to clothe and feed their children.

All of these views, local and national, filtered through to newspapers, conferences and Councils thus helping to create a positive attitude towards its debate.

Forster had tried to balance economy with avoidance of disruption to the large stock of efficient voluntary schools. It was in the places where this provision did not exist that he saw the need to build. In these types of areas a School Board was to be established. These Boards would then work as a local Authority responsible for the educational provision of the School District. Apart from establishing and maintaining the Board Schools, as this became necessary, they would also levy a local rate in order to cover the cost. Thus alongside the existing voluntary system would be a non-denomintional system run by locally - elected Board members - the first public, local authority for education elected by and responsible to the ratepayers. Yet because a patchwork of provision already existed they were not spread uniformly across the nation. Indeed the Board system would probably never have arrived at that point if the voluntary schools had been able to keep up their rate of provision and to adapt to urban pressures, but the numbers of children on the streets gave at least one, constant reminder of this inadequacy. Nor was the Government too keen on the increasing sums of money being distributed without their full control. Also there was the recent shock change of Government with new non-conformist confidence.

10. M.C.C.E., 1870, p. 334.

Thus Forster's Bill much amended in the end reached the Statute Book and a national system of education, with all the support for it to continue, was established. One of the reasons that this Bill had passed whilst others had failed was that the contentious items such as school fee-payments and enforcement of attendance had been left to the local Boards to sort out.

The country had been divided into school districts which were municipal boroughs or civil parishes, London being a separate school district. The Education Department was empowered to ascertain the available school accommodation in every district and from this to decide how much more, if any, would be required. If it found a deficit, the voluntary societies were allowed a short period of grace in which to supply the need. For this they would be able to apply to Parliament for a grant for building, enlarging, improving or fitting up an elementary school. They were allowed no help from the rates for this. Once this had been done, any remaining deficiency automatically brought in a School Board, by 1) application for one (this could take place where there was no deficiency, also) 2) a district becoming deficient at a later date (perhaps as a result of a closure) 3) a deficient district, after being instructed to supply the deficiency, being forced to do so.

One year after the introduction of the Act half of Britain's largest towns (Not Scotland) had School Boards. By the end of the Board period 2½ thousand Boards existed. It was often the non-conformist areas which 'went Board' earliest. Gateshead, Middlesbrough and Stockton all did so within three months of the Act. South Shields, Darlington and Durham did so by the following year. For all the large number of Boards created by the end of the period one half of these had had to be forced to do so, rural areas often taking the longest (where the Established Church was strongest).

In Co. Durham, during the period, 54 school Boards were formed but only 23 voluntarily. In small-parish areas they were allowed to unite. Members of Boards had to be ratepayers, thus allowing in working men. The main reason for a person to be disqualified was inevitably for gaining profit in connection with his official work.

Elections were triennial with interim vacancies having to be filled. The complications and expense which could ensue from this were ironed out a few years afterwards. The enfranchisement of a larger proportion of society allowed more power to spread to more people. Women were allowed to vote and stand as candidates. It will be shown later that school Board elections raised a new awareness of the working of democracy.

Meanwhile the Act slipped into the localities of England with its delayed-fuse burning. In his exertions to persuade the Sunderland Council to establish a School Board, Alderman Candish M.P. picked upon a theme which was to become important in Sunderland and from September to January 1870-71,

'.... with a Board they could compel attendance. I need not tell the Council that there was a class of children whose parents were quite able to pay for children, who thoroughly neglected their families, whose children ran about in rags and formed the nucleus of the criminal population. We already have the industrial Schools Act. This power was to pass to the School Boards, once established, to compel children to attend and get parents to pay.'¹¹

Alderman Candish M.P. was to become the 'agent provocateur' of the 1870 Education Act for Sunderland. He had witnessed the Bill's passage through Parliament; he had witnessed the agonised debate. He, alone in the whole Council Chamber knew the exact implications of the Act,

11. S. T. 22nd Nov. - 7th Jan 1870-71

'The thirty years following the passing of the Education Act in 1870 was a period of conflict and debates as a variety of interest groups resolved the political, religious and social tensions high-lighted by the establishment of the School Board.'¹²

He chose to make the 'reluctant parent' factor the first rallying point for the Sunderland Council. His was a subtle, psychological approach of gentle persuasion – at first. He raised the matter again three weeks later,

'It is the lamentable apathy of ignorant and vicious parents which the application of the power of the Act is expected to counteract and eventually put to an end. Parents will still have a choice of school but will no longer be permitted to let children grow up without instruction....I feel that compulsion is the best part of the Act, but that soon it would not be necessary.'¹⁴

He went on to echo a sentiment previously voiced in the Committee of Council Minutes with reference to voluntary provision,

'The mere knowledge that the byelaws can be at once put into force, when required, will do a great deal in the way of a spur to careless parents.'¹⁴

Candlish probably read eagerly the Minutes of the Committee of Council when in Westminster. The report for Durham in that year¹³ provided him with further material for his speeches to the Council Chamber. The report spoke of a group of people who saw no need for change. But these people were confused between the numbers of children stated by school registers to be attending some school or other and those receiving a very moderate education. Even at the best of the existing voluntary schools many children were leaving for work, or some other reason, before they could be considered to be educated. At such schools which are better fitted out, in receipt of grant or where inspection is sought to get the grant or where

12. A. Elliott, The Bradford School Board and the Department of Education 1870 - 1902: areas of conflict, Journal of Educational Administration and History, Vol XIII, July 1981, p. 18.

13. M.C.C.E., 1870 pp. 165 - 173.

teachers require qualifications to compete for certificates – at all these schools the problems of irregular attendance are made even worse. The methods of teaching, of classification, of drill and of discipline are not first class; and as for the schools below that level, not many children were going to obtain even the most moderate certificate of efficiency. As if to prove the final line of the theorem the report comes last of all to the large number of children who don't go to any school. Need it say more?

Indeed it does appear that the case for interference was completely made out – at least to those already committed to education anyway! All official agencies, Government, Committee of Council for Education and local Council were in accord on the need for education – in itself a huge step forward from some of their attitudes several decades before. The only matter which remained was to persuade the hesitant lower section of the community to join them. The main local Sunderland newspapers, 'The Times' and 'The Herald', as it has been shown, were giving plenty of encouragement. Being run by a leading Non-conformist it was natural that the local press should encourage the formation of a Board and of non - sectarian schools to force out, or at least, match, the Voluntarists. These later, however, must have had Gladstone's words ringing in their ears,

'The day you sanction compulsory rating for the purpose of education you sign the death-warrant of voluntary exertion.'¹⁰

The origins of the local debate had been earlier. So it was that on the 11th of August 1870, the Sunderland Herald in a small section of its regular Parliamentary column stated, that on that day Royal Assent had been given by Commission – the Lord Chancellor, the Duke of St. Albans, the Earl of Cork – to make law.. .. after which was a list of forty - seven Acts of Parliament

14. Quoted in N. Morris, 1870, the rating option, H. E. , Vol I, No 1, January 1972, p. 32.

ranging through the Curragh and Kidare Magistrates, Queen Ann's Bounty Superannuation and also Peddlers' Certificates. The twenty-fourth item on the list was the Education Act (Elementary). Regular Herald readers who read reports and articles but not the editorials — as is often the case — would not even have seen this entry on the list. Fortunately the interests of the editor were such that in reviewing the paper before it went to print he picked out one small item which his fellow journalists with interests on 'the War' had largely overlooked. The editor said,

'The second session of the eighth Parliament of her majesty Queen Victoria, which closed on Wednesday (August 3rd 1870) was opened on the 8th February in the midst of profound peace....but if the session, now closed, had produced nothing more than the Irish Land Bill and the Elementary Education Bill it would have deserved to be classed amongst the most fruitful of Government measures in our time. These two Bills are likely to be productive of more, real substantial good than would be accomplished by half a dozen sessions of the mere tinkering work which Parliament has often contented itself.'¹⁴

Whether or not all the inhabitants of the town were committed to education, it is a naïve yet interesting exercise to read our forefathers viewing, assessing and implementing locally, an important piece of legislation. Yet thus the Act very slowly crept upon the town of Sunderland. A fortnight after the passing of the Act on the 27th August Alderman Candlish at the end of a long Council meeting ranging over various matters had stated that at the next Council meeting he proposed to introduce the Elementary Education Bill and to move a resolution with a view to its application to Sunderland. The reaction of the other councillors had appeared to be of mildly-interested surprise. One gathers that they were totally unaware of how to go about approaching the new Act. Candlish continued,

14. S. H., 11-27th August, 1870.

'It was at the discretion of the Town Council to initiate proceedings and I will put the matter in due form.'¹⁴

At that point Alderman Alcock had suggested that each member of the Council should be furnished with a copy of the Bill. There is a stunning contrast between the furore with which the Bill reached law and the calm with which it had entered Sunderland Council Chamber.

However, the strength of religious commitment, or dislike of it, laid the unlooked for but inevitable path towards discord. Nevertheless, it is important to realise that the new Act came at first to a willing, wide-eyed group of local well-wishers, basically, to provide education for those not in receipt of it. The problem lay in the political and religious feelings which built up in the successive weeks. A situation such as this was at work in many of the towns throughout England and Wales. An attempt to make a breakdown of the normal balance of interests in Board elections in English industrial towns has been made by D. R. Pugh.¹⁵ Firstly he cites the Church party whose main concern was for denominational religious education and the interests of voluntary schools. They were usually supported by the Conservative newspapers. Pritchard also refers to a group of non-conformist Liberals or progressives supported by the Liberal press who believed in an unsectarian Board system and wanted to expand it. Thirdly, there were usually the Catholic voters, some of whom were Liberal in politics. They had a single-minded concern for schools which made them allies of the Anglicans in educational matters. The strength of feeling and commitment of the Anglican and Catholic groups had already been manifested in the town of Sunderland. There was a national pattern similar to this,

15. D.R. Pugh, A Note on School Board Elections, H.E.No. 6 June 1977 p. 115.

'Isolating the educational attitudes and policies of Anglican and R.C. teachers in Liverpool during the School Board period reveals that despite considerable variations of emphasis, they substantially followed the stands taken by their churches nationally. The Anglicans in the country as a whole were concerned to see that their contribution towards education in the past should be recognised and fairly treated but were very much on the defensive as resources became severely strained and as competition increased. The Roman Catholics, generally, in England maintained the conviction that schools had a religious and a secular function in educating the children of our community and they were determined to fight vigorously for that principle.'¹⁶

The last group mentioned by Pugh was the Labour interest, not always present. It was usually divided into the Trades Council and the Socialist candidates. He maintains that whilst no absolute correlation existed between the voting and political allegiance, the hard-fought local School Board elections did seem to justify at least some speculation about the balance of political opinions in the towns.

One must be careful, however, not to relate automatically, conscientious religious belief to strong views, social or political. The breakdown of parties reflects the attitudes of politically and socially active individuals. Most of the time the majority of society was not stimulated to express, with zeal, concerted views. Mary Sturt states that by 1870 religious squabbles had lost importance for the people,¹⁷ that parents were indifferent to religious adherence of schools and only that decent education was important. The ecumenistic approach of the early nineteenth century Sunderlanders in the Catholic schools tends to support this fact. She continues by stating that it was the managers and priests who made the trouble. Certainly it appeared to be only when stirred up by news-

16. P. Pritchard, Churchmen, Catholics and elementary education: a comparison of attitudes and policies in Liverpool during the School Board era, H.E., Vol. 12, No 2, June 1983, p. 119.

17. M. Sturt Education of the people, 1967, pp. 256 - 336.

papers and religious teachers that the people of this town fell behind their standards. Stormy meetings might, however, have been more of a safety-valve than a barometer. Numbers voting, it will be shown, never seemed to reflect the apparent pre-election fervour.

There was further evidence to suggest that some religious views were not only strong but also declining or transferring. The religious census taken in the town in 1861 showed just over 10 thousand Anglican and Roman Catholics in attendance at church on one Sunday. The non-conformist attendance was 18 thousand.¹⁸ From the 1851 religious census, this showed the Anglican attendance down 22% and the non-conformist attendance remaining the same. In short, religious attendance in neither denomination was up but most dramatic was the fall of the Anglicans. It is this cold fact which was to provide a source of irritation. The Anglican Church had been the first to create a main society for the promotion of education, had battled for education all century and had worked at a compromise in the 1870 Act. By 1870, however, it found itself expecting to command an automatic majority on many School Boards without even a contest against the other major group, the Non-conformists, who were daily receiving ex-Anglican communicants!

Meanwhile, Alderman Candlish M. P. was still trying to educate the Council on the Education Act. He used two ploys. The first was to tell the Councillors that there would not be much work involved; the second (once they had become interested) was to have them believe that they might not even be able to have a School Board. On 10th September 1870 he told them that by the 67th section of the Act they, as a Council, were not in any way exclusively to carry out the beneficial provisions of the Act. The Act would be

18. Appendix II.

administered by the local Board, but not by the Town Council; indeed the Town Council had no duty whatever with the formation of a local Board which was elected by the burgesses at large who were to proceed to elect a Board of five to fifteen members (accordingly as the Education Department of the Privy Council might determine) who might or might not accede to representation of the Town Council. He said there was power for the Council to express, by resolution, its opinions that the Act should be applied within its own limits, within the municipality; then later at the discretion of the Education Department they might direct a public inquiry to be made to guide themselves. He explained that the school districts in the borough were co-terminous with the municipal boundary. Sunderland was therefore a School District and the Education Department required to be informed of the school accommodation already existing in the borough. With tenderness he explained that the Act was to supplant deficiencies. He casually stated that if the educational provision of Sunderland now in operation, in the opinion of the Education Department, was sufficient for the town they would not appoint a local Board. He proceeded, as if hurt by the idea, by saying that

'They would have nothing to do with the Act in Sunderland.'¹⁸²

This last personal opinion by Candlish following on from the formal vocabulary of the earlier part of his speech must have jolted his listeners in their seats. It was quite a clever scheme to use. His audience felt, up to that point, that they were being gently and successfully persuaded to 'buy' something and Candlish had perceptively seen in them the blasé reaction of the converted purchaser — but then for the salesman to say that he might not even be selling his wares...!

182. S.T., S.H., 10th. Sep. 2nd. fol. 1270.

From that point on his tone changed to that of someone speaking to the eagerly committed, as now the Council indeed was. Two further points were next to arise in the continuation of his speech. With the passage of time it transpired that neither statement became true. The first one was the level to which he said the rate-precept would rise. This subsequently went well beyond its stated limit. The second point was a belief in a trouble-free period without religious dissension. He said in this speech that a requisition had been made to the Town Council for the returns. They, therefore, had to investigate. Returns had to be sent to the Education Department who in turn order the formation of a local Board or public inquiry. The Council would see that its powers were very limited at the initiation. They also had to supply the money which was limited to a rate of 3d in the pound. A Committee should make the enquiries to furnish the returns and lay them before the Council who would send them to the Education Department. Upto this point the Council had felt that it was dealing with the procedural matters of the Act in a mood of concord. Then came the very first statement which alerted the emotions,

'The Committee should be of two Churchmen
two Dissenters and one moderate.'¹⁸²

Not too long after this date the figures from the census on church-attendance and their re-indication of changes of colours, were to be republished 'for public interest' by the non-conformist owned newspaper. It should be borne in mind that upto the publication of church attendances the Established Church and most of the rest of the town had thought that the Anglicans were in the minority numerically but not in educational spirit.

Then followed the second of the two statements, later to be

seen as misguided,

'My impression is that there would be nothing like the difficulty which the House of Commons had to deal with in the working of this Act that was known as the "religious difficulty"'¹⁸²

He then added as a reassurance to the Denominationalists,

'I am glad that while the local School Board had nothing to do with existing schools, the Act had to do with them and they would continue to receive Parliamentary grants increasing in amount but subject to the regulations that governed grants hitherto.'¹⁸²

Thus in this important speech Candlish had attempted to put the new 1870 Education Act before Sunderland Council within one month of it becoming law. He tactfully used persuasive vocabulary and expressions: 'beneficial provision'; 'no extra duty (for the Council)'; 'power for the Council to express its opinions'; and just in case they felt no urgency to consider the matter, 'The Education Department might direct a public inquiry'. He then stated two personal opinions on cost and religion – two matters close to the heart of Victorian councillors. Basically, Alderman Candlish' speech was a description of the parts of the Act which related to fears and doubts which might be passing through the minds of his listeners. The ingredients of this speech were seen to be successful when minutes later, after a satisfactory reply to a query about a Roman Catholic on the Committee, it was agreed that the Committee should be seven with the addition of one councillor plus the mayor.

One fortnight later the religious problems which Alderman Candlish had so quickly dismissed as being unlikely (in order to encourage the Council to pursue the Act) were being stirred. He himself presided over the very meeting to do this. The Conference of Friends of Unsectarian Education called together by circular was held in the Long Room of the Atheneum on 27th September 1870 to

consider the effect of the Elementary Education Act upon circumstances of the town and the system of the British Schools Society. After a statement on likely numbers in the borough by R. Cameron, Mr. Browne, secretary of the British Schools Society gave a resume of the Act. He explained that whenever a school was established the local Committee elected by subscribers was left to make its own arrangements subject to the condition that the Bible be used in schools, but no catechism or creed. He looked on the Board School as a lineal descendent of the School Committee endowed with extended powers of excluding the Bible and dipping its hands into the rate-payers' pockets; and he believed the Act could be made the means of educating every child on the principles of religious liberty. Gone now were the cowed tones of the Council Chamber. This was a group of hunters deciding how they would best take their kill. The local taxation reference, in particular, was extremely guileful. Morris, refers to this also,

'Rating for education.... drew support from three sources: from those wanting to limit national taxation [urban areas in need of more schools would thus pay more heavily] from a minority of Dissenters[to block] the influence of Church and State from Radicals [such as] John Stuart Mill.... who believed in the social and formative value of local democracy.'¹⁹

These three, however, were not a pressure group. They only became so when Chamberlain built a pressure group of them.

It is no accident, therefore, that Candlish played down this aspect when speaking of the Act to the Council. Indeed once the Board was formed, this very issue – the first precept – was to be a major problem in the principle of fee-payment in voluntary schools.

In his book, Murphy states that some of the problems which the 1870 Act faced and tried to overcome were of local, non-religious people seeing in close proximity their money going to

19. N. Morris, 1870, the rating option, H.E. , Vol 1., No 1, January 1972, p. 35.

pay for religion. They also saw the control of voluntary schools unsupervised by the Board. The Boards were to simply let the local rating authority collect their money for them to give back out to voluntary schools.

On November 11th the Council met and again education was on the agenda. Two more cogent reasons for the establishment of a Board were put forward neither of which could be said to be wholly professional. In his first point Candlish said that if the town did not move on the matter, London would force the cost of an election. In his second point he asked whether they should let other towns take the lead over Sunderland. The Council was like modelling-clay in his hands.

This 'free-for-all' was continuing in the chamber when Canon Bamber added that there were now many thousands more Catholics in Sunderland and he would want two representatives in a contest. This third-come to the fight only made matters worse, creating the sort of deadlock which was always threatened in Board elections such as this,

'There is great risk of division of factions creating such disunity as to have a new lot in every three years. In effect, the cumulative, voting system encouraged minority representation to made it more likely that the School Board would be a battlefield for warring factions over religion in Board Schools and the policy towards voluntary schools over possible subsidization with rate money of denominational education through payment of poor children's fees in voluntary schools.'²⁰

This raised another issue which was to occur later. Whilst the non-conformists buzzed and met almost daily to decide on a 'modus operandi', the Anglicans calmly announced that they would settle without a contest, for a majority, even if a very small one. This

20. K. Ratcliffe, The School Boards of Middlesborough and North Teesside (Durham Univ., M. Ed., Thesis, 1966) Conclusion.

was immediately rejected by the Non-conformists who said that the Churchmen of Sunderland did not exceed one quarter. By now the Non-conformists had the bit between their teeth. They felt that progress was on their side, that they were wresting power from the Establishment whom they saw as out - of - touch.

'The extension of the franchise had made the retention of the control of the nation's schools, in the hands of a constitutionally irresponsible and unrepresentative body, a political anachronism.'²¹

So it was that on the 24th December, 1870 the Sunderland Times re-printed the results of the Religious Census taken in the 21st April 1861. ²² The request for a Board majority on the 20th of December by the Anglicans followed by the republication of the census four days later fanned the flames of discontent. Throughout this period of meetings and statements the Sunderland Council went through all necessary motions of establishing a Board. On the 3rd December 1870 the town clerk had read a letter from the Education Department with reference to the recent application by the Council for a School Board which stated that a requisition would shortly be sent for the election of a School Board. Mr. Alcock had enquired whether the number of Board members had been allocated. The town was to learn that the number was thirteen.

By December 22nd there had been growing concern at a possible election of fierce and unpleasant emotions. Candlish, realising, that he had eased open Pandora's box tried to calm down the situation. He stated that it was his hope that nominations would be made with as little reference as possible to sectarian prejudices and with due regard to high personal worth, intelligence and no less than 'liberality'. This last word was carefully chosen, showing

21. J.S. Hurt, p.67

22. Appendix II

that Candlish had not altogether relinquished his persuasiveness. He was, however, starting to show apprehension. This was the reason why the Non-conformists had suggested a pruning of their number of candidates after the nominations 'glut'. This latter situation had been urged on by the blasé Anglican affirmation of their required majority and the Roman Catholic statement that they would expect two places. Into this same discussion Alderman Kayll tried to introduce some reason,

'The Board's duty would be to see that the children were being educated.'²²²

One can imagine the sort of looks he received for trying to be sensible at a time like that... Things began to look black.

Having won ground on the general principle of 'a Board' but having lost ground on the 'religious questions', Candlish next tried 'the numbers' issue. It might have been assumed by this point that the central question of whether there was actually a need for school accommodation was not really being considered. Indeed it was – but with everybody producing their own sets of figures! As early as the 20th September 1870 the matter was being considered earnestly,

'Looking forward to the carrying out in Sunderland of the Act passed in the last session of Parliament, it is important to be able to form a rough estimate of the number of children for which school accommodation will be required.'²²³

No one imagined how 'rough' this was to be. Candlish said the census of 1861 furnished them with the means of forming such an estimate since they gave the respective ages of all persons then living in the borough. On looking over those tables they found that the number of children in the age group 10 to 15 was 7,309 in the Sunderland Union, the total population of which was 70,576. They cal-

222. S.T., S.H. 20th. Sep. - 14th Jan 1870. 71.

culate, therefore, if they allow five years schooling (since each one would receive that in round numbers) school accommodation would be required for one in ten of the population. The existing accommodation would, of course, have to be deducted. In the case of boarding schools they may assume that a like number of children is sent out of the borough to get their education as is brought there. If they estimate the population of the borough at 100 thousand, school accommodation necessary equalled 10 thousand (using the 1 in 10 theory). It would be well to ascertain the number of schools in each registration district and the actual number attending them so that the deficiency, whatever it was, might be supplemented by new schools in the right localities.

Having put, into print this 'rule - of - thumb' assessment, that same figure became established and reappeared seven days later at a conference of the Friends of Unsectarian Education when R. Cameron, said that he believed that there were 10 thousand children in the borough to whom he considered compulsory provision was to be applied. It was to be a further two months before a special committee on Education appointed by the Council recommended the establishment of a School Board on receiving 'most' of the returns from schools. In reality their estimate differed from that of the newspaper report of the Council meeting by 2 thousand. In short, they estimated that provision be made for educating 12 thousand, with an actual attendance of between eight and nine thousand. They had estimated that the actual number of school age children in the town was 16 thousand. Next the spokesman for the Committee said something which must have made Candlish grip his chair with horror,

'There is already greater accommodation provided than utilized. The present schools are not filled.'²²²

As an old campaigner from the floor of the Lower House of Parliament, Candlish thought quickly and responded,

'It was clear to establish a School Board; the accommodation already provided would not otherwise be satisfactorily utilised.'^{22a}

His continuation was even more clever,

'It was a more important thing that in a town numbering 100 thousand, ratepayers should have an election of a School Board.'^{22a}

By this he meant that the people of Sunderland should have some say as to whether there should be a majority of one party or another; here he assumed that his majority of Non-conformists would vote sensibly and put in himself and his colleagues.

The editor of the non-conformist newspaper came to his support one week later by saying that thousands of children were not in receipt of education. He admitted that the report was on the whole more favourable than had been anticipated. The important point, however, was that a considerable number of apparently neglected children was on the streets. He blamed the schools for the shortfall in attendance saying that the demand for them was dull whilst the demand was high for everyday products except elementary education. So little was there that was valued and cared for by a large section of the people. Nancy Ball comments on the unfilled voluntary school places thus,

'The school places which promoters laboriously provided remained unfilled and their efforts to extend education were checked. It has not often been recognised how powerfully the existence of half - empty schools must have acted as a deterrent to the establishment of new ones, thus contributing to the failure of the voluntary system and making 1870 reconstruction inevitable.'²³

During that week the Council had met again and Candlish had had

23. N. Ball, *Elementary School Attendance and Voluntary effort before 1870*. H.E., Vol 2, No 1, January 1973, p. 32.

chance to gather his thoughts. The attack this time was not on school accommodation numbers but on internal space. He continued to try to show the inadequacy of existing provision and the need for a School Board, by stating that the real requirement of the Government would be 8ft on the ground floor which usually contained 80 cubic feet. The total School area was adequate for the education and reception of 3,375 children. This is a fair enough point he was making. Inspectorial reports had spoken of some classes lined along the wall. Also if voluntary schools had wanted to strengthen their case they could have invented higher numbers than would be sensibly educated. The main check on this would indeed be the space available. The second point he made was that the schools included accommodation for infants and those above 13. Added to that, many of the schools in the list were inefficient and would be rejected. This was also true. Candlish then tried another baffling amateur attempt at calculating the shortfall. Fortunately Alderman Kayll put the listeners out of their misery,

'It was grateful to look at the figures in the return. They proved Sunderland had no course to blush. A very large provision had been made for education in the borough. The Board need not erect schools in all three or four divisions because provision for 2 thousand might be needed in the entire borough; but schools would be provided in those districts lacking that provision that other districts enjoyed.'^{22a}

This ice-clear common-sense statement by Alderman Kayll on New Year's Eve brought a close to a torrid three month debate of principles.

Once Christmas had passed everybody became fair game again. All minds began to direct themselves towards a date for the election. Although it will be shown later that the first election and voting patterns did not typify all Sunderland elections it is

interesting to look at this particular one. The Sunderland Times on 3rd of January reported a meeting of the Political Union, made up of Non-conformists, Church, Wesleyan Methodists and Roman Catholics to consider the arrangements for avoiding a contested election. Alderman Hartley was in the chair. The very best of feeling was displayed and all parties expressed the desirability of avoiding a contest – provided they all got their own way. It was conceded that the Roman Catholics should be entitled to one representative and the Wesleyan Methodists, two. Ten seats were to be divided between the Church party and the Non-conformists. With a view to a friendly settlement Alderman Candlish suggested that they should be amicably divided. No clear decision was reached and the respective deputations undertook to refer to their respective bodies. With typically polite English diplomacy, once back in their own camps the war - parties met. The very same newspaper, carrying the report of this meeting from two days previous, reported in its editorial,

'The Roman Catholics have decided to try for two representatives, a resolution which if persisted in will of course upset all that has been done within the last week for sake of peace. We repeat we are exceedingly sorry not only because it will launch the town into £500 of expense and divide it into much more but also because it tends to arouse religious animosities which all sensible people deprecate and abhor.'^{22a}

These were hollow sentiments from a newspaper which was to make a fine profit out of arousing religious bitterness. It continued by saying that if the Catholics were determined, the paper was glad the difficulty had not arisen with Non-conformists. Then taking the opportunity to snipe at their own candidates, described them as narrow and crotchety enough with the established Church or the Wesleyan Methodists. Perhaps, the paper thought, it was enigmatic to hope to arrange affairs so that all parties should be pleased;

but at least the attempt was praiseworthy. Even yet, the paper did not despair of a compromise being reached after all the nominations would have been made. In the meantime this contest should be prepared for. Like a peace-seeking general settling into the trenches the newspaper had shown some common sense.

One week later the Unsectarians took their turn to indulge in some realism at a public meeting. They understood this contest would cost as much as would furnish internally several new schools. The origin of this calculation is as bewildering as the many sets of calculations made on existing places available in schools. It is likely that by this point, realising the lack of authenticity and plethora of pundits that they might as well join them or any other empty-head who chose to make a statement about such matters. This highlights and typifies the whole Autumn and Winter Juggernaut of events, with all those involved eager to sacrifice themselves to the novelty of the 1870 Act.

From that point onwards events became so hectic that one feels the whole situation was beyond control. On 8th of January, the Non-conformists tried to come to a compromise with the Church; but they could not accept Mr. Alcock and did not have time to refer to their own body. On January 10th the arrangements for the inevitable election were in hand. The voting papers were prepared for every ratepayer. The penultimate circumstance in this most peculiar series of events came that same day, when the Roman Catholics met to discuss the situation. They realised, after having started the whole furore that two nominees would work contrary to each other's interests. They could end up with nothing at all. Such a complete failure would be looked upon by Catholics in London and Liverpool with disgrace. Working on such honourable motives they picked

Canon Bamber.

The final Act came on the 15th of January with the publication of the result when the non-conformist newspaper realised to its alarm that it had overlooked one fact that even the Roman Catholics had assumed. The Non-conformists had fielded too many candidates and being a d sparate group anyway, had been unable to discourage plumping. D.R. Pugh pointed to the advantage of Church organisations here,

'Campaign managers had the task of persuading supporters to distribute all votes equally among the party's official candidates. It would do no good for a popular candidate to secure too many votes and a less popular candidate too few... "Church men do you duty, no plumping,"'²⁴

an Anglican leaflet stated; and it was this ability to communicate directly and regulary which paid off,

'Clerical parties, however, managed to cope with these problems more effectively than their opponents and the voting system tended to operate in their favour .'

Indeed it had done so in Sunderland. Not only had many of their own fallen but one of the leading Non-conformists, Samuel Storey, had become an 'also - ran' The headline in the newspaper, lined with funereal black lines was,

'Unlooked for result in election.'²⁵

Unable to rise to 'unexpected' they had chosen this word to infer that nobody had wanted such a result - least of all themselves. Then began the accusations,

'Money won the election.... There was union in strength.... There is no coalition amongst groups not normally heterogeneous.... The Church won.... The Non-conformists did not collect money and being badly organised they lost.

At least the paper admitted,

'It is a good Board but the parties are not

24. D. R. Pugh, A Note on School Board Elections, H.E., Vol.6 No.2, June, 1977, pp. 115 - 119.

25. S. H. , 17th January, 1871 and foll.

well-represented.'

This statement was probably included in order not wholly to offend the honourable men of the town who now held office. As a note of encouragement,

'The Conservatives won but the Liberals should take the first opportunity to get their own back. Privilege and monopoly won.'

Some days later the paper printed a letter without commenting on it other than the title,

'Accusations of bribery and corruption.'

In that paper one of the fortunate and successful Non-conformist new Board members had his letter - of - thanks to the electorate published,

'We shall have more important work to do than to discuss putting on 'isms' or to ask each other whether we are Church, Presbyterian or Dissenters.'²⁵

True to Candlish's promise that once elected the Council would have little to do with the Board, on the 1st of February at the end of more important business, at the Nonconformist-dominated Council meeting, a private enquiry was raised concerning where the new School Board might meet. The mayor offered the Committee Room (where originally the Committee had suggested the creation of a Board). Councillor Douglas stated that he thought and now privately wished that the Council were to have nothing to do with the School Board. The mayor reminded him that that particular comment referred to the election of the Board. He then reassured him that the Committee Room would be available - but only when the Committee did not want it. Thus did the Council think that it had washed its hands of this rather unpleasant incident, little knowing the creature it had sired.

As for the mayor, he still had one official duty to perform. He sat in the chair of the first Board meeting only long enough to read out the names of the new Board members. He promptly – and one suspects with relief – stated that there his duties ended. He vacated the chair and left. His name never even appeared in the Minute Book. He left neither wish of good-will nor salutation for the future. One senses no feeling of regret of this fact on behalf of the Board who immediately set about electing officers and sending to the Council the election bill of £300. It set to the task of deciding the clerk's salary and seeking to appoint two education officers. It was so automatic and matter - of - fact, one might have imagined the Board had been operating for years.

As one councillor had put it, Sunderland had no cause to blush. A very large provision had been made for education in the borough. Certainly the town had a decent spread of schools for those who wanted to use them. The point about the 1870 Act was that it was intended to encourage into schools those who had not been there before. Also, the quality of what existed, when put under the strain of these extra demands would not have held together very well. Given that a fresh approach seemed unavoidable most of the town was willing to give the new Act and the new Board a good send-off. The rôle of Alderman Candish M.P. was to put all of these points, and more, before the Council; this he did, well, even if with some self-interest. At the start, the Council had appeared open-minded about the issue. Only when the details of the Board majority and the religious questions came up did bad feeling come into the debate. In the end Candlish, who had assumed that a non-conformist majority of inhabitants would produce a non-conformist Board majority, ended up with a red face; but the town ended up with what even the non-conformist newspaper described as a 'good Board'.

CHAPTER 4

A gentle battle for conscience: religion in the town of Sunderland during the nineteenth century

Of the three main religious groups in the town it is evident that the Anglican and Catholic faithful had worked to build up the strength of their educational commitment. For their part, the Non-Conformists were less active in educational organisation. Marsden sees this as part of a general pattern. In the Northern Counties, for example, he states that there was little expansion of the British School movement because of the existing National School provision, whereas in Lancashire, the West Riding and the Midlands they were more favourable to the British system. Yet in these latter districts there was greater parental resistance to education. Indeed, the British Society system started to move towards the National Society educational system. However,

'... diffusion was inhibited by lack of priority ... [for] this ... innovation; [there was] limited provision of formal channels ... essential for hierarchical diffusion.'¹

Nonetheless, the Non-Sectarians of Sunderland, not to be outdone by the educational traditions of the Anglicans and Roman Catholics, produced their very own 'tour de force.' It took the form of a spontaneously unique religious experience. Yet it was to take fifty years before the idea that grew in the early 1820s finally came to the surface during the early School Board years. Thus the maturing of religious views came at the same time that attitudes to education were becoming more positive.

With a fifty year gestation period it was to be expected that the birth itself would be something special. It took place

1 W. E. Marsden, Diffusion and regional variation in elementary education in England and Wales 1800-1870, H.E., Vol. II, No.3, Sept, 1982, p. 182.

in 1877, when the aspirate Christian Lay Church was born. The speech of secession ran thus,

'All that is dear to us ... is dear to us still, but Primitive Methodism ... is no longer what it once was; and as we hold that any departure from the Scripture is fraught with danger; and as we have long perceived a growing tendency to establish a hierarchy in the Church of our fathers; and that wide dissatisfaction towards this bane of the Dissenting Protestant Church is being manifested through Christian England; we have resolved to return to the primitive usages laid down in the New Testament believing that a hired ministry is by no means essential and believing also that those who are called of God to preach the gospel and who labour only to win souls will not labour in vain ... There is a lamentable tendency to, "Lord it over God's heritage" and as we cling to the fundamental principle embodied in the words of Jesus, "One is your master, even Christ and all ye are brethren", we are resolved to disdain allegiance to a system which is subversive of Christian liberty and destructive to the holy bond of brotherhood. We further assert that our object is not to promote discord, but peace. We shall seek to promote the spiritual welfare of those who meet us, but also to wage a steady warfare against sin.'

The signal for the final alleluiah was only to come after the last battle-cry,

'Our fervent prayer is that God may ... bring carelessness to a sense of their danger and impel them to cry, "What must we do to be saved?"'²

This fiery speech had broken out not on the steps of the offending parish church or central Methodist chapel but behind closed curtains in the private lounge of one of the plotters. In effect it was a small group of Primitive Methodists whose faith had already split from mainstream Wesleyan Methodism in order to seek the purer untangled format of the Primitives. Now, however, they had taken one step further towards a totally democratic form of worship. Yet this rejection of mainstream Wesleyan Methodism and thence the rejection of Primitive Methodism because of the latter's connections with the authority

2 G. E. Milburn, The Christian Lay Churches: their origins and progress, Sunderland, 1973, p. 14.

of the Establishment shows the strength of feeling in Sunderland for a Church run by the people, for the people. This was the start of the Christian Lay Church which inspired the whole of the North of England to look again at Methodism.

However, a balanced view of religion in Sunderland must really begin by looking at the oldest established form — the Church of England. Historically and in fairness the Anglican clergy had ministered to the town from earliest times. Their contribution had not been as dramatic or noticeable as the other main groups, but it had been firm, steady and continuous. The nineteenth century arrangement of central Sunderland and its three townships of Monkwearmouth, Old Sunderland and Bishopwearmouth appears to show three parish churches set equidistant and appearing to provide the Anglican Communion to the main areas of population. This picture had taken one thousand years to be created. Monkwearmouth on the North side of the Wear had declined into a small monastic enclave in the Middle Ages. South of the river, the Bishopwearmouth settlement had expanded at first into an important community. Its position at the convergence of Durham Road, Chester Road, Hylton Road, Stockton Road and High Street West (as the regional town names suggest) showed its potential. The name Bishopwearmouth originates in the claim over it by the Bishops of Durham. Yet no architectural trace of the original village remains.

Finally there was the 'late-developer'. The third community of Old Sunderland Port, had no parish church before the eighteenth century. Since medieval times a community of merchants and fishermen had been forming itself near the rivermouth (the 'Sunderland' or 'separate part'). This third portion of Wearside

realised its potential far more successfully than the other two, over the centuries. With the development of saltboiling and the construction of the quays, High Street East began to sport large, stone dwelling-houses where people such as George Lilburne had lived.

An important development had taken place here between the sixteenth and eighteenth century which was to be crucial in the development of the town,

'The seamen and commercial interests of the young port led the way in support of Puritanism and Parliament whereas the farming folk up at Bishopwearmouth seem to have been more inclined to Royalism... By 1712 the people who crowded into the busy port area were petitioning for their own parish. They were no longer willing to walk each Sunday up the High Street to St. Michael's Bishopwearmouth. There was in any case little room for them since Bishopwearmouth families tended to hold all the pews. The fact that Non-Conformists were enthusiastically setting up their chapels and gaining hold among the industrious cosmopolitan population may have further influenced their action. It should be remembered, too, that the parish was the basic unit of local government. It was the control of their own affairs that [Old] Sunderland folk sought.'³

The message of this latter statement and that of the former address of secession is really quite similar. The two indicate a desire in Sunderland for unbridled progress in religion, local government and commerce. The building of Sunderland parish church, Holy Trinity, was at first appearances an attempt to complete the set and embrace the third part of Sunderland under the control of the Established Church. In this respect 'Trinity' was an ironic choice of name since the control of this last area by the Church was shortlived and tenuous. Even more ironic was the fact that the men who were later to look for greater freedom in Non-Conformism were experiencing their first taste of it within the broad spaces of the new Anglican Holy Trinity parish church. It has been shown already that parish meetings and local

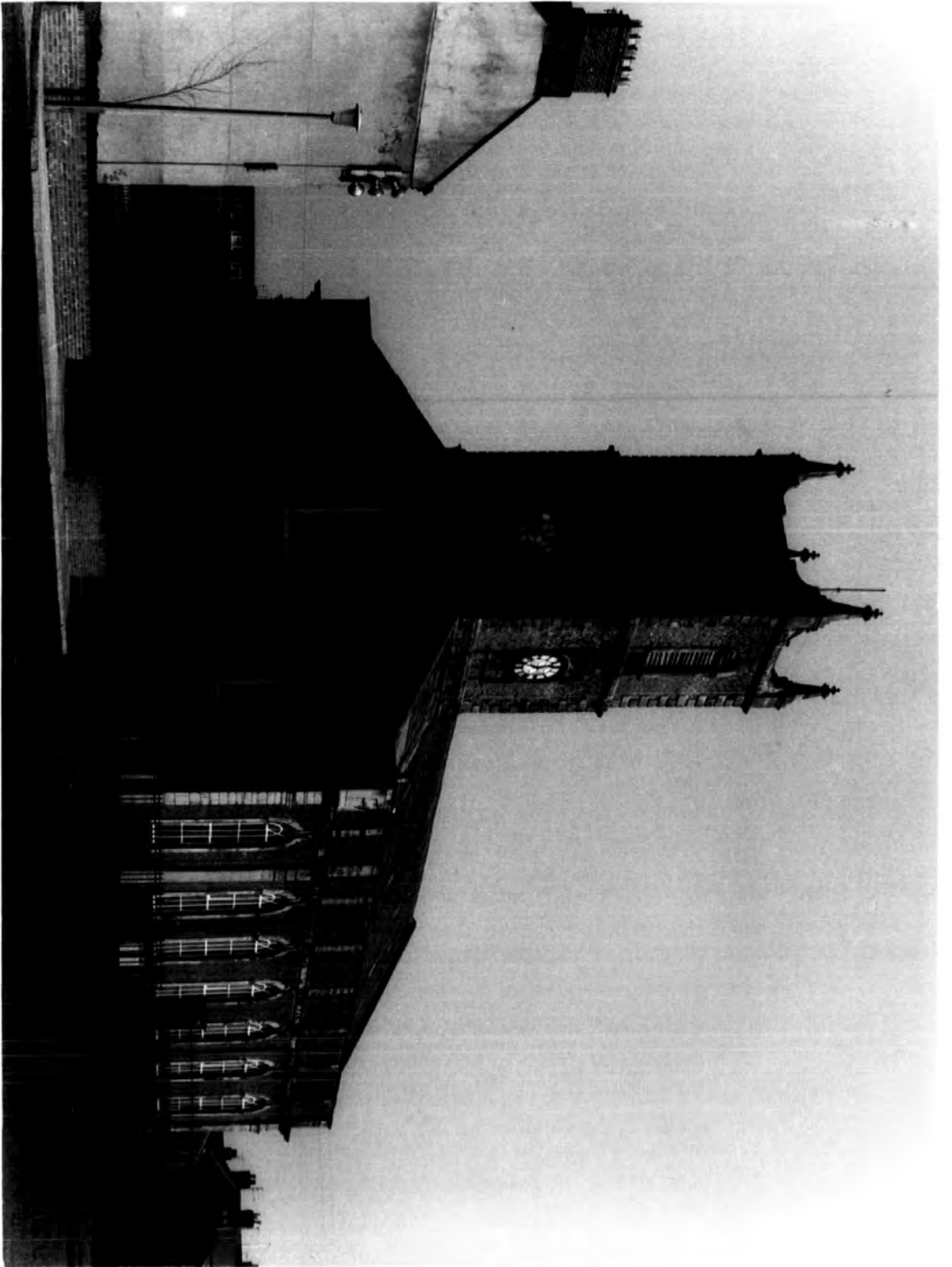
3 T. Corfe, p. 29.

Plate 5
Holy Trinity Parish Church
(ref. p.97)

Plate 5

Holy Trinity Parish Church

(ref. p.97)



Government took place within,

'In its early days Holy Trinity was the focal point of a flourishing community with its principal social centre in the Assembly Rooms opposite - the scene of balls, entertainments and plays.'⁴

But this attempt by the Anglican Church to encompass the third area of Sunderland came too late. The town-centre was already on the move. From the eighteenth into the nineteenth century, as indicated, the centre of commercial activity had started to move slowly westwards from Church Street (Holy Trinity Church) along High Street away from the poorer properties onto higher ground. From mid-nineteenth century onwards slum-clearance and new street-building was to take place in this old port-area. One of the first new streets along the path of this town-centre movement was to be James William Street. It was soon to take on great importance, as its later buildings indicate,

'It was part of an early Corporation clearance and re-building scheme. As well as its pleasant terraced housing, it has one of the first Board Schools, two Victorian pubs, the small Freeman's Hospital of 1876 and three Mission Chapels, summing up neatly the Victorian concern to provide for education and spiritual as well as material needs.'⁵

One senses, in a way, that the Established Church of England was losing the battle for Old Sunderland Parish. Certainly the parish was becoming very populous for one single church. The 1851 Religious census had shown the huge shortage of accommodation in Anglican churches around England,

'The London area, Warwickshire, Lancashire and the North-East had the smallest percentage of population which could be accommodated.'⁶

The reluctance of the Anglican Church to place smaller, less lavish buildings on more sites in the more crowded areas lost

4 T. Corfe, p. 31.

5 T. Corfe, p. 34.

6 J. D. Gay, p. 57.

them favour. The Non-Conformists, conversely, set up chapels with random generosity,

'Wesley placed emphasis on loyalty to a particular group of people rather than a geographical area. The Methodist practice of building new chapels as soon as there was a demand for them and then allowing them to draw members from a natural catchment area was better fitted to the urban environment than the static system of territorial parishes.'⁷

Nevertheless the Established Church in Sunderland was not slow to pick up this message after 1850. In 1850 it had had only eight Churches; by 1870 this had risen to fifteen. In 1889 this had doubled again to thirty-three. The pace slackened by the opening of the new century with a grand total of forty-three. Even so, they remained behind the Non-Conformists who between 1850 and 1870 had trebled the number of their Churches. During the Board period the Anglican spurt had kept them to within two-thirds of the Non-Conformist total.

In the battle for the streets of Old Sunderland the Church had won Church Street; but the enemy had captured the first strategic point westwards - James William Street - and had therein raised its flag. This took the form of the plethora of non-conformist chapels. Whether it happened by design or by accident one further point should be made regarding the Anglican efforts to secure and keep Sunderland parish. Holy Trinity building itself had indeed a square central tower in common with the other two parish churches in the town; however, the rest of the exterior resembled a non-conformist chapel! For an Anglican church built in a non-conformist stronghold, such a compromise in design must indicate that the Church was making concessions to its environment in Sunderland, contrary to the national pattern of resting on its Establishment foundations.

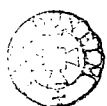
7 J. D. Gay, p. 147.

In turning now to the progress of the Non-Sectarians, it was in fact to this same James William Street that the secessionist church leaders of Lancashire were to come in the 1870s to learn more of the Sunderland Christian Lay movement. The ceremony was the laying of a foundation stone in a new chapel. However, that was to be when the movement was reaching its peak. It was around the year 1800, some seventy years previous, that the concepts of this Sunderland secession had been on the move further south in England. Revivalism was moving through Cheshire, North Staffordshire and South Lancashire creating or strengthening religious societies. Some of them sought a greater freedom within their own Independent Methodism. The Independent Methodists preferred a non-professional, unpaid ministry and congregational autonomy. The Primitive Methodist movement had started from a ministerial ban on open-air camp meetings. The name Primitive was adopted on purpose; the founders believed that outdoor preaching went back to the first principles of Methodism. 'To save peoples' souls' became their burning ideal. However the Primitive Methodists did employ travelling preachers, on minimal stipends, to retain a cohesive relationship.

The Independent Methodists were, therefore, more radical in their views. The 1819 Peterloo tragedy had evoked a demonstration of support and sympathy on the Newcastle Town Moor. The mainstream Wesleyan Methodists exercised strong discipline over their societies for quelling militancy and lay political murmurings. Their leaders had an intense fear of revolution. Resentment of the repressive response by the ministry to the Town Moor show-of-support (combined with the faithful's awareness of dissatisfaction in the areas further south) by the future secessionists of Sunderland produced the Independent Methodist Church in Sunderland.

This was to be a half-way staging-port only. The full journey was reached by the statement of secession (fifty years later) quoted in the introduction. By that point Independent Methodism had dissipated; but it was the same type of people who made this movement of conscience, or at least those with similar views. The Independent Methodism which had grown in Sunderland (1819-22) really had a Wesleyan Methodist base. It included: circuits, classes of congregation and a strict code of conduct in line with mainstream views. The only difference from Primitive Wesleyan Methodism was that no person was to be hired to preach or do sacred duty. However, the movement could only struggle along and many of the followers were absorbed into other branches of Methodism during the 1820s and 1830s. There was inevitable internal bickering because of officials' lack of available time, experience and expertise in Church government. Nevertheless, the fact that in Tyne and Wear 76 churches of Independent Methodism had been set up, indicated the potential for a non-mainstream Wesleyan Methodist type of Church.

It has been suggested that Independent Methodism did not succeed in Sunderland because the congregations' option for an unhired ministry meant that there was no cohesion. Yet, this ought really to infer that Independent Methodism could succeed nowhere, if that were its fault. It is in fact more likely that the second time around the circumstances of the secession which began during the early School Board period were different and the people had by then different views. In the same way, an 1870 type Education Act might not have passed before the 1870s. By then, men of inspiration and organisation could guide from within and lead by experience. The link, therefore, between secessionism and the events leading up to the creation of the



School Board cannot be dismissed. The attitude (of these leading men and women of the town) which had respected past achievement in voluntary education whilst still seeking to establish a School Board, also was open to a democratic mood of change which was reflected in this metamorphosis of religious conscience.

It was the building of a new chapel which sparked off the new Lay Church Movement or rather it was objection to its construction which did so; and it was Sunderland's migratory town-centre which raised the idea of setting up in a more fashionable area. Tatham Street Chapel was to be a new circuit base in a more attractive area. The 'grass-roots' members saw it as an apparent rejection of principles. They interpreted it as a desire for fine chapels, dignified worship and general respectability. At a £9,000 construction fee they might have had a point on the first objection. Similar things were going on around the country. The National Wesleyan Methodist Association began after a dispute in 1827 over the installation of an organ in a chapel in Leeds, the results of the dispute ,

'...convinced many Methodists that the Wesleyan Connexion was not only moving towards an artificial form of worship, but that the Methodist Conference was assuming almost dictatorial powers, and so they broke away to form the Protestant Methodists.'⁸

The heart of the matter in Sunderland was that a chapel already existed at Flag Lane but both chapel and area were declining. The ministers wanted a new chapel and a new image; the congregation did not. The ministers saw the need for broadening their appeal to a growing number of working-class people with rising educational and social expectations. The congregation, on the contrary, bore in mind the rising ministerial stipends and manse-expenses.

8 J. D. Gay, p. 154.

Circuit sizes were also being reduced thus increasing the domination of ministers. They saw the Church in the light not of capturing new souls but simply building up existing financial commitments, and they did not like it. Revivalist preaching was changing to teaching; simple, fervent ministers were being replaced by ones of education and refinement. These Primitive Methodists (as now they were again since Independent Methodism had withered in the town) found difficulty in accepting the modernizing approach. It was, of course, obvious to them that the Methodist religion was also starting to acquire the trappings of Anglicanism,

'It is not an unknown event even in those professedly enlightened days for Methodism to be stamped out of a village through the imperfectly-concealed influence of the Established Church.'⁹

This concern for 'image' was an important consideration since it also played upon the relationship between laymen and ministers' own views on their rôle. It so happened that this was also in line with the thinking of Connexional headquarters. Thus the strength of the ministerial majority on the Sunderland Committee gave the 'go-ahead' for the new chapel. It was a perfect example of an ideology surrounding itself by a supportive majority for the sake of self-preservation — religious politicism. So it was that a second loss of intent and direction had been suffered by the congregation. Still smarting, they retired to decide on a course of action. They inevitably saw the need for a freer type of church structure without, inevitably, the power of the priest. It was to be an all-lay ministry. It is thus now possible to see whence originates the venom of the introductory address cited at the beginning of this chapter.

⁹ R. F. Wearmouth, p. 96.

It was not, of course, in Sunderland alone that such altercations were happening,

'Wesleyan Methodists in the middle of the nineteenth century suffered a spiritual earthquake that shook their very foundations, undermining the work of past generations and threatening the whole structure with collapse.'¹⁰

Nearly 100 thousand units, constituting one quarter of the total, either separated or were disregarded as being unharmonious elements. The impact was immense. Rebuilding was a strenuous burden. It took a quarter century to recover the losses, some of which had gone forever,

'In 1878 the bitterness of the conflict was over, Wesleyanism invigorated, the ministers less autocratic than before and most of the reforms demanded in 1849 were ungrudgingly conceded. The problem was the impossibility of the inevitable compromise between autocratic and democratic groups.'¹⁰

The religious conflict was the mirror-reflection of the struggle going on in politics. There had been years of open warfare between those of the working-class seeking reform and those in the government reacting against them. The first battle was a victory for established authority,

'The deluded and defeated Chartists were suffering from the consequences of living before their time. So with the Wesleyan reformers; they wanted the franchise, a share in the Government of their Church. Their demands were refused; even religious monopolies would not surrender privileges and prerogatives. Spiritual autocrats were no less severe than their political compeers, they struck hard and conclusively.'¹⁰

Since Sunderland was to feel greatly the impact of the growth of Methodism; since the further one moves away from Wesleyan Methodism the further one moves to 'the left'; and since the Christian Lay Church of Sunderland led the North in its polarisation from mainstream Methodism; it is worthwhile to

10 R. F. Wearmouth, p. 91 and foll.

consider the connections of Methodism with the radical worker-movement. An 1886-87 enquiry into the condition of the working classes showed 27% out of work. Some of the worst problems for the lower orders were indeed to come in later-century when they had been attracted into the towns from the land. In Bristol thousands were out of work. In Liverpool thousands more were walking the streets due to slackness of work. There were, however, pockets of prosperity and the North-East, at times, provided these. Durham miners not only had employment, they had good conditions of work. In 1893 they worked between thirty and thirty-six hours per week. The decades previous to this had not been so pleasant. In Durham in the 1870s, the miners had a strike which lasted fifty-seven days because of a 10% reduction in wage. The struggle in the second half of the nineteenth century had been intense. Workers joined Trades Unions to improve conditions. Employers organized themselves to keep down wages; employees organised themselves to keep them up. The fight was made worse by the conditions of the urban areas. Sickness and disease, in most cases the direct result of insanitary conditions, weakened the resolve to continue the fight. Thus poverty and distress drew out and embittered the struggle,

'To escape these conditions was a laudable objective, to desire and seek social amelioration was an impulse that grew from bitter roots. Bitterness has often crept into human relationships and in consequence has made the art of living together in peace and progress almost impossible and always difficult. This unhappy state is one of the legacies of the nineteenth century.'¹¹

On the other side of the coin, however, these years saw an increase in the power, industrial and political, of the Trades Unions. As or when they mastered the use of that power the

11 R. F. Wearmouth, p. 30.

country would benefit from greater balance. The Trades Unions, for example, agitated for National Education. At the start of the century the working classes had had no rights of association, no right of political meeting, no right of franchise, no right to equal justice and no right to state assistance except the despised Poor Laws - the equivalent of Supplementary Benefit and its repugnant means-testing. Political rights had come by striving against the State, against the privileged classes and against human nature. Perhaps the good fortunes of Sunderland, economically, gives a clue here as to why people were able to think independently, earlier than other areas. Only when a person has enough food, clothing and warmth can he think about improvement in the conditions of his life in terms of religion or politics. As it has been shown, Sunderland had certain industrial peaks sufficient to give it that confidence. Before long the radical-worker movement was to be in no doubt from where it was earning its new support,

'The Establishment is the enemy of public freedom. It has always deserved this odious name; it has ever been the friend of tyranny, the foe of freedom, siding with the strong against the weak, with the oppressor against the oppressed, and doing the utmost to maintain class privilege and prevent the enactment of equal laws and the enjoyment of equal rights.'

This was no political-newspaper article. It continued,

'We plead for the disestablishment of the Church, not for its destruction.'¹²

It appeared in the Primitive Methodist Magazine one year before the great debate on Sunderland Methodism which led to the secession. Sunderland was more than a thermometer of events testing existing temperature. It was, once more a barometer of

12 The Primitive Methodist Magazine, 1876, p. 187., quoted in R. F. Wearmouth p. 112.

events reacting somewhat in advance of high pressure events which brought changes. Sunderland was a town which enjoyed prosperity. It had attracted people from all parts of Britain but also from the Durham pit-villages. Many of these people had suffered the hardships of the political struggle. In the calmer atmosphere of Sunderland they were able to reflect. Sunderland's lay secession may well have been initiated by acrimony but it was no simple reflex reaction which might disappear quickly. Similarly it did not hold a permanent grudge against its mainstream body. By 1898 they agreed to be Independent Methodists under the title of the Northern Counties Independent Methodist Lay Church Confederation. By 1909 they even agreed to drop the word, 'Lay' - all except (inevitably) James William Street Chapel; this congregation, obviously still holding the fort in Old Sunderland against the influences of Holy Trinity, retained that word until it closed in 1919.

It was probably by sheer chance that this humble little street eventually managed to sport so many honours. It just happened to have building-space available after recent slum-clearance. Even so, James William Street received the honour of having the first Board School (just before the secession). There had been cost-wrangling over the choice of any site; so too much may not be read into the positioning of this first non-voluntary, non-conformist supported school in that particular street. Furthermore, it is necessary to remember that the first Board had a majority of Voluntaryists.

So also did the second Board. Therefore it was not a non-conformist decision to place the school in a street taking on such importance. Moreover, it should be borne in mind that

Non-Conformism encompassed a very broad selection of congregations, far broader than the simple split of Wesleyan Methodism described so far. It has already been shown in the events leading up to the establishment of the first Board that the fragmentation of non-conformist beliefs was denying the movement of much of its strength. The Sunderland Echo newspaper, owned by the non-conformist Samuel Storey, had taken the Board election defeat very badly. The editorial had inferred that money and experience of organization through the pulpit had been the source of this voluntarist victory. In fact when a voluntary victory was repeated a second time three years later, much to the horror of the newspaper, it was seen to be partly the vulnerability of the voting system. Yet again, however, it was the fact that the Non-Conformists were a very broad mixture of sects.¹³ They also put up for election a broad mix of candidates. Given the inevitable subdivision of all radical parties and its accompanying discord, the loss of concerted effort at the elections seems understandable. With regard to Board policy in the placement of schools, a less cynical observer may see the choice of James William Street as pure common sense. There was a greater need for a new school in the poorer areas. The street had been in the middle of a clearance programme. New property, new amenities might have seemed natural.

Before it is assumed that Sunderland was a political forum of dissent it should be stated that this was not the case. As indicated, the first two Boards had a voluntary majority. The majority changed to the Non-Conformists in the late 1870s and early 80s, roughly the same time Durham as a county went in the

same direction in the Parliamentary elections,

'In the 1885 General Election Liberalism had triumphed, where Methodism was strong - Cornwall, Devonshire, the East Counties, Yorkshire, Durham and Northumberland.'¹⁴

It will not go without notice that these were mining counties. Yet Sunderland was not a mining town, more a coal-shipping town, therefore any strong Methodist influence from mining must have been largely through immigration from County Durham and individuals such as,

'... Peter Lee whose work for the Durham Miners is commemorated by a new town-name. He was born at Trimdon Grange. At nine he worked in the Lancashire Cotton Mills. He became a "pit laddie" at ten. He went to America, to Rand in South Africa, then back to Wheatley Hill. He became a Primitive Methodist early and was prominent as a local preacher. "He typified the courage, integrity and humanity of the mining community he served so well."¹⁵

But it should be remembered, Durham notables were not typical of Sunderland basic congregations.

So it is that one ought not to judge by first appearances. In Board politics, for instance, superficial appraisal of the first election from newspaper reports might have given the impression of a huge impending non-conformist victory. The non-conformist Sunderland Echo must have increased to a handsome circulation as it beat the electioneering drum before the Board elections; and although the early elections attracted a fair proportion of voters the numbers diminished over the years. It was a similar situation in routine, religious matters, also. The new Christian Lay Church suffered a lack of support in the town for the monthly meetings where adults had a voice and a vote. No doubt many members, whilst cherishing the democratic

14 M. L. Edwards, Methodism and England, pp. 167-170, quoted in R. F. Wearmouth, p. 213.

15 R. F. Wearmouth, p. 190.

principle in theory, were in practice happy to leave decisions to the leading men. This, therefore, might indicate that choosing Christian Lay instead of mainstream Methodism was not an expression of a yearning for radical democratic religion but more for the spontaneity and warmth that could arise from a 'people's religion.' Thus it echoes a suggestion in the previous chapter that a decision to 'go Board' was not a rejection of voluntary provision for something radically liberal, more a willingness to let some fresh air into the educational atmosphere. There is no doubt that the early successful expansion of the Christian Lay Church came from common enthusiasm; but it also was influenced by another important factor. Although as their gospel spread further afield, the principal speakers tried to play down this aspect for fear of appearing to be a cheap religion, the fact was that Christian Lay ran on virtually no overheads at the start. If people wanted to rejoice together they simply hired some rooms. Any money collected, quickly built up to provide for the acquisition of buildings. Christian Lay appeared to offer a 'do-it-yourself' religion in 'kit-form'. In reality, it was one of the most sincere forms of Christian worship; and even its title confirmed this.

Yet it was the feeling of warmth and enthusiasm which came forth from the movement. By their connections with open-air Primitive Methodism the Christian Lay Churches were certainly a visible group in the town. Each Sunday before the evening service a group of sixty or more members went through the streets and lanes of the east end, or Old Sunderland parish. After several hours of singing and talking the Gospel there was a Camp Meeting on the Town Moor. In that afternoon there was a procession through Hendon, below the Moor by the sea, followed by another

Camp Meeting. In the evening there were Love Feasts. On Whit Monday the day started at 7 a.m. with the Lord's Supper. Then as might be suspected, they went to James William Street for a substantial dinner, probably outside since the street was decorated with flags and flowers. After some more business there was tea; then united followers of Bethany and James William Street chapels sang hymns. To complete the atmosphere a telegram of good wishes from the Lancashire Methodists was read out. For those who could manage to do so, it was work the next day. This was just the annual celebration of two churches. After a perusal of the list of churches (almost one hundred) one starts to imagine the religious atmosphere of this mostly prosperous Victorian town.

If Independent Methodism and Primitive Methodism differ from Wesleyan Methodism because they are more free and more warm and not just necessarily (in the case of Sunderland) because they are more radical; it is reasonable to wonder why a town with an independent, almost cosmopolitan, flavour should expand so heavily into so many non-conformist religions. The answer may well lie in the fact that the freedom-loving Sunderlanders found a type of social mobility that was missing from life for the majority of people in the second half of the nineteenth century until the State had devised a framework for the Welfare State.

The easing of social controls allowed, then, some social mobility. This social mobility may well have included some religious mobility. As they grew more prosperous some people might find that as they moved into the better areas of the town,

still remaining faithful to Nonconformity, different churches might cater better for their needs. The stone or wooden chapels of Old Sunderland might for a successful Sunderland shipping family, be exchanged for the more impressive churches of Villiers Street. Or if 'the boat really did come in' possibly it called for a residence in the Georgian-style, stone-faced Grange Terrace with attendance at the impressive St. George's, this time belonging to the Presbyterians. The 1851 census had shown this group to be the strongest nationally to the north of a line from the Solway to Blyth with an extension to include Newcastle and Tyneside. This was the area where the Scottish influence was most potent. Even as low down as Durham, Presbyterianism was absent in seven of the Durham Registration Districts and apart from South Shields and Sunderland which shared nine out of fourteen Presbyterian churches in the county of Durham, all the Poor Law Union or Registration districts had an index of attendance below four.¹⁶

In Sunderland, then, the Presbyterians,

'... despite a certain amount of coolness on the part of local residents were determined to join the ranks of the respectable and prosperous who were colonising this area. It was a shipbuilder, R. A. Bartram who provided much of the drive and finance for St. George's. Its architect was John Bennie Wilson of Glasgow and its most distinctive feature, the tall tower with long vertical openings, is very similar to the campanile that he had just completed for a church in Belfast where it dominates the skyline at the southern end of the city centre.'

However, the real 'social' mobility ranging from the most meagre to the most impressive non-conformist church came when the ordinary person of the 'nouveau-riche' without education was able to be somebody whom people might listen to when addressing the congregation. This might then lead to a committee or some

16 J. D. Gay, p. 129.

other position of responsibility from which he would be excluded in ordinary life. Non-Conformism was offering a type of education for those who required it. Even the Christian Lay Church of Sunderland had an Examination and Education Committee for the preparation of new preachers. It offered sets of books and also access to a library.

The 'educating' theme of these Independent Methodists came even further to the surface when one looks at the history of some of the better-known figures. Mr. Drinkwater was a Schoolmaster. In 1877 he had a private academy in Sunderland as a tailor. M. W. Branfoot was a member of the Sunderland School Board and of the Sunderland and district Sunday School Union. He was typical of his peers,

'[Of] humble origins [their] rise in social scale was attributable to religion which inspired [their] diligence and reliability. They believed it could help others, too. Hence there was stress on hard work, education and self-reliance.'¹⁷

The elderly Edward Rutter who was reluctantly allowed to retire had been a schoolmaster. He, also, had run a private academy.

The training of aspirants led to appointments, and different churches were asked to propose new ministers. Once they had reached certain educational standards and had preached trial sermons; once they had satisfied others on their evangelical principles and personal faith; then only, the accepted men and women became 'exhorters.' Since these were indicated by an asterix on the circuit list they were called 'stars.' When accepted as full preachers the quarterly committees took their new 'frontmen' very seriously. Absences required written or personal explanations. It was only after many personal requests that the weary seventy-year old Mr. Rutter was finally allowed to

17 G. E. Milburn The Christian Lay Churches, p. 40.

retire soon after the death of his son! Bright new beginners were also retained tenaciously. Mr. G. Edwards, soon after qualifying, went to sea and was shipwrecked. He spent two days clinging to the rigging before rescue. On his return, the Quarterly Committee recorded the warmest thanks to Almighty God for the preservation of Brother Edwards in a time of imminent peril. Then they put his name on the preaching list for the next plan. Nor, even, had the leading figure in the secession, William Branfoot, been discouraged from taking up preaching when his father ('en route' to take the good word to a new chapel) met his death when hit by a coal truck.

The trouble with all 'back-to-basics' such as Christian Lay is that eventually human nature does not like 'basics' and tends to improve the quality of life. It has some of its origins in the 'original sin' theory of which this particular chapter allows mention. Totalitarianism, for example, is most vulnerable when under attack from the sweeteners of materialism. So it was that Christian Lay expanded and took on some of the features which it had been intended to eradicate. In the pursuit of democracy the Quarterly Meetings had taken the place of ministerial authority. However, at least when a minister had been autocratic they had known whom to blame. The corporate responsibility of Committees often makes individuals doubly ruthless. With the doggedness of the Spanish Inquisition the Quarterly Meetings tenaciously maintained the moral rectitude of the preachers. Meetings became longer. It was necessary to have timekeepers to halt meetings every half hour for prayers. This respite, however, sometimes served only to help them arm their weapons. A preacher convicted of sharp practice was expelled. Unorthodox or controversial views were rebuked. A member 'suspected' of bankruptcy was asked

to appear at a special meeting with his creditors to explain his position.

Nevertheless expansion also took place in a positive direction. It has been shown how the Education and Examinations Committee improved the preachers. There were also: class meetings; a Sunday School with 364 members by 1884; a Young Men's Improvement Class; a prosperous Band of Hope plus the usual round of bazaars, musical concerts, tea-meetings and teachers' soirées. In spite of the part-time nature of the organisation the movement managed to keep running smoothly. Occasionally a preacher might appear to be somewhat obstinate. Captain Gibson asked to have no appointments except during the first fortnight of the new moon and only at places where he could get home without having to walk all the way. Fortunately, for all this might have appeared to be a groundless fear of vagrant lunatics, such requests were not common. In spite of this overintensity in its early stages Christian Lay had netted some of the choice Primitive Methodists at its inception - best preachers, vigorous organisers, bankers, stewards, harmonious choir members; it had made a very good start. Also huge support was given to any nearby area trying to raise a congregation. The new church-goers in Silksworth, for example, must have been very puzzled by the disparity in numbers between their earlier and later meetings; established Sunderland congregations had been transported 'en bloc' to give atmosphere. However, the important fact is that the 'Sunderland message' was being eagerly taken up over a wide area in the North,

'There is no doubt that the Lay Church in the North-East received considerable impulse from the events in Sunderland. It is as though a series of shock waves ran through the area arousing a sympathetic response in widely-scattered communities.'¹⁸

18 G. E. Milburn, The Christian Lay Churches, p. 31.

From Newcastle down to Darlington a Northern Counties Lay Church Confederation was formed; but it was to be to Sunderland from Darlington that Mr. Bolton came in order to seek unification - because the strength and enthusiasm lay in Sunderland. The connections spread through Northumbria and Cumbria. Soon the Northern Counties joined with those further south in the United Free Gospel Churches Confederation. Soon afterwards (1883) the annual conference came to Sunderland, so great had been the impact nationally of the Sunderland Lay Church within the Connexion.

This national impact drew its strength, inevitably, from the responses of individuals. One stunning feature in the lives of those Sunderland pioneers is that they changed religions quite late in life. In a moment of quiet reflection and speaking quite unaffectedly, Branfoot said,

'I have never before felt the grace of God so shaping and moulding my life as I have during these years in the Lay Church.'

The real eye-catchers, then, in the nineteenth century were definitely the Non-Conformists. Numerically they dominated. Emotionally they so much suffused that their influence brimmed around the region; and of the whole group the Christian Lay Church most typified the zeal of the town. Any group of people whose ardour influences and attracts people two hundred miles away in the parochial atmosphere of the nineteenth century definitely deserves attention. Someone wrote on the door of James William Street chapel,

'The world needs to be turned upside down and these are the lads to do it.'¹⁹

No-one could doubt that sentiment.

19 G. E. Milburn, The Christian Lay Churches, p. 46.

In summarizing the two main groups so far, it has been shown that the Established Anglican Church had slowly and painstakingly spread its historical heritage around the town, quickening its pace in the second half of the nineteenth century as it put chapels and schools into the expanding suburbs. In spite of the loss of Old Sunderland, New Sunderland was going well in later century. For a town with such a great non-conformist commitment the numbers of Church of England properties was not inconsiderable. Forty three churches, missions and parish halls by 1900 was a very respectable total. Some of this was due to the publication of 1851 census,

'The frenzy of church and chapel building in the 1860s and 1870s was partly a consequence of Census findings.'²⁰

However it has been suggested in this and previous chapters that the attitudes of the townsfolk were also becoming more positive towards organisations which tried to improve the general condition of ordinary people. The Church of England had been a visible benefactor for many years in the town. Even so it was rather disturbing to find that Sunderland was amongst the thirty-six towns with below the average attendance for large towns.²¹ In spite of this the Established Church had shown a methodical, controlled and confident approach. The Non-Sectarians, it has been indicated, lit the town alight with their personal, effervescent brand of religion which had simply grown out of the mood of the century.

The Roman Catholic community was another main force in the town. It is clear by now that their impact on the town was not

20 J. D. Gay, p. 56.

21 K. S. Inglis, English Churches and the Working classes 1880-1900 (Oxford Univ. Ph.D. Thesis 1956) pp. 64-101 and pp. 652-70, quoted in J. Gay, p. 60.

inconsiderable. The power of their educational surge had created a fine legacy for later generations. The difficulty of their reemergence into British Society and the crucial integration of the Irish immigrants indicated the massive tasks which were undertaken. Lady Hylton of Hylton Castle had played a central role in encouraging believers at all levels of society during the sixteenth century. Considering the penalties which others suffered, her actions were true bravery. Such example led many ordinary people to decline allegiance to King, Parliament and the Protestant way of religion in the seventeenth century. The inseparable joint-oath led fifty Sunderlanders to suppress their natural love of King in order to keep their religion. The eighteenth century in the town saw the passage of several priests,

'But either the climate, the difficulties and anxieties of the life they had to lead, or their age, might well account for the fact that the earlier priests in the town do not seem to have lived long in Sunderland.'²²

... and one or two unsavoury incidents,

'In 1746 the Catholic Chapel was set on fire by the mob and the priest had to make his escape from the town in the disguise of a woman.'

At the beginning of the nineteenth century there were still only some 300 Catholics in the town of a population of thirteen thousand. A few centuries later the same Father Kearney who had brought over the Christian Brothers took the dramatic decision to build the dominant and beautiful church of St. Mary's next to the Wear Bridge. It is still the first building which meets the visitor's eye. His successors were all to be men who played important rôles in the public life of the community. It was

22 L. P. Crangle, The Roman Catholic Community in Sunderland, p. 65.

brilliant foresight that the church should be placed there, for it came to be the very axis of the town's new commercial and administrative centre. At the time few people could have known where the town centre would end up. This church put the Catholic community in a strategic position in the town. As if to prove this they processed through the town behind banners singing hymns on important days. This was to be a familiar sight throughout the century as their churches opened. Add the Non-Conformists and the Sunday School Movement to the Roman Catholics snaking through the streets and the second half-century must have offered a very colourful sight. To the growing numbers of Irish immigrants these opportunities for public displays of faith must have been most unexpected in a land where welcome might always have been doubtful.

Many of these poor Irish, in fact most of the Catholic population, were not living near the mother church in the new town centre. They were inhabiting the Port area of Old Sunderland. Priests came down to this area and used public buildings such as the Old Arcade Hall and the Old Market for services in mid-century. By 1860, St. Patrick's had been sitting diplomatically between Holy Trinity and James William Street, to its rear. This rather subtle setting showed the crucial position of that little acre in the fight for the town's souls.

During these years (which preceded the establishment of the School Board and continued through it) in common with the other two main religious groups, new Catholic churches and chapels spread through the expanding streets. Between 1857 and 1878 Reverend Bamber put missions into five areas of the town. This was an accommodation increase from 800 to 2,700.²³ Two priests

23 R. J. Cooter, (Durham Univ., M.A. Thesis, 1972) pp. 62-101.

increased to nine. The English and Irish Catholics had reciprocal effects upon each other. The English mood of timidity and Christlike humility became more flamboyant under the influence of the Irish personality. The Pope had tried to initiate an aggressive evangelism into the Catholic Church. This had been unsuccessful because of the narrowness of its approach in contrast with the scope of the Church's rôle. Financial support had not been forthcoming. Enthusiastic priests had been in short supply throughout Britain. The missions had also diversified and converts were in short supply also. The Irish were slow to take up the new mood since they did not fully understand it. In the North-East distant from London, the respect for local Catholicism prevailed over the national efforts. In short the Catholic-Irish influence in Sunderland insulated it from an already unsuccessful national attempt to change the Church's direction.

The dedication of the Catholic community, as it became established, was clear to see. The sacrifices made for educational foundations have already been shown. As the financial 'poor relation' to the other two, admiration for their great progress is fairly granted,

'It will be seen that throughout two or three hundred years Sunderland's Catholic community was not one which included families of great wealth or influence - it had no munificent benefactors such as other denominations had. Somewhat paradoxically, its struggle against the materialism of the world also included a struggle for the necessary material possessions without which it could never have survived - let alone progress.'²⁴

It was shown at the beginning of this chapter that the Established Church had the longest-standing tradition in the town, dating back to Benedect Biscop and Aidan. Their next

24 L. P. Crangle, The Roman Catholic community in Sunderland, p.78.

parish at Bishopwearmouth became a solid semi-rural community based on the Church. It was only in the eighteenth century that the Church in Sunderland faced up to the national problem of urban parishes. Even then it was an important rôle which it played in the early life of the growing port. The encroachment of Non-Conformism and the movement of the town centre westwards are the two factors which undermined Holy Trinity's position. The architectural concessions of this building are interesting in the consideration of the competition with Non-Conformism. By the nineteenth century, anyway, the Church was balancing somewhat the loss of pastoral supremacy by its progress in the educational field. For their part the Non-Conformists grew in line with and then ahead of a national trend. The Christian Lay Church was only one example of the individual manner in which the character of the town interacted with Non-Conformism. The Catholics on the other hand were the perfect foil for the other two main groups. They helped the poor and helped themselves. As progress was made by them it was accepted with grateful happiness.

In short, the religious bodies of the town all made important contributions to the town's progress. Fortunately, (and where religious beliefs are strong this is not always the case) the contributions were nearly all positive. A constant, gentle drive was being made in order to capture the hearts and souls of the population. Once these souls were secured, the drive continued in order to retain them. Few suffered as a result of this effort, nor was the competition between groups counter-productive. This religious framework of the town offered a crucial support system at a very important point in its history. With so much change and expansion at that time, many people might

have lost perspective. Strong, brave, hard-working individuals gave every ounce of their energy with philanthropic devotion. It would be cruel not to admire their efforts. It is also impossible to separate any consideration of nineteenth century Sunderland from the influences of its religions.

CHAPTER 5

A commentary on attitudes: buildings during
the Sunderland School Board period.

It is only in the last few years that School Board buildings have started to disappear from English skylines. Most are over a century in age. If it appears whimsical to wonder whether their modern counterparts will be in existence one hundred years from now, this only serves to indicate the staggering rôle which they have played in over a century of English public education. That child-ravaged buildings of that age had until recently been included in forward plans shows the unusual, indeed **unique position** in English culture held by the Board schools; for it should be remembered that they have not been simply school buildings but part of the English way of life. There were, of course, other civic buildings of a similar heavy use which were also the pride of many towns. However, stations, libraries, museums and Townhalls with their broad concourses and tall ceilings were not subjected to such intense activity; nor have they been victims of the demands of numerous Acts. Apart from recently being included in lists of modern educational building stock the Board schools have been more than simply well-known faces amongst the terraces of towns and cities. Very many English people have been into a Board school building, many have been taught in one and many of their children still are,

'School Boards have left much influence still with us. Often the Board Schools were still used and have a distinctive look.'¹

The memory of being inside a Board School classroom is lasting. High, formal windows and ceilings create an instant church-like deference. Bare walls with dark ceramic, glazed tiles or interlocking

1. D. Spenceylayh, The work of the Heworth School Board, 1875 - 1903, (Durham Univ., M. Ed., Thesis, 1968) Abstract.

wooden cladding upto head height, give the impression of being in a sink. The comparison may well be accurate. The daily toil which besmirches the walls can thus be periodically removed. Many children must have gazed upwards, attracted by the dangling cords to the tiny opening lights, only to realise that escape was impossible.

However, such schools would never have survived the sporadic twentieth century periods of growth and high-spending on education if they had not offered positive benefits. It is ironic that one of their attractions in the twentieth century was the antithesis of their original intent in the nineteenth century. Since the child's environment was grey, the Committee of Council was trying to provide, at school, conditions better than at home.² These late nineteenth century schools were environments offering change, space, warmth and cleanliness. The school was something unknown to many children. It was a modern, purpose-built building, an oasis in the otherwise dull desert of their lives,

'Education gave a few ways of escape from the drabness of life.'³

The Board school buildings for the last fifty years have often owed their attractiveness, not to their modernity but to their antiquity. They had nostalgic connections with the past for parents whose children already came from modern, clean, purpose-built homes. The Board schools exude past, high standards of learning and respect for authority. It was a case of the new order of the twentieth century looking back to the old order for reassurance.

Nostalgic memories, therefore, would not have retained these buildings through the periods of lavish cornucopia in education nor would they have provided models for schools built well after their

2. J. Hurt, Education in Evolution, 1971, p. 77.

3. E. Woodward, The Age of Reform 1815 - 1870, 1962, p. 14.

creation if they had not been soundly-built structures. Some of their detail has been altered over the years, but the basic concept was still seen to be good,

'Whatever shortcomings the solidly-built Board schools of the great cities may seem to possess today, they offered the child from the slum an amount of light, cleanliness and warmth he could never have experienced at home.'⁴

There is no doubt that the Board schools were in fact solidly-built. They have, it would seem, borne the test of time in both a psychological and a material sense.

In a psychological sense, the longer they have lasted the more they have become 'the untouchables'. These schools were the first visible testimonies of formal state interest in education. They represented confidence in education just in the same way other surviving civic buildings still do. The public bodies responsible for their creation represent values still held. School Boards have been one of the most important developments in the progress of education in the last century. The present-day expectation of the Government's obligation to provide, originates with the Boards.

Repeatedly one senses that those who planned them were building something permanent, something to survive that current generation,

'We recommend the Public Loan Commissioner to lend your Board £18,000 for the purpose of providing it the repayment of the said sum over 50 years.'⁵

The confidence to borrow sums of money with repayment periods far beyond the lifetimes of these individuals, underlines this. Boards could borrow on the security of rates and acquire by Compulsory Purchase. The Government decision to extract money [from excise duties on whisky] for instruction beyond basic subjects, further reinforces this. Once the Government had accepted responsibility

4. J. Hurt, Elementary schooling and working classes, 1860 - 1918, 1979, p. 168.

5. S.S.B.L.B. , 22nd March, 1873.

for education, much of the tension, felt by the public over education, dissipated. It may have been that the apathetic public felt that the fate of their children's education was safe. The fact that locally-elected and well-respected individuals put their efforts towards this distant concept of education in a period of short-term goals and short lifespans imbued the schools with a hope in the future. The zeal of Boards to do well also matched by the growing realisation of the public that their rôle was important. It has been stated that there was growing support for education. Already School Boards had imposed on the community larger and larger sums of money; however, these became less resented since they were being spent on the elevation of the people.

In the creation of the Board Schools it is possible to see the inevitable slide towards state involvement, as in other fundamental aspects of a nation's life; it was a growing realisation by the public that it was necessary, and the equally growing acceptance that it was they themselves who had to pay for it. It is possible that in some respects there was a self - directing drive in society towards provision and towards the creation in society of certain civic monuments,

'If the buildings which an age leaves behind it offer a commentary on attitudes....'

Indeed they do, and furthermore,

'The importance of premises and important buildings emphasized the fact that a school stood at the apex of the local educational system.'⁶

Apart from the psychological and romantic considerations, the School Board buildings have borne the test of time in a physical sense. The soundness of their structure had discouraged and delayed

6. M. Seaborne and R. Lowe, p. 50.

their early disappearance this century. One possible reason for the solidity of School Board structures lies in the fact that their late arrival (in comparison with other countries) allowed later-century consideration and design features to be included. The fact is that in the late nineteenth century many far-sighted social advances were beginning to crystallise. Areas of professionalism, over and beyond that seen in education, were forming. The deep-seated problems of urban life which were seen to have plagued Britain and had appeared to have put it behind other areas of Europe in some respects, in fact had acted as a melting - pot. The murmuring of discontent had produced a period of cautious preparation and foresight which had created a framework of sufficient strength to take nineteenth century United Kingdom almost into the twenty-first century. The slower English rate of social reorganisation eventually outgrew the progress of other countries; even if the industrial expertise of the country was later to be plagiarised. At least the United Kingdom could not lose financially by having its constitution and social fabric copied - if any-one was sufficiently interested to do so. Thus the late start of State involvement in education helped it towards physical creations, also, that were far to outstrip its apparent forerunners. Visionary individuals of design and architecture such as Robson of the London School Board, the local Health Officers and the Royal Commissioners, whose chairmen's names live on - they all had a massive influence on the new school buildings. There was a 'land - fit - for - heroes' type of attitude in educational preparation, especially where the 1870 Act, with its hint of a victory, caused a civic stir. Many of the gentlemen of the new Boards shrugged off the legacy of the voluntary

schools, wondrously so, since many of them had held their interests there. They frequently rejected voluntary buildings, except for renting, in order to create breathing-space to build for the future. It is in this very concept that much of the physical strength of these buildings takes its origin. With the courage that only rate-assistance even today gives to local decisions, they created the many buildings which now vigorously survive.

In considering the physical qualities of the schools it should be remembered that it has not until recent years been seen to be basic to the design of a building that it should inspire in a user a reaction related to its use. Few people of that era felt upset that an impressive Town Hall entrance-hall, balcony, and corridors might take up half of the internal building capacity and thus compress administrative office accommodation. So, many Victorian public buildings simply reflected civic pride. In some ways this was important because many of those buildings were used by the adult population. This partly explains why local Government, for example, still considers the initial impression of civic buildings fairly important, since such emotions make rate-collection easier and induce municipal identity. However, attitudes have changed towards planning in areas such as education and to some extent in Health. Most Victorian hospitals still survive. Of these which still allow patients to use the original main entrance, first impressions for the many distressed persons who enter are disconcerting. Dark marble, wood-panelled lobbies suggest committees, administration and authority. The Victorian public building had a fairly standard form. Inevitably this did not lend itself to all

the different uses. In the same way Board school buildings gave only partial consideration to the impression given to the children who used them; in the same manner they often paid little attention to the entrance area. Their appearance was mostly severe and foreboding, with little internal or external welcome. In this respect they are in vivid contrast to modern schools. Even today seasonal pictures drawn on the high windows of Board schools are at times the only indication that children are within. To be fair to the Board schools of Sunderland, then, it should be noted that some of them did indeed by their design offer a form of welcome and reassurance to the children. Of the three schools which are featured in this chapter, two were planned in such a way that the impression given to the children in them was favourable. In both cases this took the form of the way in which the buildings had been grouped; and yet one had buildings in the centre of its site whilst the other had buildings grouped around the playground. The beneficial effect of two forms of completely different layout show the extent to which the feelings of children had been ignored in so many other schools in other towns and cities; it indicates that a positive impression can be obtained by many different designs, making the daunting aspect of so many schools elsewhere almost inexcusable.

There was a varied history which led up to the way in which 'Board - style' external appearance was formed. Perhaps the absence of any major architectural influence or personage produced a dearth of professional, 'neo', plagiarised, external style. This may be one factor which created a distinctive, Board school appearance. From mid-century a complex movement of external school building

styles could be perceived. During the 1830s the Tudor style in school properties made several appearances. In the next decade, perhaps under the Newman influence, a religious note was struck into the rapidly-increasing population. Gothic styles continued through these middle years with a religious predominance.

External style apart, the physical layouts of schools had to be submitted to London. An 1851 circular on interior construction had no inconsiderable influence on planning. In fact schools built separately but on the same campus as Junior Schools, grew more popular in the 1850s and 1860s as the ideas of Froebel and Pestalozzi were more widespread in later decades. In Sunderland the earliest Infant School, Garden Street, was established on an independent site. Certainly Infant Departments were common. Playgrounds which took up half the ground area of the total campus were often half covered, for use in poor weather. All of these features were an indication of consideration being given to the younger child. Before the arrival of the Board schools the predominance of the voluntary societies in education had assured the continuance of the religious influence on architecture. The Revised Code in 1862 came at a time of reducing interest in the appearance of schools, and more attention to performance within. During this decade (1860 - 1870) the schools had become more elaborate although spending on them had reduced. The Anglicans moved back to an ecclesiastical style; if they ever seriously left it. Internally, the impecuniousness of early voluntary schools (now mostly long gone) can be judged by the building costs which upto mid-century averaged only a few pounds per pupil-place. However the apparently small square footage per child in this early century period looked worse than it was since absenteeism reduced numbers in practice. Schools, early and mid-century, reflected the religious and to some extent, social

views of the period. However, the resulting patchwork of buildings might give a false impression of society's view of education. Although from 1839 the Committee of Council had requested to know whether schools were to be built near interferences such as swamps or factories, the buildings or additions which grew after this date were not upto modern standards of town-planning. Since the Voluntarists were building for convenience the consequential mixture of site and style is inevitable. Manses, chapels, churches and factories all had visible influence in eventual school design. Thus a mixture of influences produced a mixture of architectural detail. Although people such as Robson urged design features, they did not innovate artistically. Robson did not create waves of admiration. He simply offered the necessary framework for the public school buildings on whose design, nevertheless, his influence was great,

'There was no architect of genius in this period.'⁷

This is very true. However, the main civic buildings created favourable impressions to the onlookers. They often did inspire and still do.

Whether the 'Board look' can be traced back with ease or with difficulty, one fact remains. The buildings are undoubtedly 'distinctive' in the sense that they 'stand out' from their environment. Other principal civic buildings of that period also stand out. However, set as many of them are in town centres they fit better into their setting. Board school buildings stand out from their domestic housing settings for a different reason. In the nineteenth century the houses which surrounded them, especially those early ones built in the poorer areas, were separated by their inferior quality. Today these schools still stand out since the older housing stock has often been demolished and the schools are

7. E. Woodward, The Age of Reform, p. 577.

surrounded by more recent houses. Either way, past or present, the Board schools, more so than most other public buildings, often were and always will be 'distinct' from their surroundings.

The origins of the architectural distinctiveness may originate in the clean break which many Boards wanted from their voluntary predecessors. A more professional approach to school design, it has been stated, grew from the new 1870 Act and from the creation of administrative bodies,

'There was a move away from the "quasi - religious" style to a more secular building style as the state played a more important rôle in educational provision.'⁸

It has been suggested that Robson of the London School Board and similar formal and professional thinkers were influential in decisions on internal specifications also. The School Board was to provide an environment better than the children's home. Standards of ventilation, heating and lighting had to rise since numbers would do so when all pupils would be brought into schools. The 'Board style' encompassed a broad range determined by the size of the site and the chronological point in the Board period when the school was built. Robson tended to promote the school hall as the central feature for each department, if there was more than one department. He saw the Revised Code, with its diversification of subjects, creating a need for diversification of design and so creating larger schools. The trained-teacher supply which it was acknowledged in many schools in the Board period would be stretched heavily, needed some rationalization between the ideas of educational architecture and the number of rooms which at any time could be supervised by a qualified person,

'Robson wanted standards (whilst staying together)

8. M. Seaborne and R. Lowe, p. 3.

to be taught for as long as possible in separate classrooms.'⁹

but since it was under the supervision of one master or mistress this should be subordinated to the necessity for school supervision. He wanted,

'.... all classes to have access off the school room.
One large, light room for drawing.'⁹

He recommended separate boys' and girls' playgrounds and that their individual entrances should be far apart, even in different streets. In effect Board schools, nationally, often did have different entrances and stairways and also covered playgrounds. Glass partitions, galleries and halls allowed supervision and class movement during the day,

'There should be hall access instead of corridor access.'⁹

There is an impression that Robson, the chief architect of the London School Board, was at the forefront of English Board School layout. It has been suggested that with reference to the external appearance he was one of only several influences. The same applies to internal design,

'Robson took every effort to suggest secular purpose of buildings by suppressing ecclesiastical connotations wherever possible.'⁹

Yet it must be remembered that for all his architectural preferences he was still left vulnerable to the realities which have been mentioned,

'Within the schools the teacher-shortage left less room for choice.... A popular internal organization was an assistant teacher who supervised fifty children in the hall and was responsible for a further thirty who were taught by pupil-teachers in an adjoining classroom. A row of classrooms lay alongside the hall.... the gain in discipline was made at the expense of class room ventilation as only one set of windows opened onto the outside of the school....

9. M. Seaborne and R. Lowe, pp 24-28.

Rooms were glazed to ensure head's supervision.'¹⁰
 Many Boards would have adopted the Prussian classroom-based schools but for the shortage of teachers .

In spite of the lead given by, and sometimes as a result of, the pressures of the Acts, and even local circumstances, differences were evident within the 'Board-look',

'There was a wide variety of styles by the end of the nineteenth century on architecture and organisation.'¹¹

These ranged from one - teacher schools to complete classrooms. So it was that classroom teaching and dual desks offered a broader education.

Internal dissensions or problems within the school continued. Whatever the discussion that ranged over the 'Board-look', the purists obviously had decided that it had no future anyway,

'Architecturally, the Board school Queen Anne style was thought unfitted for the development of the highest order of architecture and was used infrequently for secondary schools.'¹¹

The social setting of the school added another dimension,

'(Board) schools were planted deliberately in the most degraded and least educated areas of the city and filled with children brought largely by compulsion who made the greatest demands on teachers.'¹²

Earlier in the century it had surprised some inspectors to find the opposite - of poor children in good schools. It was shown that the inspector of St. Mary's R.C. Girls' School in Sunderland was moved to mention that there were many middle class girls in the school. Throughout the second half of the century discerning parents were selecting the better schools and sending their children into schools whose external appearance or position were not necessarily in vogue.

10. M. Seaborne and R. Lowe, pp. 31 - 32.

11. M. Seaborne and R. Lowe, pp. 37-57

12. M. Sturt, Education of the people, 1967, p. 336.

It is true then that parents were showing selectivity for schools whose appearance might be poor. Social attitudes but not necessarily social status might be indicated by the site and by the building.

It seems obvious that Board schools were put into areas of most need. These were, however, where the Voluntarists had built their schools to try to alleviate the gloom and insufficient provision. Thus the Board schools and the Voluntarists were in competition. This only added to the problems of the voluntary managers since pupils were attracted away. It is little wonder that St. Paul's and St. Patrick's in Sunderland refused to show their attendance records to the new Board.

The styles of internal design which Robson had promoted may have answered some problems but they raised others. From an architectural consideration, being ahead of their time they inevitably attracted their critics. Some said that Board schools in Sunderland were,

'.... too large, bare and cheerless; the light often came from one direction; they often had only one door and no cloak area.'¹³

Inspectors often criticised the building structure of the rooms. Others, later in the period found them too small and badly - equipped for the technological needs of the growing secondary provision of the Devonshire and Samuelson recommendations. As if to contradict such statements, often within the same report, they were seen to be well ventilated and well lit.¹⁴ Yet it has been shown that 'purpose-built' did not yet have the twentieth century meaning. 'Purpose' was satisfied, for example, if the children were being taught in a schoolroom and not a churchnave.

13. Education Week, Sunderland, 1935, p. 117.

14. A. Herdson, The Development of Education in Sunderland during the nineteenth century, (Durham Univ., M. Ed., Thesis, 1936) Chapter. 6.

Dignity not function was still the word in architecture.¹⁵ This latter concept was to be a much later arrival. Yet there was little style in middle-class housing in the early part of Board period. The effort to improve living conditions was influenced more by moves in public health than by moves in architecture. Certainly many of the new Board schools appeared to put an emphasis on size. Some of the Board schools in the northern industrial towns appeared to have more architectural connections with the mills which surrounded them. Whilst the current grants' system prevailed the encouragement to this end is understandable. Yet again, then, schools were built reflecting current classroom practices. The large capacity of such buildings was encouraged by such inducements. Teaching methods, also, from early - century were influencing internal design well into the period. The glazed partition, which has been mentioned, was to be a feature of many schools well into the twentieth century. It has been stated also that its origins date back well over one hundred years to the schoolroom, with large numbers of pupils under the control of one teacher. Partition floor and ceiling runners which exist in most of the surviving Sunderland schools, as in other areas, are a fascinating watershed of confidence. Although many are so old that they are inoperable, their purpose is partly to convert the classroom to a schoolroom. However, apart from their somewhat lower installation cost, improved lighting and also the supervision by the headteacher (further illustrated by the presence of a 'Judas Window' in Simpson Street School, Sunderland), the managers could well have built masonry walls. The glazed partition suggests a certain diffidence of direction in internal planning.

15. E. Woodward, The Age of Reform, p. 579.

Plate 6

Simpson Street School

(ref. p. 136 and following)

Plate 6

Simpson Street School

(ref. p.136 and following)



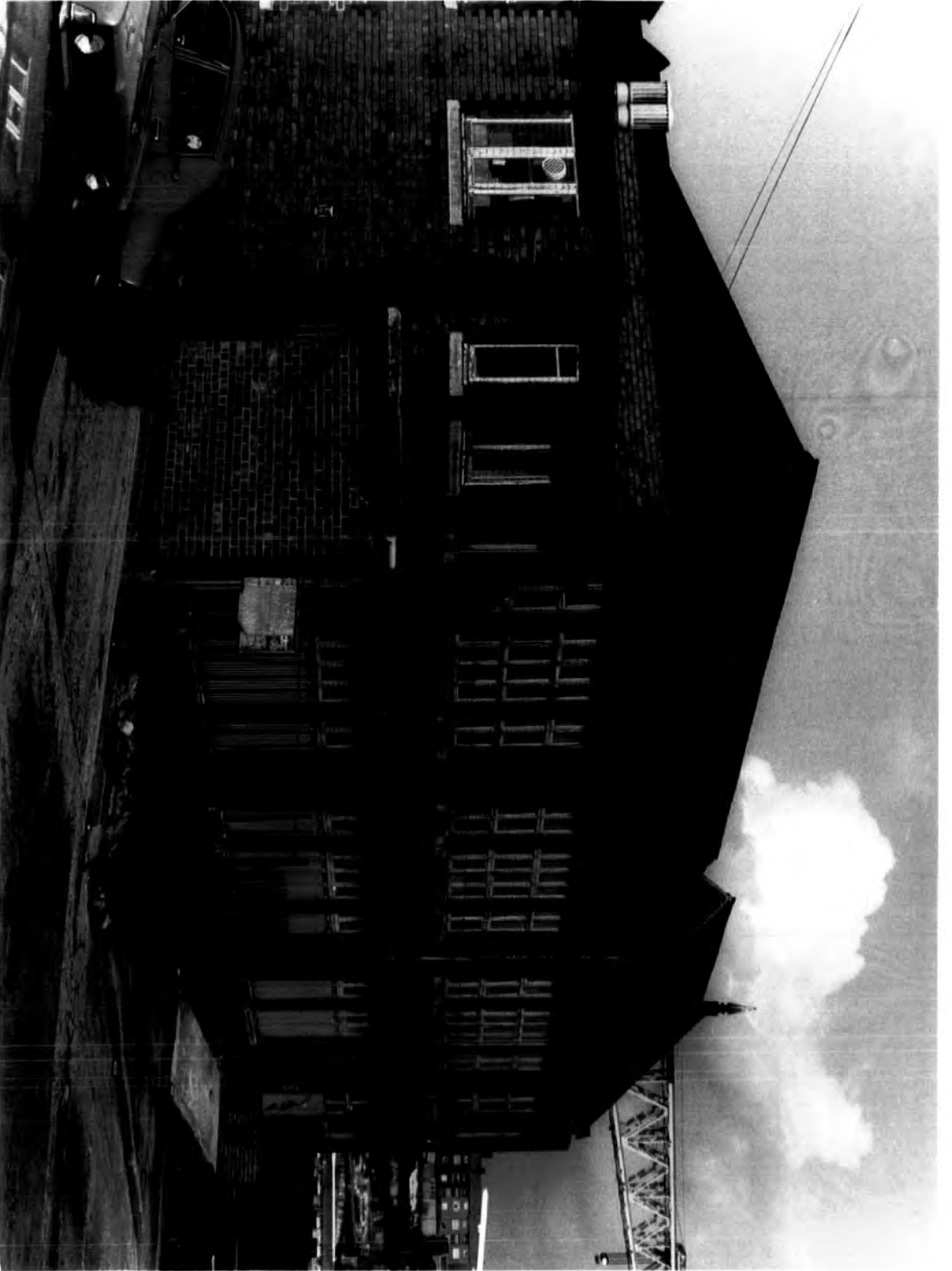
Nevertheless, most opinions of the Board schools converge on the view that the buildings improved as the period progressed. Not only were the buildings better but with the growth of town-planning, they were better-sited. Some of the Sunderland schools may well contradict this. Simpson Street was built on an incline moving in two directions, made even more awkward by a tapering of the site at one end where the street around its perimeter went round a hair-pin bend. Garden Street Infants, also, was perched on a cliff. The playground wall had a massive drop on the other side, down to the river Wear. Normally, however, the schools suffered less local interference than some of the voluntary schools described in an earlier chapter. They had better play-areas and often had the capacity to expand. They thereby had the overall advantage, so much admired in this century, of flexibility. This inbuilt ability to adapt projected these Board schools beyond the reach of the voluntary schools and again well into the present century. In London some of the Board schools became so large that they simply snuffed out local voluntary schools. In Sunderland it was co-existence that was equally noticeable. St. Patrick's R.C. lived happily next to the new James William Street School. St. Paul's C. of E. not only existed, it expanded. The flexibility of the Board schools, however, allowed them to grow to the needs of new educational demands. Many of these were at the time manifestly logical, not just frivolous requirements. The separation of Junior and Infants, the separation of Boys and Girls entrances has already been mentioned. Further additions included cloaks' and wash-areas and other specialised needs. What the board schools lacked in atmosphere and family spirit they gained in adaptability. In the current fashion they were almost 'modular'.

Plate 7

Garden Street Infants' School
(ref. p.137)

Plate 7

Garden Street Infants' School
(ref. p.137)



In terms of planning, the early nineteenth century days of education and the discretionary grants which were received from the Government had produced early schools built without professional architects,

'By 1902 this era was at an end. Professional school architects were employed and Whitehall had control over design. Well-published periodicals spread styles which were copied.'¹⁶

A more professional approach to school design was indeed beginning from 1870 onwards as local administrative bodies were created.

By contrast with small rural schools, large School Boards were in the vanguard of the move to class teaching instead of using the schoolroom. Many endowed schools and boards which did not appoint their own architect invited competitive entry for school plans and the publicity given to both winning and unsuccessful design in the architectural press also stimulated professional interest. An example of this taking place in Sunderland will be given later.

Professional planning combined with the new social mood and forged a permanent creation.

'The growth of urbanization heightened sensitivity to foreign competitors stemming from technology and increased influential central authority which all worked towards a situation in which schools were seen not simply as monuments to the past, effecting bygone styles and conventions, but also as mute reflections of a deep-seated faith in the continuing improvement of society The external architecture and internal organisation of these Board schools offer compelling evidence of the practical implications of the 1870 Act. The hygiene standards of the school buildings as well as their appropriateness for teaching produced a result that was a recognizable School Board style of architecture and internal organisation which if imaginative and stereotyped, at least allowed English schools to introduce classroom teaching, making them more receptive to developments in educational thinking.'¹⁷

The criticisms (in terms of health - hazard) voiced against the early century voluntary schools by reason of their poor heating,

16. M. Seaborne and R. Lowe, p. 3.

17. M. Seaborne and R. Lowe, pp. 17 - 24

ventilation and physical short-comings, one assumes, had been taken into consideration when planning the schools to be erected during the period. However there was the grants' system, the sense of munificence resulting from rates-funding and the general drift towards larger schools,

'Larger schools were seen as more economical.'

All of these things were seen by some as an aggravation of the hygiene of the nation. This was made worse by the growing pursuit of attendance. Children being sent to investigate sickness was a obvious irritation; just so was the parental response in sending to school sick children. The medical officers felt strongly about school size,

'The modern system of concentrating large numbers of children in great schools decidely tends to make the spread of infectious diseases much easier than in former times; it is a heavy price to pay for educating our poorer classes.'¹⁸

These same medical officer complained that schools sent pupils to investigate sick absentees, thus spreading the disease. There was also some criticism of the internal design, related to health hazards; yet it has been stated that some of the views on schools were hollow, barely supportable and pernickety. The overall reaction, indeed, was favourable. The impressive buildings with growing attention to hygiene showed the trust in education which was building up.

Much attention was given to the planning stages of the first Board schools. In West Hartlepool in 1879 they sought out the latest designs from around the North. The newest facilities were demanded. In Sunderland the first Board school was approached

18. M.O.H.R., 1885.

with cautious determination. The School Board, within months of being established, was deciding on provision for its poorest area. Mr. Pemberton wanted to find property to rent. Whickham Street School it was decided, was too expensive. It was proposed that Villiers Street School should be drawn up on lease. Repairs were necessary. A separate Girls' entrance had to be built. Whilst all this was afoot on 10th of April 1872 the Town Clerk offered to the Board a site in James William Street for its first new school which indeed it later became. This was declined until a more exact requirement could be ascertained. A month later the Board was buying other sites in the town. Meanwhile a competition was started, for design of the first Board school. Eighty-five architects had applied for copies of instruction. A deputation of the Board of Guardians approached the Board in order to request delay of demolition of property in James William Street until the occupants could be rehoused. This unusual development highlights the commitment and dedication to education, cited previously. The Board had rejected offers from existing schools to be taken over; the Board also improved the fabric of schools which it leased; and it secured land, in the town of Sunderland, in a speculative manner. Yet more dramatically it now bought tenant - occupied property, and also land, with the purpose of demolition, in order to build a new school. The intervention of the Board of Guardians in order to search for new accommodation for the sitting tenants makes this even more unusual. One starts to perceive not simply a comely Board of educationalists, but a determined group of businessmen. It is possible to assume that without the intervention of the board of Guardians the School Board would have evicted the families whose children it was later

intending to educate. The situation appears to take on a different slant when one realises firstly that this area was scheduled for redevelopment and secondly that some of the Board members were on the local Council; for the article continued by describing the nature of the occupants,

'.... Lawless ratepayers lived there, some twenty-four to a room.'

.... and then with fashionable anti-welfare antipathy,
'able to pay rent,'¹⁹

as if that justified the action taken by the Board.

Of the eighty-five instruction copies distributed to contending planners, thirty-four architect plans were eventually submitted. Between eight and ten of these were deemed suitable. On the 6th of September the newspaper reported an exhibition of designs for the new school. The modern counterpart conjures itself, of small box-wood models displayed under glass-cases in a municipal reference library. The curious ratepayer gazes onto the pastel-coloured fabrication, never doubting that anyone who could fabricate such a delightful creation could but fail to be designing a building which the community has needed for the last fifty years and was to last for a further one hundred. Such offerings of professional design were, of course fair game for all manner of criticism. The local newspaper was not slow to take up such an opportunity,

'It is a good ground and is well-placed to create a playground; the room-size is correct, allowing no more than three rows deep of desks. There is no roof-light due to the possibility of snow - blockage. Room for display is available. There is clear light on the board. High windows do not distract attention.'

When the editor ran short of 'professional' observations he continued with more inane ones,

19. S. T. , 9th August, 1872.

'The rooms are rectangular. The desk of the teacher is placed for supervision. There is a lobby for shelter in wet weather and an area for drying clothes. There are four to five lavabos to every one hundred pupils. There are cupboards. The W.C.s with covered approach are far from the building.'

The editor does not confess whether he thought that in hot stuffy weather this was of more advantage to staff or pupils.

'There are two to each one hundred. The teachers' room provided supervision.'²⁰

In his appraisal of designs the editor found poor thinking. He did not state, by this comment, whether he meant his own!

He continued,

'None impressed. I have only one good word for Alpha".'

That this new school appeared to be necessary was reinforced by the fact that temporary premises were deteriorating. Villiers Street School needed attention to the windows; it had poor ventilation. The rooms and windows were dirty. As for the children,

'The class of boys who attended was so rough and undisciplined that a pupil-teacher would be unable to discipline them. The purchase of land from Williamson offered a better site.

It was agreed to buy it,

'Plan 19 was selected, from the architects' submittals, as the best plan for schools and for accommodation. It belonged to M.G. Middlemiss of Sunderland.'

So therefore, by 8th of November, almost one year after the creation of the board, it was decided that Middlemiss be conferred with, to carry out the construction of James William Street school.

There was often much discussion over the siting and frequency-spread of Board school buildings within a Board's area. It has been stated that in Sunderland James William Street was the first Board

20. S. T. , 6th September, 1872.

school. It was set in the highest housing-density area. On the 10th of January 1873 the Board appeared to be discussing the siting of the second school but this quickly changed into a reappraisal of the James William Street School which was about to be started. The discussion commenced with a statement that since the school accommodation was to be 857 and the deficiency in Easy-West Sunderland was 2,347 there was a need for a school in the South-east of West Sunderland[in all its obscurity] for 1,600 and of 600 in West Sunderland on the north side of High Street; It was in all sincerity then suggested that James William Street plans should double in size, that another school be added at Numbers Garth or a third school be built for 600. The local land-hoarder, Williamson, must have beamed with delight at the thought of selling more of his over-priced land. At this point the chairman suddenly became aware of the fact that their first Board school was considerably smaller than he had thought. Fortunately, for the architectural integrity of this school, it was decided that tenders should go out for it. The option of simply adding extra rooms onto one end to provide further accommodation without basic redesign was always possible in such local, political decisions. The problem of location of some schools was eventually resolved, however. At a later date, in summary of the Board's work, the readers of the main Sunderland newspaper were told,

'Excellent sites were also obtained at Thomas Street, Monkwearmouth for one thousand and a smaller one at Numbers Garth for Girls and Infants.'²¹

There is something of a healthy atmosphere in such open, confident attitudes; there is a suggestion, at first sight, of integrity of intent.

21. S. T. , 19th December, 1873

Four years later some doubts were being raised by the newspaper concerning the schools; more precisely it questioned the difference (according to school location) between the planned space and the available space,

'After six years there is a deficiency of school accommodation for large numbers of children in some areas; and worse; magnificent and extremely costly Board schools have been built in other localities and are two-thirds empty. Three-fifths of the seats are full in Roman Catholic schools, three-quarter in Church of England and two thirds empty in Board schools.'²²

By 1882 the paper had changed to more confident statements,

'The public have valuable property of land and buildings.'

By 1885,

'Big rate increases for schools would not benefit ratepayers.'²³

A maturity of view and greater confidence in the direction of the planning of building, however, is detected in the 1894 interrogatory remark,

'Were Board schools gaining in confidence from their relationship with voluntary schools and was this seen in buildings and choice of school site and architecture?'²⁴

There does seem to be a progression of doubt concerning the editor's view of the buildings erected by the Board. There does indeed seem to be hesitancy about the decisions on where to build. One feels the social conscience of the Board struggling against the local politics of survival.

Reports and legislation often had obvious influences on school

22. S. T., 3rd January, 1877.

23. S. T., 2nd December, 1885.

24. S. T., 1st December, 1894.

planning but equally so, subtle variations might occur. It is logical that schools built in outer suburban areas would have more space available to the planner. However, that should not mean that the architects would have planned with more inspiration for these school. So it was that outer suburban schools differed from inner city schools within one town.²⁵

For one thing the outer urban schools were often built later in the Board period and thus had the benefit of later design standards. In Sunderland, however, two of the schools featured in this chapter were very different and yet were not built at different times.

There is evidence to suggest that residential areas of higher rateable value had a better "per capita" provision of school accommodation than did areas of lower rateable value. Moreover it seems that School Boards planned, built and opened schools in the poorest areas first.²⁶

Although it would be all too easy to accuse the Sunderland School Board of favouring the more highly-rated, new suburban areas, there seems to be little evidence which supports this charge. The most sensible explanation would seem to be that some schools in poorer areas suffered certain constraints of design and site. This, nevertheless, is a feature of inner-city, school design which even modern planners seem to find difficult to resolve. Besides, the Sunderland School Board members showed determination to do what was best for the whole town. It was only at election time that personal interest appeared to bring out their human failings. Board meetings were rarely contentious especially in later years. Once elected, each Board strenuously pursued the educational good of the town. That

25. M. Seaborne and R. Lowe, p. 38.

26. M. Seaborne and R. Lowe, p. 4.

is not to say that this chapter will pass without drawing attention to some striking differences between schools.

Although the Board schools are distinctive, their design could not have ignored voluntary schools even if, at the very least, it were simply to avoid their shortcomings; equally so, voluntary buildings might later on reflect Board. Voluntary buildings, however, did arrive first.

'Since a system already existed, the Government could hardly ignore it.'²⁷

Throughout the Board period, for all their effort, the voluntary schools had found increasing difficulty in competing against the funding and the coordinated superiority of the Board system. The situation was further aggravated in 1892 when twenty-two of the Board's own departments were made free and in twelve others the fees were reduced to 1d per week. The Science and Arts grants and other such inducements to broaden the curriculum put further demands on the already small amounts of cash available. Even emoluments, in 1897, such as the Voluntary schools Act's Special Aid Grant (of no more than 5/- per head on Boards seeking a higher rate precept) were palliative against the strength which the Boards commanded through the rates. The pressures from the broadening Elementary curriculum inevitably transgressed into the emerging Secondary system. By 1895 the cost in the voluntary sector per child was 28% lower than the Board sector not because the Board got bigger grants but because the assessment for contribution was three times that of the Board.²⁸ Expansion for many voluntary schools simply meant dilution.

The educational gauntlet thrown down by the voluntary organ-

27. D. Spencelayh, (Durham Univ. M.Ed., Thesis, 1968)

28. J. Murphy, The Education Act, p. 76.

isations earlier in the century and grudgingly picked up by the Government makes a cruel irony of the corner in which they found themselves at the end of the century. By 1852 Government help had risen upto half by increasing the amount of help it had given for the minority organisations. By 1856, however, the Government had found it was subsidizing the building of church halls and assembly rooms. Two years previous the Government had decided to insist on wooden floors in new schools. Thus the Government was able to effect subtle architectural improvement. However, for the older schools this was more difficult. They could not adapt their heating and ventilation which was so outdated that it was some extent contributing to high child mortality rates. Local organisers rarely responded to the challenges; ;nor could they be forced, since it was voluntary.

The passing of the 1870 Act did not suddenly transform the education of the population. Only slowly did the Boards discover exact numbers and only slowly were the reluctant population brought into the schools. The existing voluntary accommodation was therefore only made to seem inadequate by the results of the child census. However, the providers and many of those provided for never came into contact completely, and it was still to be many years before they would. Whether what already existed was acceptable architecturally is another matter. For a large number of voluntarists, the snooty snub given by the Boards in their summary dismissals of existing schools (due to unsuitability) must have been a cruel blow. The matter was alleviated somewhat by the fact that many of these people became members of the new Boards. However, to hold the neighbourhood esteem for providing education for the town's children one day, and the next day for it to be written off in cold condem-

natory architect's report must have been a severe body blow. Yet the numbers of schools of voluntary organisations continued to grow nationally,

'In 1895 four sevenths of all children at grant-aided schools were still in voluntary schools.... but the expansion figure was one tenth numerically.'²⁹

The average accommodation in voluntary schools was 250 — in Board schools , 440. Board schools, it must be added, were often planned and built to larger capacity. Although Boards realised the impending increase in numbers, even in the nineteenth century it was probably the case that 'new' and 'big' were vogue companions. The voluntary schools had two thirds attendance, the Board schools, four fifths. The huge expansion of voluntary education can be judged by the accumulated amounts of money and provision made available between 1839 and 1869. Of the £24 Million spent on elementary education, £15 Million came from voluntary contribution. This produced 1 3/4 Million places. This period of largesse was next followed for the Voluntarists, by the strain of the 'Board years'. From the Board and voluntary schools alike (as the Board schools became more efficient) the Government demanded higher and higher standards. The voluntary position became worse by comparison as the Boards' became better. Many Voluntarists both squeezed buildings and also widened and liberalized their curriculum. In Sunderland St. Paul's C. of E. school was still extending late in the Board period. However, the 1891 Free Education Bill was hard on the voluntary schools.

For their part, however, the Boards lacked the few advantages held by the Voluntarists who were able to support each other. The Boards lacked administrative integration between their schools; they were isolated. Nevertheless, the Voluntarists needed to be more

29. J. Murphy, The Education Act, p. 77.

closely allied with the public system. The pressure from the denominationalists for rate-aid and from the administration for them to be integrated into the system made the Unionists look again.

Some attempt has been made, then to show the physical effect the voluntary buildings had on Board schools and also the reverse. The eventual fortunes of the voluntary schools, once the Boards had been created, differed from area to area and followed all imaginable courses. In Sunderland the smaller schools of the Church of England closed down. Out of two others, one was eventually rented on a temporary basis; another was not accepted at all because of the conditions of the offer. Three closed within four years. In effect, the only Church school which transferred was the Colliery school at Monkwearmouth. In the case of this latter school, the Board actually tried to take it over but its efficiency made Durham Deanery want to keep it. For all the Church schools which closed, more opened, especially in the suburbs. However the Voluntarists could not build Board-size schools. For example, St. John's added only one extra classroom.

During the Board period, all the Church schools added only 712 places between 1870 and 1902. Four Roman Catholic schools were built, rebuilt or improved and the Catholic accommodation increased 53%. Voluntary schools were usually Mixed to reduce building costs. The Non-conformists, on the other hand, saw the 1870 Act as a victory and handed over many of their schools. Not everybody, however, fell in with the spirit of self-sacrifice. The leading Non-conformist, Alderman Candlish, in a gesture of generosity offered his cherished school in Waterworks Road, in 1872. The Board accepted his offer gladly only to add that they would later sell it and use the money to build a replacement. The self-immolatory partizanship of Alderman Candlish obviously did not extend to folly. Logic was

not to outwit his emotion. He retained his school for a further two years until it closed. Meanwhile the North Bridge Presbyterians were so delighted by the Board's attitude to the inter-denominational Bible, that they offered their own school which was immediately taken. Two other Presbyterian schools were taken, on one of which the tenancy was terminated. The Primitive Methodists offered two schools. One was taken, the other was rented for three years. A Bethany school closed; and the Society of Friends were unable to follow through a wish to build an Infants School in the East end. A British and Foreign Girls' school of the Society of Friends was used by the Board until 1891 when they closed it due to lack of finance and falling numbers.

Eventually, all non-conformist schools closed as the Board met its educational needs. Wesleyan schools stayed open until the 1890s. Interpretation of school closures can be hazardous due to the multiplicity of causes. In many cases they closed because their managers took a political decision to do so or because their rôle and service had altered due to the creation of the Board. Rarely did they close because their building structure was unsatisfactory. One consideration was the size of the schools,

'Voluntary schools were unsuitable through their smallness (except Rectory Park, 850)... Only three Board schools were 800 or less.'³⁰

Thus a variety of reasons for voluntary closures can be seen; yet only part of these can be accounted for by their planning, architecture or site.

Apart from the influences of legal requirements of architectural trends, of site and of existing voluntary schools the new Board schools were also affected by the expectations, needs and attitudes

30. F. Watson, *The voluntary schools of Sunderland* (Durham Univ. M.Ed. Thesis, 1955), p. 256.

of the people. The people who live in an area, as much as anything, create the attitude of an area,

'The most striking characteristic of the inhabitants of the town is a frank, unsuspecting hospitality very uncommon amongst those who reside in old populous, corporate towns. Their spirit and benevolence are revealed in the fact that within the last thirty years above one hundred thousand pounds has been expended on public edifices and establishments; while the various charitable institutions, including the Poor rates, distributed upwards of ten thousand pounds annually and this has been effected during a period in which the shipowners of the port had ³¹ sustained losses to the amount of fifty thousand pounds.'

Thus it is possible to see the strong move towards standard civic buildings which were mostly all built to the south of the river in the new commercial area. The lack of urgency to produce inspired architecture on the north side of the river is partly seen by the acceptance of ordinariness in the living environment of its inhabitants. Part of this northern section was occupied by Monkwearmouth Colliery and the rows of miners' cottages beside it,

'Pitmen (lived) in long rows of low-storeyed houses... built near the entrance to the mine.'

They had small gardens, and practised good flower cultivation.... Pitmen were 'rude, bold and savage, cut off by feelings and interest; they were outrageous when drunk, through lack of civilization'. Children joined them from the age of five to six.

'With their canteens on their shoulders and their satchel or haversack and Davy lamps, they go down in a basket or just on a chain let down by a steam engine.'³¹

Such an existence can hardly have demanded aesthetic architecture in the suburbs around the Monkwearmouth pit. In short, people often get the architecture which it is thought that they want, or worse which others think is best for them. The best proof of this is the dramatic and favourable reaction received when houses or buildings

31. Mackenzie, A History, pp³²⁴, CXIV.

with thoughtful taste appear.

In the Monkwearmouth Colliery area the long straight rows of pit-houses are a reminder of the practical and ephemeral life of the miner. The influence of the Colliery, north of the river, and the general plainness of this part of Sunderland are in contrast to the more varied lay-out of other parts of the town. Therefore, in addition to giving people the buildings they want or what others think they want it is also relevant to consider that buildings reflect and support attitudes to life.

The School Board buildings of Sunderland, then, were the products not simply of decisions of the Board members but the eventual creation of numerous influences. Some of the influences were: professional architects, both national and local; nationally-encouraged legislation, often the result of reports; buildings of a similar type which affected their shortcomings and strengths; local requirements such as site and finally the influence of the mood of an area as emerges from its inhabitants.

The pace of the building programme was impressive once it had built up momentum. The financial commitment reflects the increase in the number of schools, the increase in the cost of building schools and lastly the increase in the facilities and amenities which could go into schools. In Sunderland it was running at £400 per annum in 1873 before the first Board school was built. By 1876 it had trebled. By 1879 it was £4,900; and it jumped to £24,000 by 1895. The necessary borrowing jumped by similar proportions: Board 1. £8,500; Board 2, £30,000; Board 3, £14,500. By 1897 the Board had borrowed £152,000. Thus the precept had to rise between 1873 and 1892 from £2,000 to £19,750. By the end of the Board period

fifteen large schools had been built with a further one under construction. The schools themselves had cost in the region of £146,000 including site, furniture and fittings. This represents a massive achievement even by modern standards.

School Study

It would be laborious to investigate such a large number of schools in detail. It is nevertheless, essential to make a close study of structures which occupy such an important place in the development of English public buildings. Three schools have been selected. The first, Diamond Hall (1878) was opened in the third Board period. The fifth Board opened Simpson Street in 1883. During the sixth Board's term of office Hylton Road (1888) was opened. The Schools lie on a diagonal line running from the riverside, just east of the Queen Alexandra Bridge, in a south-westerly direction. They span a distance of only three miles yet they lie in areas different each from the other.

Diamond Hall is built in the Millfield area, half way between Simpson Street (now completely devoid of domestic housing) and – at the other end of the line – the still-thriving Pallion district of Hylton Road. Not only is Diamond Hall half way between these two completely different districts, its setting almost reflects its attempts to keep away the spread of industrial decay originating in the riverside, Simpson Street area. Diamond Hall faces South-West in the opposite direction to the river and even more so away from the huge Corning (Pyrex) complex which is one quarter of a mile beyond. The school is almost like the last frontier post of the cottage-owners before reaching the vast riverside industrial spread. The front wall of the school is low with a decorative iron fence. The aspect is pleasant. Ivy grows up the wall of the Infant Department. The perimeter wall on the other three sides, however, is very high; or where in one section it is a building, the windows are very high. In this respect, from outside, the school appears to shun the

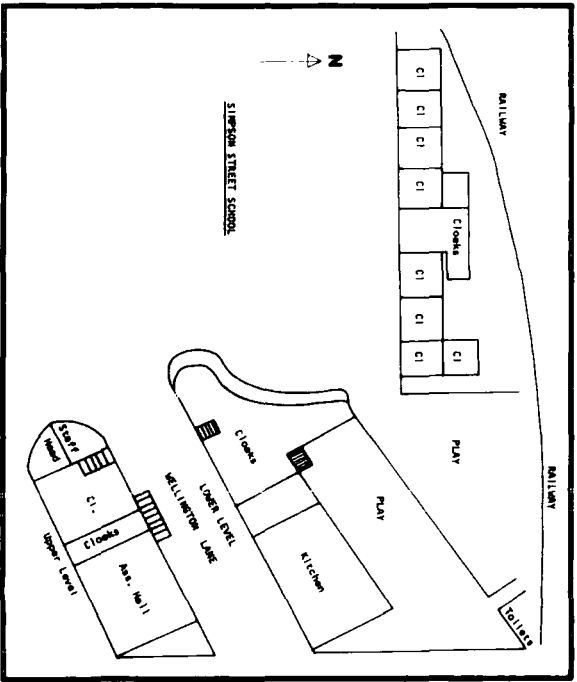
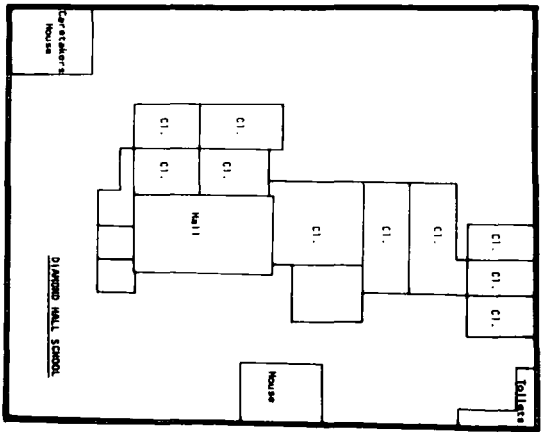
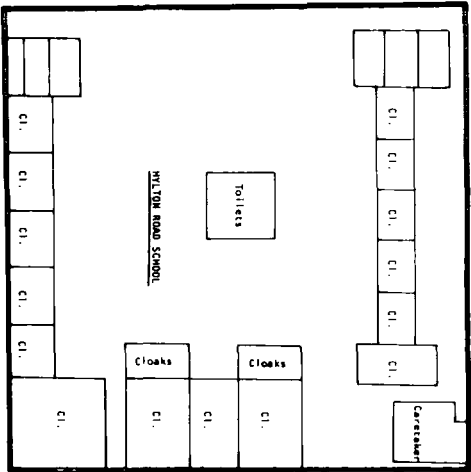
Plate 8

Plan of Hylton Road, Diamond Hall and Simpson Street Schools
(ref. p. 154 and following)

Plate 8

Plan of Hylton Road, Diamond Hall and Simpson Street Schools

(ref. p. 154 and following)



industrial squalor; it prefers to face the South and the sunshine.

Once within the grounds, the impression changes dramatically. The classrooms are set like small islands around a central hall floating on a tarmac lake. The individualization of each classroom must surely appear very appealing to the children. They are able to identify themselves with a particular section of the school. The central grouping of rooms is almost insular except at the northern end where it meets the exterior wall. The main entrance leads almost immediately to the central hall. In all directions the eye of the visitor moves off down corridors or into rooms. A child would find this adventurous and would want to investigate. The diversity of the interior is, nevertheless, comforting and homely.

Well into the industrial area, yet mysteriously isolated now, amidst vacant land sits Simpson Street School. At first sight it does not appear to be a school since no playground is visible. Nor does its split-level site, on a hairpin, descending bend, beside a broad railway-siding appear to have connections with normal educational design. The teachers entered by a lower door at the base of the prow-like turret of the hull-shaped main block which wedges itself awkwardly onto its site. The turret is in effect for staff; the headmaster's 'Judas window' looks out along the upper level of the main Hall and classrooms. Ceiling supports give evidence of partitioning, yet there does not appear to be evidence of heating in all rooms. Below, the lower string of classrooms is reached by a set of wide, twisting, steep stairs resembling the entrance to Hades. From this level, entry is gained to the lower playground. This has a thirty foot high wall on one side matched by the full height of the building on the other. It is barely twenty feet wide.

The child would have looked upwards to a strip of sky, itself partly blocked off by the drawbridge-like pupils' entrance, to the upper level classrooms. The pupils must have felt that they entered an Inner Keep, with the lower playground serving as the Moat. The remainder of the school lies set apart in a continuous line of seven classrooms at right angles to the main block, tailing off into the narrow, triangular playground. The run of classrooms appears to be arbitrarily cut off by the railway line. At the very least, therefore, Simpson Street school appears to be a compromise of site and design. Yet even so a descendent of Board School pupils, now supervising adolescent trainees on the same site, speaks with affection of his own childhood day and the reminiscences of his forebears.³² The school provided a haven from the storm outside the walls. The area around the school was very poor. In the two-roomed houses which swept back from the school in dark, descending terraces as many as seven persons had slept in semi-destitute but immaculately clean conditions. Poverty had brought imprisonment to some Simpson Street pupils. The ex-pupil recalls how some boys had stolen coal for home-fires from coal waggons, temporarily halted at signals on the lines beyond the playground walls.

Hylton Road school was completed five years later than Simpson Street. It is the third school of the group. It was set in the privately-owned predominantly cottage area of Pallion on a prime site at the corner of Hylton Road and Pallion Road. From outside, the school appeared on three sides to be a solid rectangular block with a very generous supply of windows. It was only around the rear that a playground wall was visible; from over the wall the view of the school was an expanse of playground lined by the visually-app-

32. M.G. Davison, Local Authority Workshop supervisor.

ealing, irregular line of classrooms. The classrooms appeared to embrace the children and protect them at play. The building-line breaks at the front for a children's entrance. The first impression for the child was of a large, inner sanctuary of play area. The playground created a sense of space and pupil-centredness. All classrooms opened out onto the playground. Within the school, the well-lit rooms supported this feeling. The architect had even found space to leave a grassed area between the classroom and the perimeter wall. Hylton Road was built with a Boys and Girls Higher Grade department as if to crown its confidence.

The three schools have opening dates separated each by only five years. They clearly belong to the same building period. In spite of the fact that they have been dealt with in chronological order, a clear progression of architectural importance is reflected not by years but by location; the further one moves away from the river and from the deteriorating East end, the better becomes the environment for the child. Simpson Street School's confined playgrounds and daunting entrance display an introversion of thought by the planner. The land should never have been used for a school. It might have made an interesting factory. Currently, all of its classrooms are in fact used as such.

Diamond Hall School's westward gaze, away from the squalor around Simpson Street and the encroaching riverside industry gives a sense of 'looking-over-the-shoulder.' The extremely high walls on the industrial side look to be an attempt to keep out the outside world, not so much to keep the children within. The school obviously appears to want to look onto the pleasant, private houses. The entrance for the children is, also, inviting. The building arrange-

ment is reassuring. The atmosphere inside is bright and invites discovery.

Hylton Road School paid no heed to its surroundings. It invited entry to its large playground. The easy accessibility to play areas throughout the school probably created a desire to learn. Knowing that the playground was constantly within reach, the child would be less distracted and concentrate on the lessons. The bright bustling classroom would encourage this. The windows of Hylton Road were set every metre; those of Simpson Street were set twice or three times that distance apart. The three schools represent, in brief, the attitudes of those who planned them; and although Simpson Street was painfully constrained by its site (just as many inner-city schools are) if the completely different designs of the other two schools could create a pleasant and interesting environment, one wonders why Simpson Street totally lacked this. Nevertheless a personal reminiscence indicates that for the local children, even this odd creation was a happy refuge.

CHAPTER 6Masters and schoollearning: some aspects of the development of
the teaching profession and of the school curriculum in Sunderland
PART I c. 1850-c. 1885

In present-day education thirty years is a long time—time enough for two or even three swings of the historical pendulum. In the mid-nineteenth century there were thirty years between the first, benevolent helping hand given by the Government to voluntary bodies in 1833 and the subsequent 'body blow' of the Revised Code in 1862, as it first then appeared. The mid-nineteenth century was an important formative period for public education. So therefore, the Code was a sinister and bizarre twist in the progress of an emergent teaching profession and the curriculum of the schools. Those thirty years had been fully necessary to establish that education should hold any place in society and more especially in the public purse. It had also taken thirty years, at least, to encourage young people to consider seriously taking up the teaching profession; in addition it had been just long enough in order to allow schools to broaden their view of what should be included in the curriculum.

In mid-century as inspectors visited more schools, more information was promulgated. This report on Durham and Northumberland was phrased in terms of parental expectations of schools and teachers,

'Parents have a right to expect that good schools should be provided for instruction, schools where every faculty of their (children's) nature should be called forth as far as may be practicable into healthful exercise by wisely-considered and fitting discipline. May we not hope that persons of a higher range of understanding, of more thought, information and experience will gradually be induced to give their services to the amelioration of the condition of those beneath them.'¹

1 M. C. C. E., 1840-41, p. 147.

The inspector was obviously aware that it was unlikely that parents would read an inspectoral report; the 'superior' classes were the real target of the report,

'Are not daily the upper classes becoming more sensible of those whose faculties of labour are their sole inheritance? Are there not signs of the growing sense of the responsibility which men are laid under by their superior rank and education? The great want throughout the whole district [of the North] is that schoolmasters may be better educated and more systematically trained but above all men who may in some degree be sensible of the great trust reposed in them when a parent has confided to them the education of his children.'²

Thus general exhortations were being given to society to help to ease the progress towards, first, an appreciation and, second, the establishment of public educational provision.

It was during these early years that one inspector attempted to direct those already involved in education towards a framework for a reasonably realistic and interesting curriculum and method of teaching. It was not a very common occurrence at that point for an inspector to be specific in curricular detail, therefore it is valuable to review his suggestions,

'Good education, the means by which the objects are to be secured, may be arranged under the two headings of instruction and training. It is the business of the elementary teacher not only to furnish his scholars with as much secular and religious instruction as they are able to receive but also to train them up in the habits of religion and morality.'²

The list of areas of secular instruction included the following goals for pupils: reading with fluency and precision, writing in a fair running hand without lines and working with rapidity and ease in the first essential rules of arithmetic. The target skills continued: some acquaintance with their own language, with the pronunciation, composition and meaning of words, with the elements of grammar and with simple rules of composition;

2 M. C. C. E., 1840-41, pp.147-178.

acquisition of self-expression by reciting the content of the lessons which they had read. They should have some knowledge of the surrounding objects beginning with the nearest and most familiar of all objects which can be presented to the sight or touch and which could serve as a form of instruction. Examples of these might be: clothes, the processes of their manufacture, payments, school hours leading to the seasons, historical periods beginning 1 A.D.; schoolroom objects leading to study of clay, stone, wood, glass; measurement of the room, of desks leading to the earth's diameter; the sun, stars, flowers, seeds, trees, woods, birds, fishes and quadrupeds; the study of a local hill might lead onto rocks, mines, metals; countries, a local river, seas, oceans, navigation; cities; everyday food such as bread and vegetables could lead onto husbandry, soils, sunshine and showers, latitude, the origin of everyday objects such as tea and sugar. This fresh approach of linking everyday, relevant objects to major themes must have stirred many imaginations. The list moves on through; furniture, capital labour, international trade, maps and the universe; a study of cottage economy would show how pupils can economise in purchase of fuel, food, dress; pawn-brokers, alcohol, debt, savings; care of health, choice of dwelling (wet cellars or light garrets); sedentary occupations; exercise, work in hot rooms and exhausted atmospheres, neglect of cleanliness, ventilation, effect of sickness on enjoyment of life and the blessing of good health. At this point the curricular suggestions move into areas which at a later date³ were to be contested because of bias and more doubtful

3 C. Griggs, The T.U.C. controversy over the National Society Standard V Reading Book in 1879, British Journal of Educational Studies, Volume XXIX, Oct., 1981, pp. 236-245.

interpretation; history of manufacturing districts, the means of prosperity, the institutions of the country, the form of government, the necessity of laws, the right of property and also the interests of masters and workmen. Upper class assumptions on suitable female pursuits,

'An appropriate leisure occupation for a noblewoman... like spinning and needlework.'⁴

combined with the assumption of the jobs schoolgirls would take up to make him suggest sewing, cutting-out and the duties of domestic service for girls.

Thus the secular components began to lose some credibility towards the end. The non-secular section contained some of the following statements,

'Children should also have such religious instruction as they can comprehend, should be made to know proofs that the Bible contains a revelation of the will of God and the various instances in Scripture in which sin led to punishment and in which piety secured happiness.'²

Many of these ideals are praiseworthy but there is an oppressive emphasis on punishment and pious subservience. Furthermore,

'It would be a great mistake to point out to children the instances of persons raised by successful industry or by remarkable talent to dignity and wealth as an example and illustration of what education might do for them.'²

This, with regard to the majority who would never reach such heights (they were told) would form in them unattainable expectations,

'What is worse it would give them the false view of a life of labour. Our Lord by becoming a poor man has taught us that lowly stations are honourable when connected with wisdom and piety.'²

This fear of overenthusing the lower orders was, of course, a common theme which will be discussed along with pupil attendance.

4 L. Jardine, Isotta Nogarola, Women humanists - Education for for what? H.E. Vol. 12. No. 3, Dec. 1983, pp. 231-244

This inspector echoed those sentiments. However, although the mood is disdainful some later parts of this statement on aims and objectives indicate a mighty, almost naïve trust in the power of education; there was obviously great hope in certain quarters that education could slice through society's ills. The inspector continued by stating that they had to teach children not that they should seek to raise themselves above the necessity of labour, but that labour which is the apportionment of God whilst it secures the health also strengthens the understanding and is consistent with the greatest enjoyment of life; supplying a nation with its comforts and being the source of its opulence and strength it must be creditable to individuals and show that a man of intelligence, wisdom and overall worth in a cottage has more true dignity than a sensual selfish, ignorant and irreligious man even if he were to be the owner of a palace. Whilst education is not meant to raise the working classes above their condition, it may greatly multiply the comforts which they enjoy. It may give them better food and better health, it may deck their windows with fairer flowers, spread cleaner linen on their tables and adorn their dwellings with more convenient furniture. While it may enable a few by superior attainments to fill higher stations with credit to themselves and with advantage to their employers, it may also enable many to take account of the advantages of their humble situation. By its aid, they may learn to think so soundly and to weigh evidence with so much acuteness that the wild doctrines of licentious infidelity may shock their understandings as well as revolt their hearts. Education may raise the character of their enjoyment and, in general, make them better people. Having stated the aims of education in this lyrical and parochial manner he, usefully and

perceptively summed up his conclusions on the existing state of mid-century education with reference to attendance, existing building provision and teacher-training and supply.

He was aware of large numbers of children who were neither being taught in schools nor working in factories. He was aware also of a great shortage of school buildings and 'the friends of education' would need the help of the Government in erecting them. There was a general complaint of the extreme difficulty of getting good 'masters'; the Government, he thought, should institute training schools in various parts of the country, at which masters might be educated freely. Since financial resources of many schools were so low that school committees were unable to fund salaries adequate to recruit the services of able men and their assistant masters, the Government should concede small allowances to these masters for instructing scholars who might pass an examination satisfactory to the Government Inspector. All public elementary schools which were conducted on the principles approved by the Committee of Council could if they so wished invite inspection.

The success of such curricular aspirations depended very much, as the Inspector suggested, on the teaching force which could carry it through. Such esteemed goals would demand esteem for the teacher. However,

'During the earlier Victorian period, the elementary schoolmaster had been a little-respected figure, badly-paid, insecurely established, socially-isolated and at the mercy of government inspectors, school managers and local clergy. After some improvements ... following the introduction of the pupil-teacher system and Teachers' Certificate examinations he was subjected by the ... Revised Code of 1862 to a reinforced system of pedagogic and financial controls. His claims to professional status were ridiculed (Newcastle Commission), he and his kind were uncultivated, narrow and foolishly conceited with an exaggerated opinion

of their work. His chances of promotion or of increased earnings-capacity ... were very small.'⁵

For all the late twentieth century teacher might feel he was reading his own epitaph in this statement, these views reflect an interpretation of the years which followed the inspector's report. Considering the inspector's hopes in the power of education which rested very much on the quality of teachers and their conditions of work, such shortcomings can only have been a great disappointment. It is important to realise the massive incongruity between the vision and the eventual reality. It was right and just that the inspector should have such dreams about education even though some of them seem misguided to later generations. Misty-eyed reflections on youthful innocence as the sole thread of hope for the future are one of mankind's more endearing weaknesses. If the resources for the caring society are available, many will maintain that no argument should deny their use. Some modern historians have argued that restraints on education such as the Revised Code were not necessarily to the detriment in the long term. Assessments on one contemporary of the Code, Matthew Arnold, are still taking place and no doubt will continue.⁶ Whether the Code acted for better or worse may be seen later. Whichever, it did not speed up improvements for the teacher.

It was a slow progression from the time of this inspectorial report in the early days of grants. A decade or so later, of course, much more money had been spent on education. More

5 G. Bartle, George Bedloe: a London School Board Headmaster, Journal of Educational Administration and History, Vol. XI No. 2, July 1979, p. 13.

6 D. M. Mason, Matthew Arnold and elementary education: A reconsideration, H.E., Vol. 12, No. 3, Sep., 1983, pp. 177-189.

Government inspectors had visited the places where money was being spent. Growing public accountability created growing demands and expectations amongst the Inspectorate and to some extent the public. In the first years of grants there had often been praise for the spontaneous efforts being made. For example this report on the North states,

'... the extraordinary quickness exhibited by the more advanced children in these mental calculations and the incredible rapidity with which the more intricate calculations are almost simultaneously solved...'⁷

or elsewhere Matthew Arnold stated,

'With the progress of the body of schools under my inspection I have abundant cause to be satisfied ... The teachers ... form and pursue their own plans with entire security and consecutiveness and occupy in the eyes of their scholars a position of individual dignity and authority.'⁸

Yet during these years approaching the Revised Code there was also criticism at a more subtle level,

'... with few exceptions the power of expressing sentiments, feeling or poetic imagery with any degree of refinement is certainly wanting ... a taste for the good, the beautiful, the true expressive reading, I think, might fairly demand somewhat more attention than it is now receiving.'⁸

Certainly from 1862 onwards many reports take on a growing aggression. A large proportion of the inspectors, although obviously still showing sympathy with the problems, were now aware of their crucial position in the fortunes of each school and were far more rigorous in their summaries. In 1864 a Select Committee looked into accusations that the Council was mutilating reports to stop criticism.⁹ This, it was stated was being done in order to exclude opinions that were unfavourable to the

7 M. C. C. E. 1846, p. 97.

8 M. C. C. E. 1858-59, pp. 147-148 and p. 142.

9 D. M. Mason, Inspectorial Reports and the Select Committee of 1864, H.E., Vol. II, No. 3, Sep. 1982, pp. 195-205.

Office and to include those opinions that were favourable. The Select Committee in fact conclude that the control exercised over reports had not been unreasonable. It asserted that future reports should supply information only, without opinions. Like many reports its suggestions were not really followed.

Many inspectors were, in their comments, critical of the rote-learning which they experienced when they examined pupils. Inadvertently one inspector cited one of the main disadvantages (even after only five years) of the Revised Code. However, the words he used appear to upbraid the teacher rather than the system,

'Children are made to read over and over again the same lesson-books in order to be sure¹⁰ of passing as readers on the day of the examination.'

On the opposite side of the coin was the life seen from the front of the classroom. Any improvements for the teacher in the decades immediately after the first grants had, by 1862, been controlled. Lowe said,

'What we want is not more schools but to make existing schools work harder.'¹¹

What he really meant was 'turn the screw on teachers'. It is not surprising, therefore, that under the intense pressure of payment-by-results many teachers simply left their post,

'... to find more attractive employment elsewhere. However, a surprisingly high number of dedicated men and women chose to remain in what they regarded as their calling.'¹²

10 M. C. C. E. 1868, p. XXViii.

11 T. Elkington, Maximum Education at minimum cost, H.E.S.B., No. 24, Autumn 1979, p. 11.

12 T. Elkington, Maximum Education, pp. 12-13.

The many burdens of earlier-century teaching had at least been compensated by the chance for teachers to concentrate on the better pupils. Classwork became a continuous tedium of drilling, repetition and examination. The Simpson Street log book for the pre-Board period indicates an obsession with testing. To make matters worse pupil-teacher numbers and standards declined. Reduced numbers of Queen's scholarships, the strong possibility of complete failure in the fifth and final year, the weakened position of teachers now controlled by managers and the general loss of a headteacher's time to be able to teach his pupil-teachers — all of these things discouraged youngsters from taking up the rod, which along with the carrot were applied to both ends of the pupils.

It may be seen from the voluntary school log books that there were growing problems with large mixed ability classes. One Sunderland teacher states,

'In examining the boys of the fourth class I find that only two of them know fairly how to put down the Capital letters ... Had to correct several boys today for staying out late yesterday in order to see a shiplaunch... Mother complains about non-setting of tasks. Child found not to take task-book home.'¹³

One month later the Headmaster again reports,

'Fourth class. Only eight able to write their Capital letters. Fairly slow improvement so I set two Capital letters large and small per day.'

Taking time off to move away from grant-earning subjects, the headmaster bravely addresses the whole school of some one hundred boys in an object lesson, perhaps as a Friday afternoon treat,

'22nd November, Friday. Object lesson to the whole school on a "cup of tea"... got as far as the spoon.'

13 Log book, Simpson Street Boys', 4th-28th Oct, 1867.

One cannot tell whether he said this with pride or exasperation.

By late November the headmaster reports that he is drawing up a timetable to be worked with upto examinations. In early December he gave an oral test to the whole school. On 7th of January he reports that the boys have done their Christmas holiday work reasonably well. This obsession with testing, the fact that the log barely mentions anything besides the 3Rs, the concern of parents that homework is set and the general sombre tone, all present at least a brief personal glimpse of a Sunderland voluntary school, its teachers and its curriculum in the period immediately before the arrival of the School Board.

It seems valid to spend this time studying the teachers and curriculum immediately before 1870 since it would be naïve to think that the curriculum which existed in the voluntary schools suddenly altered when a public educational system arrived later. A sensible reason for this assumption might be that it was really only the superstructure of education which changed in both 1870 and again in 1902. The log books of the time around both Acts show virtually no mention of any discernible changes within the classroom as these momentous pieces of legislation became operative. It seems peculiar, at first, that these highly detailed books do not appear to reflect periods of major change in educational history; however, currently, major educational legislation is being passed in the twentieth century and it will have an almost imperceptible effect on the schools for quite some time. As M. H. Price points out with regard to Mathematics,

'As Professor Layton¹⁴ has remarked "school subjects have

14 D. Layton, 'Curriculum theory' in G.T. Wain (ed.), Mathematical Education, (New York, 1978), p. 121, quoted in Footnote 15.

been, and are, socially determined to some considerable extent"... Questions of power and control are central in curriculum history, particularly concerning periods of major curriculum upheaval. However ... there are few detailed studies of curriculum change and resistance to change over key periods in the field of mathematics and science. In the case of mathematics in English education, two significant and contrasting periods encompass 1870 and 1902 respectively when Education Acts of major importance were passed.¹⁵

It was to be some time before these changes worked their way as far North as Sunderland and then into school log books. What happens behind the closed doors of classrooms in the United Kingdom is still very much determined by the class teacher. Just so, then, in the mid-nineteenth century the class teacher responded, as he himself saw necessary, to the pressures being exerted from different directions.

It has been inferred that the lot of the voluntary teacher in the nineteenth century had not been altogether a happy one. The progression of this theme into the Board years will be soon described. During the 1830s and 1840s the country had strained to handle the new social movements. It was only the public-spirited vocationalist who had responded to these strains by providing schools as and where the need arose. It had been education according to demand rather than by royal command. The inspectors throughout this period had made their appearances with avuncular regularity passing on each school's experience of failure and success from district to district. Much of the early century attitude to educational principles expressed earlier had run below the surface in the 1850s and 60s. A charity, garden-fête atmosphere of grateful appreciation of

15 M. H. Price, *Mathematics in English Education 1860-1914: Some questions and explanations in curriculum history*, *H.E.*, Vol. 12, No. 4, p. 272.

any effort very slowly had changed to a more critical appraisal of what was happening in the schools. The appearance of statistics in Reports had become more regular. Neighbourhood schools had been immediately put onto the alert when their hitherto-private details had appeared in publication throughout the Kingdom. Grants and building costs had started to take up more room in the reports. In some areas a written account might have been substituted by endless pages of figures. In the same way that it has been shown in the study of school architecture that voluntary building provision had suddenly come under professional scrutiny for its potential inclusion in School Board provision, so too now the teachers and the curriculum were being put under the same pressure,

'The Revised Code by demanding certain standards, revealed, as elsewhere, the demonstrable failure of voluntarism thus creating the climate necessary for the acceptance of increased state control in 1870.'¹⁶

In the decade before the School Board the teachers were taking some solace from the fact that a streetful of urchins could be made to stop talking and take an interest in something non-ephemeral. Maintaining discipline had been, itself, quite an achievement,

'Perhaps there is scarcely any one point in which greater improvement has been made under the present Minutes of the Committee of Council. In my early years the noise of children and the hum of work most effectively prevented any efforts which I could make to find out what the work really was or how the scholars had advanced. Such difficulties I hardly ever encounter now, except in new schools where I note undertalking and copying. On the whole I express the conviction that the general state of education and popular interest it excites throughout my district are wholesome and encouraging signs of progress and improvement.'¹⁷

16 T. Elkington, *Maximum education*, p. 20.

17 M. C. C. E., 1858-59, p. 146

However, this apparently slack curriculum left the emergent teaching profession open to ambush - an ambush which the profession was again to fall into 100 years later in the late 1960s. From the nineteenth century Government's point of view it appeared that a mostly-untrained force of Sunday School volunteers was eating up ever-increasing amounts of money. It also realised that these amateurs were only teaching the pupils whose parents were actually sending them to school. Somewhere into this picture had to be fitted the future criminals still at large on the streets. The Government questioned this situation as a base for industrial Britain.

A crucial factor in this polarisation of Government and teachers was the position of training establishments for teachers. They alone offered the authenticity, experience and professional aspirations for the teachers. They were (even more than the voluntary schools) autocratic institutions paving their own way. One inspector noted in 1864, probably with unintentional irony,

'The Training Colleges for Mistresses have remained in the same satisfactory condition as last year ... No perceptible changes have been produced by changes in the educational system.'¹⁸

The earlier Normal schools appeared to set as their target the general education of the students, combined with some contact with children in attached or nearby schools. The weekly timetable of subjects read rather like a public school equivalent,

'I hope it will be possible to enlarge the course of study at our Training Colleges; wider reading, some knowledge of Latin or a Modern Language...'¹⁹

18 M. C. C. E., 1864-65, p. XV.

19 M. C. C. E., 1873-74, p. 2.

Understandably the Training Colleges were treading unknown depths. They also, in the earlier years especially, were carrying out more than one rôle. There had been criticism of the education being given to incipient pupil-teachers by the headmasters. Therefore the Normal Schools saw themselves partly in the role of Secondary-Further educators. They also had to offer professional preparation for the classroom situation. Their diffidence in this respect is reflected by the fact that for many years foreign method systems were applied. Pestalozzi was used for Arithmetic and Mulhaus for writing (as late as the 1890s at Battersea College). This would at least have given the Sunderland headmaster an extraneous peg onto which he could hang his lack of success. It was, in fact, at Battersea College that a brave statement of intent was issued,

'Our first step on founding this institution was to remove from schools which had been under our immediate superintendance some of the most promising pupils. In selecting (only) the destitute of pauper parents to show the transforming influence of religious training, our successes would not fail to increase the confidence of the public in the ameliorative tendency of national education on the manners, habits and feelings of the neglected classes, we hoped that a more active sympathy might be inspired for the fifty thousand pauper children who await the legislative interference of Parliament for their efficient education in religion and industry.'²⁰

Teachers of the time, struggling to pull in and hold better pupils, would have been bemused to see the Training Colleges adopting the same attitude towards day-school rejects. However, teachers were to come to expect peculiar behaviour from their training institutions for it was to be from amongst these forward thoughts and innovations that a path was to be found for the progress of education. Components of modern teaching principles

20 M. C. C. E., 1883, pp 251-268

and curriculum have often been apparently luxurious experiments of the past.

Battersea explained itself thus,

'... our chief design was to ascertain whether by training youths for a series of years in the strict regimen, in exact and comprehensive instruction, in the industrious and self-denying habits and peculiar duties of a Normal School we should not be able to procure more efficient instruments for the instruction of the children of the poor than by any other means. The formation of character is therefore the chief aim of a Training School and the Principal should be a man of Christian earnestness, of intelligence, of experience, of knowledge of the world and of humbled simplicity and purity of manners. Next to the formation of character of the pupil in our estimation is the general development of his intelligence.'²⁰

Next comes a statement on a topic which was just starting to appear in the vocabulary of the Training Schools - that of teaching method,

'The method of conveying instruction is part important in an elementary school because the scholars receive no learning and little judicious training at home and are therefore dependent for their education on the very limited period of attendance at school. On this account nothing superfluous should be taught lest what is necessary that the teacher become acquainted with a method of communicating each branch of knowledge.'

'This is the more important because individual teaching is impossible in a common school. Every form of organisation from the monitorial to the simultaneous includes more or less of collective teaching. The characteristics of skilful collective teaching are the simplicity and precision with which the knowledge is communicated and the logical arrangement of the matter of instruction.'²⁰

These very ideas are the instructions given to new teachers one hundred years later. The debt owed to these early Training Colleges is clearly immense,

'Diffuse, desultory or unconnected lessons are a waste of time; they leave no permanent traces on the memory; they confuse the minds of children instead of instructing them and strengthening their faculties.'²⁰

Far from the effects of the metropolitan throb, in deepest Sunderland came the reality,

'Five of the First Class boys were allowed to use the Atlas this afternoon after a Geography lesson from Mr. Brotherton

on the Capes and Bays of England.'²¹

Some of these five must have been peering at this one book upside down; this cannot have helped their geographical appreciation of England.

In Sunderland as much as in most areas, discouragements against brighter adolescents going into teaching were great. Those that did, saw their less academic peers absent themselves from school in order to earn extra money in all manner of small jobs. The 'would-be' teachers operated under great strain in return for financial penalty. There have been few professions where the skilled person instructs and scolds his apprentice in full view of his customers and then expects 'the lad' to demand and exact full control and respect moments later. It was a further disincentive for them to see the teachers themselves having paltry salaries and poor conditions,

'In every workhouse in which a school exists, every officer but the teacher has a fixed salary.'²²

Soon afterwards the Newcastle Commission retorted,

'... although the prospects of teachers were not as favourable as other professions their employment was more secure.'²³

Furthermore, the dawning realisation that teachers would have to be the power for this growing system of education caused more and more their background and preparation to be assessed. The good work of the Sunderland Catholic Boys' school had been often and widely acknowledged, yet the mood now turned against them,

'The increasing numbers of pupils must be referred to a

21 Log Book, Simpson Street Boys', 21st Nov. 1867.

22 M. C. C. E., 1859, p. 501.

23 A. Ellis, The training and supply of teachers in the Victorian Period, H.E.S.B., No. 24, Autumn 1979, p. 35.

class of teachers many of whom have been students in training schools..; among the causes that contribute to the efficiency of the school, the character and ability of the teacher to occupy a principal place. The want of his efficiency causes irregular attendance and imperfect reading.'²⁴

Even well into the Board period national efforts to enhance for the public the conditions of the teachers did not always compensate for the hazards of life. One inspector had written two decades previously that the salary which teachers received was quite sufficient to maintain them with comfort and respectability and to enable them to provide for the contingencies of sickness and failing health and strength.²⁵ However it is doubtful whether even by the Board period, conditions had improved so dramatically that this offered any reassurance to one poor Sunderland teacher,

'Miss Dobson is absent. Miss Taylor was blown down by the wind on her way to school and was hurt. She returned home.'²⁶

It would, of course, be unfair to maintain that for a certain number of good teachers life was not quite good,

'To men of humble origin but good ability the new School Boards opened up real prospects of improved conditions - better pay, proper increments, promotion to more senior posts and protection from inspectors and managers, (for the headteacher) an amply-furnished house in a pleasant suburb, domestic servants, secondary education for his children, regular holidays - sometimes abroad, and a respected place in local society.'²⁷

There can be no doubt that the salaries paid were a crucial factor in the progress of the profession. The average salaries of certificated teachers in selected years were:

24 M. C. C. E., 1858-59, p. 206

25 M. C. C. E., 1865, p. XIV.

26 Log Book, Simpson Street Girls', 1888, p. 325.

27 C. Bartle, George Bedloe, a London School Board Head, p. 13.

	Masters £. s. d.	Mistresses £. s. d.	Infant Mistresses £. s. d.
1855	90/1/7	60/11/5	57/3/8
1859	94/3/7	62/13/10	58/3/8
*1865	86/10/9	55/2/1	52/3/3
1868	91/5/11	56/1/7	54/16/6 ²⁸

*The Revised Code removed augmentation grants and introduced Payment-by-result.

The large number of female teachers would seem to be the main victim of a fall in salaries. However, they could be reassured by a familiar series of arguments which are trundled out whenever the profession becomes overinflated with its importance,

'Whatever the limitations of salaries, pensions, emoluments and security of tenure, teachers not only enjoyed a rising social prestige and long holidays but also could reasonably contrast their situation with that of their parents and acquaintances who were probably subjected to intermittent unemployment and hardship.'

If this statement were not quite so familiar in recent years it would be embarrassingly fair.

There had been seen to be, in inspectorial reports on schools before and just after 1870, a constant fear that the Government might be allowing itself to act with too much generosity towards the teachers in the schools. Yet in the reports on Training Institutions there is present the constant praise and appreciation of the work being done. Rarely is a Training College corrected for its policies or philosophies. It has been suggested herein that these Colleges were crucial in the development of public education. Perhaps, therefore, the balance between the tones of reports on both is a correct one. Some inspectors moved to and from the staff of these institutions. Sir Joshua Fitch was an example of this. His career moved freely between the Inspectorate

and the Training Colleges.²⁹ Of those who were not like him, the majority must surely have seen the Principals and educational sophists, 'carrying on the good fight.' They probably looked to the Training Colleges to bear the standard of educational thinking. These leading men visited other countries, met with important politicians and generally had their fingers on the pulse. They provided the 'jargon' which eased through the new ideas. The level of their intelligence and education justified the veracity of their views. In acting as the buffer between Government and teachers they were helping to professionalise the new profession. As the Training Schools became more adept, the public esteem of the teachers rose also. The influence of those leading educationalists was far greater than that of Government legislation. Teachers respond most readily to realistic, enlightened suggestions and example, not to pages of the Statute Book. A modern example is the twentieth century Colleges and Schools of Education which created the climate and the detail for dramatic waves of change which occurred very much by their powers of persuasion. In the same way that this nineteenth century body of knowledge and experience was able to lead, so also was it able to defend; and it was right that teachers should have, like other professions, a force to protect them from without.

29 A. Robertson, *Sir Joshua Fitch, 1824-1903: a study in the formation of English educational opinion* (Newcastle Univ. Ph.D. Thesis, 1980).

If the relationship between the Training Colleges and the teachers was important then equally so this applied to the relationship between the Inspectorate and the teachers. Before and during the Board period, then, the teaching profession consolidated its position guided by the growing professional hierarchy. Before and during the Board period, also, the ever-increasing number of grants and Codes compressed and refined the teachers and their schools' curriculum, attempting to produce the most cost-efficient results. It has already been suggested that the teacher had mostly tried to be master of his own classroom and that the Revised Code had put some restrictions on this; these constraints lasted only until the teacher learned anew how to beat the system. The general effect on the schools themselves, nevertheless, was more noticeable. The personal contact between the teacher and the inspector, the frequent reference by inspectors to the fact that they themselves were well-treated and befriended in their areas, and the human instinct of civilised people (at least English people) not to be unpleasant in each other's company, unless provoked - all of these things helped to soften the judgements of the Inspectors. The Inspectorate must have realised that it had a dominant rôle to play in the future of education and certainly that it held the teachers' careers in the balance; it saw also the valiant efforts of the vocational teachers. The grant for performance in basic subjects allowed for a strong element of interpretation; it was not necessarily so for other grants. One Sunderland teacher was caught red-handed altering attendance registers,

'Mr. Jarman informs me that there is rarely a badly-kept set (of registers)... In one case a teacher's Certificate was suspended for one year for wholesale justification of attendance marks.'³⁰

There would appear to be some error in a system which leads the Government to expect professional standards yet leads a professional to have to resort to underhandedness in order to earn a living wage. It is almost defensible that grants should be awarded for performance in subjects, especially when the human element of the inspector allows for interpretation. Understandably the Government felt that basic education had to be remedied; and not so understandably they felt that a 'piece-work' payments' system was the best way to do it. However, the grants -for- trivia show a breakdown in clear thought on the part of the Government and cast doubt all the way back down the line to the academic performance grants. In the Sunderland Board Schools for example,

'Eight departments lost grants for lack of cleanliness in the offices.'³¹

The inspectors often used this word for the lavatory in order not to offend the more faint hearted reader. Boys' toilets are notoriously danger-areas in terms of hygiene. Even architects use such terms as 'troughs' and 'stalls' to allude to their function. Were it not for the fact that it was the teacher's salary that was reduced because of this feature, it might seem mildly amusing. The Inspectorate justified its use of the 'carrot-and-donkey' method of improving results in a statement on Article 4, Sections 52-54,

'The object of the grant is to promote the education of children belonging to parents of classes who support themselves by manual labour; the grant may be reduced for faults in instruction or discipline on the part of the teachers or on managers to remedy deficiencies in premises or to provide proper furniture or books. We believe that these reductions have, at very little loss, served to fix the attention of managers and teachers upon principles of great importance.'³²

31 M. C. C. E., 1880-81, p. 329.

That the three basic subjects were in need of attention at that point is mostly true. That concentrating on them to the exclusion of others for some short period was almost inevitable in the circumstances, is also true. That the Government should choose to do it using bribery is recriminatory and leaves a sour taste. It is the memory of that taste which made (and still makes) the teaching profession suspicious of the motives of certain political parties or those who operate in certain social and economic climates.

In spite of this, the administration was congratulating itself on the good idea it had thought up, in the form of the different Codes except for one statement that was to be of crucial importance for the development of the curriculum. It came from a Report on the Code,

'The less favourable judgements turn chiefly on the observation to neglect higher subjects of instruction and to dispense with pupil-teachers. We hope the latter trend will be checked as the Code becomes better understood.'³²

Then some attempt was made to justify the ravaged educational diet,

'As long as examinations in indispensable subjects continues to show such results it can hardly be said that the day of higher subjects has arrived; ... in promoting popular education that which ought to be done must take the precedence over that which ought to be left undone; and this distinction in favour of Reading, Writing and Arithmetic will continue to be needed in the apportionment of public grants until those three arts are acquired as a matter of course by children who pass through elementary schools.'³²

The message here is clear and logical. Anyone who might question it would himself be questioned as to his own low standards. In practice it had the desired effect. It also had other effects. Just as a public education system was forming, just as the

32 M. C. C. E., 1864-65, pp XXI-xxiii

teaching profession was starting to gain confidence and parents and pupils confidence in it — just then, a severe tension entered into the classroom and that appetite for learning, which so loves freedom, was kept short of nourishment. It happened at that crucial point when the fleeting elementary years of a young child's life which should be full of joy and discovery were turned into a perennial anxiety for pupil and teacher. The very ethos of education was under attack. Let Governments take heed when they apply market-place economies to the formative minds of young people who will eventually outlive them and become the nation's next generation of citizens.

In turning to consider these dispensable and indispensable subjects one cannot help but remark how percentage pass-rates in the three basic subjects rose once attention was focused on them. Within fifteen years of the Code of 1862, Reading, Writing and Arithmetic percentage pass-rates had risen from low pass-rates to the following: 86% Reading, 79% Writing and 72% Arithmetic - and there they held constant, without dropping. Ten years after that in 1887 they were 92%, 85% and 83%.³³

If good inspecting was thought to produce good results then Sunderland was very fortunate; for the School Board acquired an excellent past-teacher and a local inspector. This appointment offers the opportunity to combine the study of teachers and inspectors in one person,

'The Board of Sunderland has done a great deal since 1876, much of the recent improvement is doubtless due to the

33 M. C. C. E., 1879, p. i; 1888, p. i

judicious appointment as School Board inspector of one of the most efficient teachers in the North of England, Mr. Jarman.³⁴

Six years into the Board period, it is useful, therefore, to consider some of his observations on the situation in Sunderland with respect to teachers, teaching and the timetable.

He found the elementary work to be well done, with the percentage of passes higher than the average for the country. Like other inspectors he found Reading to be lacking in expression, but had a realistic attitude to this,

'I have always felt that to insist upon expression would be very hard upon the teachers considering the very monotonous way in which the people talk in this district.'³⁵

He found writing very fair and in many schools, good. He showed sympathy towards spelling,

'Spelling is, I think, the hardest subject to teach. Teachers complain of this more than any other part of their work.'

Five years later his report was more harsh,

'The general character of writing seems to show that the children are left very much to themselves while teachers give an oral lesson elsewhere.'³⁶

Such contrasting views from the same person within a four year period must reflect either a dramatic deterioration within the schools (which is unlikely) or a change in the perceptiveness on the part of the Inspector (which is likely as he became more experienced) or lastly an increased willingness to speak more plainly about what he saw. This latter possibility is also likely. As he became more convinced that the education in the town was sound, he felt the confidence to be more outspoken. Whichever, unfortunately, the teachers receive further public

34 M. C. C. E., 1880-81, p. 322.

35 M. C. C. E., 1880-81, p. 327.

36 M. C. C. E., 1880-81, pp. 327-328.

criticism. It might be argued that any group which objected to open, published criticism (good or bad) were trying to hide something. However an inspectorial report is the opinion of one person and does not allow the object of criticism to reply. Furthermore inspectorial reports have an 'internal' flavour to them. They baste the victim with hot oil in order to improve the end product; but does all of this have to be explained to the diner? If all the other main professions are laid open thus, then the answer should be affirmative. If not, then perhaps the bodies which it has been shown, have helped to lead the profession, should also offer more protection during periods of 'national tension.'

At least with Mr. Jarman he also had open, local praise for the teachers. In 1881 he considered that Arithmetic did not even call for any special mention since it was normally well done. Indeed in some schools he found it wonderfully accurate and intelligent. By 1885, however, he remarked,

'The tables in Standards I and II are often neglected while undue dependence is placed on slate Arithmetic. Mental Arithmetic is not yet fully worked. Few teachers seem at home in the subject.'

Apart from Writing and Arithmetic, Mr. Jarman gives some idea of the Reading books which were used in the classrooms,

'I wish that the reading books used in, and above, the Third Standard consisted of consecutive narrative and not a hotch-potch of general information and moral anecdotes. Under the usual system a child's mind is not sufficiently awakened to the pleasure of reading and a powerful educational lever is left almost untouched. The contrast between the feelings of a child, allowed to read such books as Robinson Crusoe and of one pushed through lessons on coalmining is a strong one. There will be time for coalmining when Defoe and the like have created the power of reading easily. I am glad to find that one or two teachers have broken the trammels of custom and have induced their managers to provide copies of Ivanhoe and similar books.'³⁷

37 M. C. C. E., 1881., pp. 327-328 see also

G.R. Batho, History Text Books, 1870-1914: a note on the Historical Association Collection at Durham, H.E.S.B.,

PART II c. 1886 - c.1903, and School Study

Simpson Street school first opened in September 1867 as Deptford Yard; then it became the Laing Church of England School before finally being extended and opening as a Board School in 1884. It has already offered itself as an example of School Board architecture in a special School Study. It now affords an opportunity for study of the manner in which the basic subjects of a voluntary and Board school were dealt with and the factors which affected the subjects. The same log book passes through all stages and the same inspector who comments on all other schools in the Borough provided a consistent, objective appraisal. The balance is then completed by archival evidence in the form of the Simpson Street Girls' School log book for the same period. Thus it is an ideal test school and indicator of the effects of the Board period on buildings, teachers, teaching and the curriculum.

Before becoming a Board school and whilst still as Deptford Yard (in its early months as a school) the headmaster logs the course of the first two terms. At this point the pressures seem to be mainly those of educating the boys. The first class begins the week with Compound Addition; in the second week it moves onto Compound Rules; in the third week it moves onto vulgar fractions (resulting in five boys being kept in for not doing set sums which were three questions in each of the Compound rules); the fourth week was mainly taken up with a burst of Bible work; in the fifth week the first class was examined in Mental Arithmetic. To say the least, the pace seems hectic for this class which has just moved out of the Infant Department.

To balance this mental siege during that period the same

class was treated to: the book of Genesis, the life of George Stephenson, an examination in Scripture (which showed the class to be slow), some drill, Catechism, an afternoon of singing and an opportunity to copy out the Hymn 'Oft in Danger'. The fourth week started the following: a lesson on drawing a map of Palestine to illustrate the life of Abraham, some reference to Jarrold's First Grade Reading Book, a dictation piece from English History, Lesson XXV and a joint lesson with the whole school on the Imminence of God. At the end of the fifth week there was: a trial examination in which the First and Second Standards produced the best results and a Geography lesson wherein part of the class used Atlases. The school then started to work to a pre-examination timetable during which time the class joined with the school to be 'trial-examined' on the whole of the Old Testament upto the Flood.

This timetable of work for the First Standard which had already passed through the Infant School shows several things (besides exhaustion). The pace of work was fairly brisk. The progress of the class was regularly checked through testing. Apart from the fairly strenuous pace of the Arithmetic, the Reading and Writing were mainly practised from the Bible. There was some History but more Geography; the content of the former was probably fairly interesting but not absorbing. Voice and body were also given an occasional 'work out'. The headmaster's comments seem to infer that although the curriculum led to a fair number of pupil casualties it did produce decent results. In general the whole school appears to lurch towards preparation for examinations.

In 1884, after an opening ceremony presided over by many Board members, the Board school commenced its work. There was

an inspector in within two weeks,

'Arithmetic needs attention in Fourth and Fifth Standards but the boys have passed a very creditable examination considering the crowded state of the school. The order deserves praise, though the boys should not be so talkative in the intervals of work.'³⁸

Curiously enough the headteacher noted in examining the first class one month later in the same log book,

'A great number of boys cannot yet tell their letters and more than half the class is very ignorant.'

This was only four weeks after the inspector had proclaimed that the boys had passed a very creditable examination. Either the inspector picked the right boys for the right questions or the headteacher is being excessively frank - or the examination reports are a hoax.

The comments which are noted from the start of the Board period give an immediate sense of a change of atmosphere. The inspector, it was seen, had said 'considering the crowded state of the school.' The headmaster noted the following on 16th of May,

'... owing to numbers in the class the teacher has made little progress.'

There is also more mention of truancy, low attendance figures and the difficulty which pupils encounter in completing tasks. On the 24th of March 1885 E. W. Gladstone (English H.M.I.) noted,

'The boys have been, in general, well-taught but the reading in the four lowest Standards was marked by one fault - a tendency to stumble over small words. The answers in Geography were extremely good and this subject has been taught with much intelligence and care. Grammar needs much attention in the Third, Sixth and Seventh Standards. Order is creditable. Singing by both note and ear is good.'

Thus one year after its start there are signs that the school is

38 Log Book, Simpson Street Boys', 21st March, 1884.

settling down more. One year later, in 1886, the H.M.I. report echoed some early problems,

'The chief difficulty in the work of this school during the past year has been with the First Standard which contains a large number of boys hitherto neglected and from very poor homes; in this Standard the teachers have not succeeded in gaining a good hold on the attention of the boys and the results of the examination in Reading are poor.'

The report did improve,

'In other parts of the school the work is satisfactory and in some cases decidedly good ... the answers in Geography are intelligent, while the maps of the elder boys are good. I was much pleased with the singing and with the cheerful obedience and sustained attention of all the classes above the First Standard.'

The local byelaws on compulsory attendance were bringing in pupils with a mixed attitude to school. These children were creating a problem when they were in school because of their lack of ability and also because of their attendance which further hindered progress.

Mention should also be made of the efforts of a Mr. Brotherton in promoting Geography. Several inspectors make mention of his skill in making the subject interesting and also his method of passing on this knowledge to the pupils. Map-drawing was praised. Movement beyond the basic subjects to Class Subjects often went to Geography and History. It is particularly fortunate that the expansion of the curriculum in a subject with interest-potential was in the hands of a reliable, well-versed teacher. As the school moved further and further away from the early years of the Revised Code these extra subjects were given more room for expansion but elsewhere more often than not, those who attempted to introduce such subjects were not well-read persons nor were they provided with the equipment to arouse interest.

Thus expansion of the curriculum depended on the quality of persons coming into the teaching profession, the effectiveness

of the Training Colleges to teach an efficient method, the ability of the various School Boards to attract and hold the best teachers and the level of priority given by Boards to providing suitable teaching materials.

As it was stated, the Simpson Street logbooks offer a further, rare opportunity - that of access to the Girls' Department and comparison of it with details exacted from the Boys' School. The Girls School opened in the same year that the Boys' School started. The Girls School opened under unusual circumstances,

'This school was opened today as a public elementary school under the School Board to be known as Simpson Street Girls' Board School. The total number of children was nine.'

The explanation continued,

'Many more children applied for admission but owing to an instruction of the Board they were induced to return to the schools they had been attending until the inspection of the H.M.I.'³⁹

This unusual move was only equalled by the report which it produced,

'The school was fairly good but accommodation was insufficient.'

With nine pupils on roll one wonders whether the H.M.I. was perhaps standing in one of his own 'offices'.

This unusual start was not however any indication of the future progress of the school. With reference to the writing-up of log-books it may be possible that the headmistress went into more detail than the headmaster of the Boys' school. However, leaving this apart, the comparison of curriculum is at least enlightening,

39 Log Book, Simpson Street Girls' School, 7th Jan., 1884.

'4th April: East Coast of England, a mountain, Mary Queen of Scots ...; S. Irving's Geography lesson badly prepared this morning ...; Magna Carta to III, life of King Alfred to I; June 13th, Shape of the Earth, Grace Darling..., the River Nile, the Gunpowder plot, China, Railway Stations. 4th August: Coal, a ship. August 20th; a St. Bernard Dog, a Stork, a Coconut, Waterloo, Ventilation, an ostrich, flowers, Ceylon, A sponge, The Highlands, Kindness, an island, Soap, Joan of Arc, a year, how to light a fire [perhaps with the copious lesson notes]. 3rd October, the elephant, a squirrel, Discovery of America.'⁴⁰

In 1888 a visiting H.M.I. observed that even though there had been great poverty in the neighbourhood the children had again passed a very good examination. The discipline was good and the teaching had obviously been careful and thorough. Since the inspector found the school satisfactory it can be assumed that the 3Rs not mentioned in the logbook were being taught just as thoroughly. The headmistress must obviously have been noting the Class Subjects extra to basic teaching. Whatever the explanation the contrast between the two schools is vivid. The main difference would appear to be that the Girls' School sounds infinitely more interesting - certainly there must have been few dull moments.

For all his experience and suitability as an inspector Mr. Jarman, the Sunderland inspector, displayed limited views on a curriculum for girls; and yet it is only recently in Britain that such views have been challenged with sufficient force to allow access to 'male' and 'female' subjects for both sexes. He had stated that girls were not very successful in Geography and as this subject was detrimental to their needlework he did not encourage them to take it as an exam subject. More instances displayed further evidence of boys receiving preferential favour

in the extension of the curriculum to subjects generally kept for girls; there is no evidence of the reverse, however. In this case it was made with reference to Infants.⁴¹ He also stated that the regulations allowing Infant boys to be examined in Needlework at the discretion of the Inspector were much valued and were already producing some good results. He always recommended that the Infant boys be taught to sew to the same extent as girls. In a few schools boys were able to sew on buttons in a workman-like style and in one exhibition there had been garments of their own manufacture. He had sufficient experience not to rely on his own judgement alone in making assessments. Needlework received such attention that he seldom marked it as lower than creditable.

His views on girls' subjects were often in terms of where they showed proficiency, rather than recommendations,

'I am inclined to think that Mathematics and Physical Geography are more profitable for boys and English Literature and Domestic Economy for girls.'

... even so the effect was the same.

He noted that praiseworthy attempts had been made by Gateshead and Sunderland School Boards to give Cookery lessons to various schools at a common centre but without much success. He suggested that the only plan likely to succeed would be for each school to have a small kitchen fitted with simple requisites, instruction given by ordinary staff,

'The trained intelligence of a teacher ought to be equal to the task of mastering a few simple dishes and a little practice would give the necessary experience.'

This must surely be a rare instance of despecialisation of a subject.

41 M. C. C. E., 1880-81, pp. 328-329.

Mr. Jarman continued to show a strong interest in Infant Education. Judging by the syllabus for Arithmetic, which was described, there was more than a modicum of structure to Infant Education in Sunderland. He stated bluntly,

'The inference of the Infant School results is that in elementary work teachers bestow their best upon the Standard children and are content with a considerably lower level of efficiency in the case of Infants. The Infant exam is not hard. A six year old child passes in Reading if it can tell words of four letters, in Writing if it can write the letters from Dictation and in Arithmetic if it can add and subtract upto ten. I am convinced that when a child fails to satisfy these very moderate requirements the teacher, as a rule, is at fault.'⁴²

However, there was positive advice, too, for teachers. He stated that the common practice was to leave a child alone too long. The result of this policy was that an undue share of work was thrown onto one year and hence the common objection of teachers was that they have no time for lessons on form, colour and common things. Such statements, one can see, raise the horrors of the Revised Code. This poignant, almost overlooked appeal by teachers that five year olds were so much having to concentrate on Arithmetic that their day was colourless and shapeless is an ice-cold indictment of the Code. Governments which try to apply cash-book economy to education may well be producing efficiency in what may be tested but unless care is taken to preserve the curriculum unthinkable aesthetic poverty can follow. Local Governmental inspectors were and still are in a position to be able to highlight and remedy this.

There are echoes of the curricular advice given forty years previous (at the start of this chapter) in the suggestions made in Sunderland for Infant education,

42 M. C. C. E., 1880-81, pp. 321-345.

'I constantly impress upon managers and teachers the importance of the systematic instruction in form, colour and common things and I am sorry that I have no time for examination therein.'⁴²

How much more pleasant if he had simply stated that he would have liked to see children being taught these things rather than being tested on them. It is really two sides of the same coin but how different they are. In reality it was also a case that teachers and schools lived by their grants and were unwilling to provide instruction in unexamined subjects.

For all his obsession with examination performance he is also critical of teachers for 'coaching' children. He said that the growing practice of keeping in children after regular hours to secure higher results in examinations is to be condemned. He was sure that in consenting to this, managers and teachers were most unwise and were beginning to take up a burden which they would find increasingly hard to bear. It was one consequence of the race for percentages which teachers and managers had largely created for themselves. The teachers would often strain to convert a 90% to 92%. The extra one or two per cent was largely dunces who were painfully screwed up to examination point. He was not alone in this view,

'Homework resulting from the payment-by-results system became a major issue in Bradford with doctors even attributing it to a 20% increase in hydrocephalus among children. A court ruled against homework ... The Times (stated) it cannot be doubted that the result of this important decision will be to remove one of the most frequent and mischievous causes of overpressure.'⁴³

Mr. Jarman's reports on the classroom situation are a valuable

43 A. Elliott, The Bradford School Board and the Department of Education 1870-1902: areas of conflict, Journal of Educational Administration and History, Vol. 13, No. 2, July 1981, pp.18-23.

insight into the workings of the Sunderland schools. Just as it is seen, however, that the headteachers of the Boys' and girls' schools write up their logs differently, so also one must assess the interpretation of his reports. An H.M.I. described him as one of the most efficient teachers in the North of England. Efficiency is only part of a good teacher's necessary skills. Reports often bring to light known weaknesses of a system which those running it are tolerating because they can do little to change it, or, because the effort involved would be so immense that it would affect the good work being done in many other areas of education. For a report to be effective, for example, it must often highlight the most outstanding strengths and weaknesses, being unable to take account of the large number of moderate successes. Reports, therefore, can often have more irritant than ameliorative value. An instance of this would be his assessment of the pupil-teacher system at work in the Sunderland schools. It is fairly critical, probably because of the pass-rate. Yet, from the log-books it is possible to see how hard-pressed the teachers are in educating the children. He speaks thus,

'There is a want of intelligent thought and a failure to grasp the real meaning of questions set. Answers are often learnt by heart. Too little is done in the way of giving pupil-teachers practical instruction in the art of teaching, though this is one of the most important duties headteachers owe to their subordinates. If only regular instruction were given once a week. The lessons on general subjects are lifeless and uninteresting. Too little is made of what a child really knows and is not sufficiently encouraged to connect and reason about facts of daily life.'⁴⁴

However one can see that Mr. Jarman's observations are incredibly perceptive,

'One very common defect in lessons is the want of language above the understanding or knowledge of the children and

44 M. C. C. E., 1880-81, p. 329 and foll.

I seldom listen to a teacher who pays due attention to this point. A liberal use of the blackboard is of more use. It would do far more good if children were encouraged to state their difficulties as is seldom done at present. I have never heard a child ask a question of its teacher on the subject of its lesson. We want more suitable language, more intelligent reasoning and more interesting facts.'

Although such comments may not have gone down well with staff on a wet Friday afternoon there is no doubting the value which such a discerning inspector and experienced ex-teacher must have had on the Sunderland schools.

This underlines, once more, the crucial interplay between the incipient teaching profession, the mainly benign Inspectorate and the Government, concerned as it rightly should have been to maintain the highest standards which it attempted to do through its Code. From the mid-century report it is possible to see that there already existed enlightened views on an attractive and informative curriculum for young children. It is also likely, though, that at some point a more rigid structure would have to be imposed in order to achieve cohesion. However,

'The greater emphasis on rudiments broadened the base of the educational pyramid.'

and yet,

'There was obviously a greater concentration on the 3Rs or grant-earning subjects though this seems largely to have been accomplished by a more effective use of schooltime rather than by sacrificing the so-called higher subjects ... but the Revised Code did little to encourage innovation on an already depressed curriculum.'⁴⁵

As it has been shown already, the Code created and still creates a mixture of responses. It would appear to come close to offering all things to all men.

45 T. Elkington, Maximum education, pp. 16-17.

Throughout all of this period under study it is possible to see amid the fight against the overwhelming problems created by society, some people fighting to improve the quality of education. For all its controversy the Revised Code improved the basic subjects learned in the school, in that more children became literate. The Inspectorate bore a great responsibility in improving the quality by their powers of persuasion. It was upto them to point out to teachers where perhaps the content of their lessons was pitched at too high a level, whether the content of the lessons was interesting enough, whether they were taking enough consideration of different aptitudes, whether there was sufficient variety in the lessons. The inspectors could recommend enlargement of the skills which should be imparted to children,

'The exercise of hand and eye as well as memory powers of verbal expression is necessary to true education ... It appears to be true that the process of growth in the child's mind is furthered by manual training ... These considerations point to the close correlation between manual training and other subjects of the school curriculum.'⁴⁶

Such observations indicate a growing sophistication and sensitivity on the part of the Inspectorate.

As a group, the Inspectorate had a serious personality problem. They took two paces forward and one pace back. Sometimes they showed amazing foresight then at other times amazing diffidence,

'We have every confidence ... managers will not allow schools to suffer as a consequence of their own greater freedom.'⁴⁷

This was said in referring to the change in system of awarding

46 M. C. C. E., 1897, p. XIII- XIV.

47 M. C. C. E., 1865, p. XV.

grants to managers of schools. At times the Inspectorate was unbelievably repressive. At other times they appeared to show remorse for this. Their recommendations to the Board of Education in later years and the resultant changes in the Code indicate this,

'An addition has been made to Article 2 of the Code with the object of emphasizing the liberty allowed by previous Codes in framing the school curriculum and of encouraging the growing disposition on the part of the Authorities to adjust it to local conditions. The Board recognise that in framing the school curriculum the particular needs and circumstances of the school and the character of the scholars as well as the tastes and abilities of the teachers should be allowed due weight; and they are aware that this can only be done if the subjects of instruction may be varied at discretion within certain limits prescribed by the nature of elementary schools and if opportunity is offered for well-considered experiment which in some cases may be of permanent value in educational practice ... visits during school hours to places of educational interest and of the fieldwork and ramble which may be counted for the purpose of school attendance ... time spent on organized school games may be reckoned for.'⁴⁸

At other times, again, they appeared to have an unbelievable lack of sensitivity for the very basic aspects of education. In 1894 they stated that there was much to be said for providing special schools for children who were too old to be taught with Infants, and too backward (or believed to be so!) to be prepared for passing Standard I. They asserted that such children's stay in a Special School for dunces might thereby prove surprisingly brief. Obviously Remedial education was still in the hatching-stage.

At the turn of the century the reports had often lost their clarity and were taking on the look of a more modern, twentieth century legal document, with the message well hidden behind verbiage. Instead of saying that teachers were becoming more

48 Board of Education Reports, 1911-1912, XX, 'The Curriculum of Elementary Schools.' p. 91.

sensitive and responsive to the needs of the system,

'There are signs that increased attention is being given to the aims of different grades of schools and to various curricula, to material conditions and methods of teaching which may best secure and deepen moral and intellectual influences. Along with a more general acknowledgement of the need for freedom in the teacher's work and of the necessary interconnection between several parts of our educational system and proof of the importance of a high but wisely adjusted standard of educational efficiency to the welfare of the nation at large. One mark of the advance has been a greater readiness to recognise the deficiencies which exist and to consider remedying them.'⁴⁹

This statement is important not for its content but for its form. It shows an Inspectorate trying to hide its message by obscure classical sentence formation. They were pleased with the teachers but would not admit it. At other times their conciseness led to an ironic indictment of the pressures of the annual test,

'There are decidedly fewer schools now in which children break down in any of the 3Rs.'

The Inspectorate tried to influence areas beyond the schools also. Their pleas were often directed towards publishers who might take up the cause of education. There were constant statements on the difficulty being experienced in the schools by teachers who did not have sufficient reading material. The shortage of books suitable for school use had a very damaging effect most especially on the expansion of the curriculum to include newer subjects. By 1901 Simpson Street Girls' had added only three new subjects: Criticism (literary), Cookery and Sewing. Nor were these reliant on any recently published materials.

From very early days the Inspectorate was interested to try to encourage pastoral links. It encouraged any extra-curricular teacher-pupil contact and hoped also to involve parents in their children's education. The Inspectorate was concerned to know,

49 M. C. C. E., 1898, p. 1.

'Whether the master has an opportunity of becoming a companion to the children in his hours of relaxation and was in the habit of communication with parents.'^{49a}

It had suggestions, somewhat overhopeful it seemed, for involvement of parents and even a missionary rôle for the child.

It suggested that parents' hearts might be reached if a small card printed with the texts of Scripture were given to each child at night to be talked over or learned as a lesson for the following day. Encouraging parental interest could, of course, encourage parental presence on the premises and not simply for further Bible readings. At Simpson Street Boys' School a mother came to complain about the non-setting of tasks; fortunately for the headmaster it was discovered that the child was not taking home the work. Five weeks later another mother came with the same complaint. This may well have acted as a spur to the head to set Christmas Holiday Homework since after Christmas he comments that their work over the Christmas Holiday was good. This apart, it is evident that at least some parents were in contact with the school, adding yet another facet to the rôle of the teacher and exerting yet another lever onto the formation of the curriculum.

Even well into the Board period it was still a bumpy ride for the teachers,

'I had to report unfavourably of the Stock and Stone Book of a master who left you. Had there been a deficiency then, he would not have escaped a surcharge. From what I had seen of his work previously I certainly did not expect the book would be left in such an unsatisfactory state by your first schoolmaster. I hope it would be distinctly understood by the teachers that an accurate account must be kept, that it is subject to strict audit and that lately I had to discharge a master for deficiency in a stock of slates which had been lost or destroyed for want of proper care and management.'⁵⁰

^{49a} M. C. C. E., 1839-40, p. 25.

⁵⁰ S. S. B. L. B., 9th Aug., 1874.

This was the district auditor. He gives the impression that he would prefer to lose a teacher than a slate.

Three years later the Board itself showed that it was not to be left out of this form of enjoyment by stating that the application of an assistant master for an increase in salary should not be entertained and that notice be given to the assistant master that his salary would be reduced to £75 p.a. This must certainly have nipped in the bud any idea of industrial action amongst the town's teachers. The Board found before long, of course that people work better if they think that they have good conditions of work. So it was that three months later the Board realised that its teachers were probably entitled to pay rises and that they actually needed them. It published its new rates of pay (1877). There is record of another publication of rates in 1896 though not with as much detail.⁵¹

Thus the early Sunderland School Board rates of teachers' pay tend to follow the national rates referred to earlier for assistant masters, immediately previous to the Board period. The rates for 1877 were, of course, after a pay rise. For all its lapses of confidence in its teachers the Sunderland School Board responded quickly to the temporal needs of its teaching force at least in the early Board years. The rates of increase did not continue throughout the Board period since first Assistant Masters' pay went up only £10 in twenty years. In 1899 there is evidence of improvements in other conditions of work on a national level,

'Deductions for contributions to Elementary Schoolteachers Superannuation Act 1893 at 3/4d.'

The background of these Sunderland teachers is an important

consideration. In this respect it is interesting to see which type of teachers were attracted to which type of schools. Therefore the background of the staff of two schools has been compiled for consideration.⁵² One staff taught in a Board School rented temporarily in 1874, the other staff taught in a building which was not built as a Board school and did not stay as an Elementary Board School building. This latter school started three years later but it is possible to discern a difference in the backgrounds of teachers. The later school has attracted teachers of longer experience, one having been certificated almost ten years, whereas the teachers in the earlier school have only a few years' experience. One lady teacher in the later school also has a First Class certificate. It can be seen that several of the teachers take their origins in Scotland - more than a reflection on Sunderland's closeness to the Border. The teachers of the later school had other things in common: they were all trained staff; they had all spent longer in their previous schools and they had all experience in more schools. Although there is a short span between the two lists there is a strong indication that the Board had appointed better teachers in its second term of office than in its first. This may have been because its reputation was improving, because it was being more selective or because the Board system was starting to improve the standard of teacher supply.

Overall it is felt that the Board was doing its best to improve the teachers' lot and that it was becoming more generous. Even the pupil-teachers were treated with generosity,

'Fourth year pupil-teachers to attend University extension courses during the coming Winter. Board to defray expenses.'⁵³

In general there was towards the end a loosening of the belt and relaxation of tension leading to an atmosphere in which pupils and teachers alike were able to work to their best.

The opinions of one of the earliest inspectors offered some important considerations with regard to the content of the curriculum. The delicate area of general educational objectives tended to weaken this statement because of fears that education might lead to overambition and restlessness in the 'lower orders'; even so, stated aims of future happiness and enjoyment of life were still an important factor. One further weakness was the attitude towards female education. That these same views were being voiced by the Sunderland inspector forty years later show the depth of this problem in attitude. Indeed it was to be one hundred further years before the Government came to firm grips with it.

The progression of the teaching profession was obviously crucial. It appeared to be most vulnerable whenever its nobler and loftier ideals were applied to material or economic yardsticks. The enigma of the Revised Code served only to emphasize the uncertainty of the profession. It was shown that teachers deal in realities and any ideological interferences served only to cloud the issue. English education is a tale of 'trial-and-error' with a historical scenario coloured strongly with religion. Legislation would appear to sit somewhere on the surface only. Fundamental to the development of the profession were the Training Colleges and the body of educational elite who were in general consistently supportive - even if at times the support could have been stronger. The quality of entrants tended to be determined by social and economic events outside of education. A further factor in the development of both teachers and the curriculum was the rôle of the Inspectorate. Generally the inspectors showed good nature towards the efforts being made

by the teachers and the schools. Occasionally, however, when the Government cracked its whip the Inspectors bared their teeth.

In the detailed analysis of the way in which these factors applied to Sunderland a most fortuitous surviving assembly of materials, albeit disparate in their present location, offered a rare opportunity for study. Simpson Street school, already part of an architectural study has offered further information in the areas of Boys', Girls' and Infants' curriculum and teaching methods. Furthermore, the reciprocal and complementary facet of inspectorial reports by a perceptive, local ex-teacher served to complete the picture.

Thus did 'schoolmastering' and 'schoollearning', in some respects, progress nationally; and thus did they both enter into and influence the town of Sunderland before and during the School Board years.

CHAPTER 7Suffer little children: the child, the family and the community during the Sunderland School Board period

It may sound trite to reassert the basic observation that a classful of children is a classful of individuals; however, even that consideration does not take note of the physical environments which shaped the child's attitudes and the more mercurial factor of his changes in mood from day to day and even from minute to minute,

'Historians have not seen the school child as a family child, a working child, an aspiring child, an encouraged child, a discouraged child, a bewildered child...'¹

In order to appreciate the environment of the nineteenth century child with vividness, it is necessary to interpret the Reports and comments from the other side of the teacher's rostrum. As the pupils sat in the classroom during the day, at different times they would actually see themselves as, just having left their mothers or a warm living room or being one half-hour from lunch. Seen from the inspector's viewpoint, however, this read as follows:

Standard III

9.30 to 10.45	Reading and Dictation
10.45 to 12.00	Arithmetic
1.30 to 2.15	Reading
2.15 to 4.00	Geography ²

As it happens the whole class was probably just waiting for Bonfire Night.

The importance of reading between the lines, then, cannot be overstressed,

1 H. Silver, p.30.

2 Log Book, Monkwearmouth Colliery Boys' School, 5th Nov., 1880.

'Education is not an isolated experience of school, it is related to work, to baby-minding or to death of a parent. It is inextricably linked to family and work, shaped by family relations and by needs of family budget.'

For the nineteenth century child even more dramatic interferences (which can easily be forgotten) were present,

'The majority of children... had been to school before starting work; the evidence suggests that schooling was brief and intermittent; only a small minority could read well and an even smaller number could write and add.'³

It is certainly possible to find evidence of the difficulties of applying education to a poor district during the early Board period in the declining East end of Old Sunderland. St. Patrick's Infant School opened on Monday 15th May 1871. The number of girls admitted was sixty-four. Forty of these were unable to read and had no knowledge of writing or Arithmetic. Of the remainder scarcely four would pass into Standard II if then examined. By the end of the first week - no doubt after some reminders from the parish priest attendance had increased from 49.3% to 92%. This was not to last, however. On 9th June the attendance was very poor due to the prevalence of smallpox. The new Autumn term brought little relief. By 10th November the attendance was dropping because of the cold weather. There were no fires in the school. Four weeks before Christmas, stoves were put up and fires lighted. The logbook reports that attendance picked up in consequence of Christmas week. Not long after Christmas, thirty girls over seven years of age were reported not to know their alphabet. It was stated that these had only lately been admitted or were merely casual attenders. For these children the very fight for existence of life against disease put education in the shade,

3 C. Heward and M. Woods, Children's Employment Commission Report 1-6 1862 - 67, as a source for the history of education H.E.S.B., No 27, Spring 1981, p.41.

'The school was as concerned in its early decades with the children's health as it was their souls, and the school and its managers were the focal point for Lambeth's fight against cholera, bad sanitation and other environmental nuisances.'⁴

This harrowing first year of schooling for these 'babies'-as they were often described in the logbook - offers a painful picture for the observer; but through the eyes of the 'baby' and its family it must have been considerably worse. Additionally, through the eyes of the Medical Officer of Health, the whole troubled process of staying alive acquired a startlingly objective lucidity.

It is difficult, nowadays, to recreate that very fear of surviving childhood. The 'polio' phantom, of this century - now fortunately nailed in its box - offers an insight into the type of fate which could be cruelly meted out by chance. Multiply this ten-fold by the then-fatal child diseases (which today might simply be shrugged off) and one starts to approach the everyday emotions of the nineteenth century child. The living environment of the child in Sunderland had been formally put into print in 1848. There had been reference to a National School cemetery. Whatever the confusion over the title,

'The interments have not been more than three per annum, most of which have been children.'⁵

Of the 58 people who died in Old Sunderland District in 1848, 28 were children under 9 years of age. Their diseases in order of occurrence and ages affected were: Water in the Head (Infants), Consumption (11-48), lung inflammation, debility (Infants), Croup (Infants), Chest Disease, Measles and Whooping Cough (Infants), Fever, Leg Abscess.

4 H. Silver p.18

5 Report to the Board of Health on Sunderland, 1848 (published 1851).

Indeed the word 'childhood' would have a different meaning in Old Sunderland since the average age of death was 29. A child of twelve was thus entering middle age. If it survived diseases of the body it could equally expect to have its mind deformed. Nuisances such as slaughter houses could spread their trouble unexpectedly,

'On one occasion seven sheep actually made their way into his dining-room, coming at one side of his house and going out of the other. He had counted as many as thirty to forty children amusing themselves by looking at the poor animals being knocked down and getting their throats cut, which he did not think could be a very humanizing tendency.'⁵

Other nuisances lived up to all fearful expectations. The report stated that lodging-houses were a source of depravity for the young. Males and females (strangers to each other) occupied adjoining beds without the slightest division or curtain of any kind. The males habitually stripped themselves naked before lying down in the presence of young girls and children. Nor was it possible to rely on the more reliable areas of amusement to bring safe relief in leisure. The beach area was an example,

'Town sewerage went out to sea in cast-iron pipes - a source of disease for people on the beach. Few pipes come from houses. Most offensive matter is brought out and thrown out into the streets. Depositories for abominations of every kind are made in central places and tend to spread all kinds of foul vapours and nuisances. To the sea-hose, polluted aperture pour forth into the harbour (crowded with shipping), de-composing matters and disgusting ingredients which by the flux and reflux of the tide, float up and down and generally get lodged in bends of the stream where they sink to the bottom and add to the over-charged deposits. The whole is repugnant to all habits of cleanliness and encourage the propagation of pestilential and malignant diseases.'⁵

As the years progress the Medical Officers of Health display more frustration in controlling anger about dangers to children; and the School Board as a major accumulator of children inevitably becomes the victim of the outbursts. Paradoxically it even appears towards the end of the period that Board and Health Officer are working in opposite directions. The cruel irony was that the

improving medical care from 1850 to 1900 had left the child just as vulnerable to infection and contagion because of the nature of public educational provision. In the earliest Board years the Officer criticized parents for not keeping children from infected houses and for not keeping them from school until a medical person gave permission. He stated that visits to 'death houses' were to gratify idle and dangerous curiosity. With this he also took the opportunity to give advice on feeding and nursing babies. He discouraged artificial feeding adding that dirty bottles also spread disease. By 1877, however as the Board improved its methods of enforcing attendance he turned his criticism towards Government regulations. He saw one of the main causes of epidemic to be the certain number of attendances required yearly by the Education Department in order to enable the School Authority to obtain a Government Grant - there being no allowance made for absence on the Medical Certificate. There was therefore an inducement for children to be solicited to return to school during the convalescent stage of the disease - the most dangerous stage to their Fellows.

From 1878, however the battle of words against the Board began and the following series of extracts show a whole range of arguments and ploys which he used in order to put maximum pressure on the Board,

'The spread of Scarlet Fever by means of schools is clearly proved and instructions have been given to them, "During the hours in which the schoolroom is not occupied the upper and lower sashes of windows should be opened so that the room may be thoroughly ventilated. During the Winter months, the schoolroom should always be kept warm and comfortable by means of open fires or stoves. It is a false notion to suppose that a number of children in a room is sufficient to keep the school room warm. The school room floors, desks and forms should be thoroughly cleansed with soap and water and the walls brushed down at least once a week. At the end of each term the rooms should be disinfected with Sulphurous and Nitrous Acid."⁶[1878]

'To some persons the death of a child seems of little moment and the carrying of disease and death into the home of a friend of slight importance. Through the thoughtlessness of the few, desolation and almost life-long unhappiness are carried into the homes and hearts of many.'⁶ [1879]

'(Infant) Deaths through Syphilis are a sad testimony to the vice and depraved habits of some parents. During the last eight years 78 children had died thus. It is difficult to imagine how many little ones have grown up with an inheritance the most truly shocking that men can bequeath on their offspring often resulting in a life of suffering and inflicting a blot on the human race.'

'Went to a house and found a child with Scarlet Fever. Wrote to the Board. Got no reply.'⁶ [1881]

'Measles spreading. It is extremely infectious and difficult to control. Teachers at Moor Board School pressing parents to attend.'⁶ [1882]

'It is better that it should cost the School Board a couple of hundreds of pounds a year than that a single life should be lost.'⁶ [1884]

'The modern system of concentrating large numbers of children in great schools decidedly tends to make the spread of infectious diseases much easier.'

'Measles-rate up, due to large percentage of attendance of children (almost more than any other Board in U.K.)... Absentees are marched back. The system of payment-by-results has a great deal to answer for... Already the School Board has cost the community large sums of money (which are not grudged as they are spent in elevation of the people) but if to these are added recurrent epidemics then the people may well enquire if the results are worth the sacrifice of human life... Board Schools should not send the scholars to enquire after sick pupils.'

'All pupils who still pay even a small amount in fees are entitled to be instructed every minute (and not sent in pursuit of others)'⁶ [1885]

'It is an insult to their intelligence that a town that boasts one of the most successful Board Schools in U.K. should expect children would not be elevated and educated to such an extent that they can understand the use of the water closet.'

'A case of measles in a school is like a blazing torch in a powder keg.'⁶ [1889]

'The great circumstances seems to be the increased aggregation of children in schools. In 1874 36.3% were on school rolls. In 1891 it is 54.5% with 79% average attendance. While reflecting the highest credit on School Board officials, nevertheless it is fraught with great danger to children. Less zeal on the part of officers would tend to the greater health of the children. If the system of frightening parents into sending children to School is to be continued, the School

Board should provide one or more medical practitioners to whom parents can send children for examination when they appear ill. If an excuse is made of illness, the School Board demand to see a Medical Certificate but as they cost 2/6 it is no wonder they are seldom forthcoming. If Education is free and parents are compelled, then the Board should appoint a Medical man. A magistrate recently stated that frequently in cases of a parent being summoned for not sending children to school they have pleaded that those children were too ill, that they obtained no medical certificate owing to the cost, yet they had to inflict a penalty.⁶ [1891]

In spite of the apparent acrimony the Board did try to respond and the day-to-day relationship between the Board and the Medical Officer of Health was cordial. Unfortunately the child still fell victim to the system.

In the early Board months education was not yet compulsory. The parents of St. Patrick's voluntarily sent their children to school out of a belief that it would be good for them. The school was clearly moving into unknown waters; or from the child's point of view it was rather like trying a new medicine to see if it worked. In the well-established schools the 'whether or not to send the child' problem rarely occurred for the parents,

'There was a tendency 'for the skilled working man to share the middle-class attitude that compulsory education was for somebody else's children. Skilled men were law-abiding, responsible parents who already sent their children to school and kept them out of mischief without the intervention of any outside agency interfering in their lives.'⁷

Thirty years later in 1900 the attitudes of the majority had improved dramatically, yet even so the Admissions' Register of St. Patrick's school still shows a massive movement

6 M.O.H.R. 1878 - 1891

7 J.Hurt, Elementary Schooling, p. 62 .

of children (and families also - to some lesser degree). Also living cheek-by-jowl was James William Street Board School whose Admissions' Register shows similarly large movements of pupils. In both schools twenty to thirty pupils per month might be on the move in or out of the school. St. Patrick's register was more informative having had all details regularly entered. On 5th September Annie Laverick left St. Patrick's informing the school that she was going to James William Street Infant Board School. This latter school's register indicates thus. However, some pupils who left did not appear on the register of the school which was their stated destination. The column headed 'Previously' shows that pupils came to St. Patrick's R.C. from various sources: from other Catholic Schools within the town, from other Board Schools within the town and from Anglican schools, in Newcastle for example. Many were simply 'readmitted'. The column headed 'Reason for leaving' was also kept up-to-date. It included: 'under-age, illness, left district, senior school, gone to St. George's, Eczema, gone to Garden St. Infant Board, illness, Hendon Board, Workhouse ... can't find ... parents refuse to send this boy to school.'⁸

These comments tell their own tale.

So many entries explaining absence and movement raises the whole question of school attendance and the factors which

⁸ Admissions' Register, St. Patrick's R.C. and James William Street Infant Board School, 5th Sep. 1904.

interfered with the young child's learning processes. The loss of a child between schools and similar comments show how dominant was the issue of school attendance. To the teacher, the word 'attendance' meant registers, percentages, inspectorial checks and threat of dismissal. To the parent of the very poor, the word meant interference. To the child the word meant endless self-control, repetition, boredom, smell, chalk-dust, dark stuffy rooms with high windows, strange coughs and spots, constant visits of strangers (some of whom put the teacher in a bad mood) and occasional treats.

Even in the earlier log books the teachers were obviously obsessed with attendance since it is constantly mentioned in the logs of the Voluntary Schools. As long as attendance continued to determine grants, pay and the very continuation of the school, this is understandable. Acceptable attendance-levels were crucial since without them there was no school, just a school building.

'At the beginning of the twentieth century, school attendance at Voluntary or Board Schools was regarded very much a norm, as third and fourth generations began to experience formal education. Yet it must be remembered that although elementary school attendance was compulsory and schooling free (1891) the actual enforcement under law was not apparent with the 1918 Education Act.'⁹

However before the compulsory attendance of children could be imposed, the child labour problem had to be tackled. During the Victorian period, concern to fight ignorance and low moral standards amongst the children of the working classes by means of improved attendance was enmeshed in issues about the failure to control child labour,

⁹ J. Black, Elementary education—school attendance and performance: the finding and research of a forgotten early twentieth century social survey, H.E.S.B. No. 30 Autumn 1982 pp.22-26.

'In 1851 the rôle of the State was confined to stimulating the educational efforts of voluntary organizations by means of exchequer grants in return for submission to Government inspection of schools ... Education was not free, nor compulsory nor universal and the question of whether or not to send children to school was considered to be solely for parents to decide.'¹⁰

The law was slow and far from uniform in application and enforcement. Thus just as the religious bodies fought over the form of education and just as the power groups in industry fought to resist universal education so the poorer children of Sunderland were left on the streets gaining their education by staring at events in slaughter-houses.

Although, today, it is possible to view with disdain a parent's decision to let a child of school age work, it is also too easy to forget the mercurial nature of income at the lower levels. To many workers, low irregular earnings, bad health or the death of the main breadwinner were common, realistic reasons why a child must work. Although the wages of the young child might be spent by parents on drink, sometimes the money was the only means of support due to parental death or neglect. Apart from not being educated, working children were being subjected to unbelievable conditions of work in all types of atmosphere and also were in contact with immorality, bad language and excessive drinking. Thus once again as the weakest member of society, the child, suffered at the hands of adults. Indeed, it was to be over one hundred years before legislation would appear which did not simply protect but represented the position of the child as a full member of society.

The fact that children had been allowed to continue working throughout the century is an important consideration.

¹⁰ D. Jones, The making of the educational system, 1851-81, 1977, p.ix.

There are similarities to the delay in introducing naturally-protective legislation in this century on the grounds of the invasion of personal liberty. Eventually the pressure groups against what is best for the individual lose their grip and the common good prevails,

'State action to protect began to regulate conditions in coal mines workshops and railways. By the end of the century the pressure and persistence of Parliament resulted in the increase of the sphere and numbers over which and over whom the protecting wings of the state extended. State assistance as a right was recognized only gradually and grudgingly after years of distress and importunity. Out of sheer need and despair working men and women in the early years of the nineteenth century had supplicated the state for help, but asking for bread had been offered a stone. They were left to be tender mercies of such lords and ladies bountiful as might be moved by compassion. As the cry for social justice increased in poignancy, sympathy with the labour movement grew in volume and in strength and may explain the phenomenal success; Christianity seemed to be in action. The new Jerusalem was to be built,'¹¹

It is easy to raise the tambourine and shout alleluiah to that brother. However, as modern society now sits protected by the shield of welfare (albeit being delaminated) the temptation to lampoon those who once tried to stop its creation ignores the realities of life. For every attack on child labour there was a child keeping a family alive. For every attack on school absenteeism there was a mother sick in bed though gestatory exhaustion. In brief,

'focussing on change may lead us to ignore the historical rôle of inertia which is responsible for more of history than all the campaigns, the movements, the revolutions we readily call to mind.'¹²

The continued attraction of work for children throughout the century had a crucial effect on attendance. As long as exceptions to attendance were allowed to continue, the sightings

11 R.F. Wearmouth, pp.73-86.

12 M. Silver, p.95.

of children not at school during the day were commonplace. Once the part-time system declined they would have to keep to the shadows. Thus again, the fortunes of young children were trapped. The Government did not appear to want to force them (effectively) to stop working and their families came to rely on their wages. Under such circumstances the system began to be heard justifying itself: three hours in school was a way of stopping three hours in work; half-time in school was better than no-time in school; parents, it was suggested did not want education but at least would accept the half-time compromise.

By later century human nature was showing its true frailties. Arguments which had seemed so defensible earlier were replaced by more fashionable opposites. The system was said to be good for neither those involved in it half-time, nor for those whose education their intermittent appearance disrupted. The Cross Commission confirmed that the admixture of half and whole-timers was injuring the organization and working of the school. Lord John Russell maintained about half-timers (and one may of course add to this many others who worked in out-of-school hours),

'Half-timers were indifferent to teaching and came to school half-asleep after their half-day's work... they disregarded the institution because it was forced on them by law... there was difficulty in culturing them once they started work... (there was also) the tiredness of the children especially in the afternoon.'¹³

In short, they acted like the modern, recalcitrant adolescent schoolchild.

The anomaly was that the factory schools or schools built near places of work often produced good results. In Sunderland the Monkwearmouth Colliery School, later acquired by the Board,

13 H. Silver, p.43.

was to be a good example not of a factory school but of a school in a mining community. In this case also, the high priority by miners to the education of their children might also have been a factor. They voluntarily paid out their wages towards their children's education. Nevertheless, apart from these pockets of educational tradition the general criticism was that the class-system was being prolonged by the current system; the existing argument inferred that there was value in the restrictive education that was being given, thus not over-encouraging the pupils. Once again the child was on the perimeter of social priorities and its unvoiced, unrepresented needs became a soft 'pushover' for adult demands.

The Colliery School was in fact a rare combination, in Sunderland, of industry and education. The annals of coal-mining history are woven through the pages of the log. However, there is no doubt that the Colliery School in Sunderland was very popular with more than just the miners. In response to this positive parental attitude to education, the pupils worked well,

'The attainment of the boys once more proves vigorous and successful.'¹⁴

The attendance at this school was generally good. It is possible to sense the swell of the mining community in the rhythm of the school log. It has been repeated on several occasions that Sunderland was not a mining community. By being an outlet for Durham coal it rather reflected the mood of County Durham. This entrepreneurial rôle of an area should not be confused with that of the profit-taker. Examples of the risks and costs of speculating have already been shown. For all this distancing

14 Log Book, Monkwearmouth Colliery, Boys' school, 10th Feb, 1879,
and foll.

between Sunderland and true pit-life, the fact that the town lived very much off the profits of coal makes the mention of this Colliery School important with reference to the current attendance question. This school's attendance problems show the day-to-day eventualities of a coal-shipping town. Monkwearmouth Colliery area was a microcosm of a mining community within the broader, more affluent life of the cosmopolitan Sunderlanders. The school is the watershed between coal-mining Durham and coal-shipping Sunderland.

Inspectorial reports for the school constantly remind the reader of the ephemeral nature of the life around a pit. The continued strain to get the children to school whilst the father toils below the North Sea is seen in the headteacher's entries. It is possible to sense the father urging the child to school in order to get the education which he himself had not obtained. Whether the father also added that this way the son would not need to go down the pit is doubtful since most sons of miners followed their father's profession. Perhaps the hope was always there but the temptation in adolescence was too great,

'In common with other working class groups, miners faced a cruel dilemma. As parents, many did not want their children to go underground at too early an age. As heads of household they found the immediate economic argument overwhelming. They needed their child's earnings.'¹⁵

The school log notes in 1879,
'The attendance owing to the strike of miners in the County and of course this Colliery has been low'¹⁴

There was a mixture of attenders at this school. In the midst of the industrial action and subsequent financial hardship there were obviously some pupils who took advantage,

'Turned out W. Morley from school for repeated acts of truancy playing and insubordination.'¹⁴

15 J. Hurt, Elementary Schooling, p.49.

Later that year a different type of mining trauma affected attendance,

'The Colliery explosion at Seaham decreased the attendance on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday.'¹⁴

Unlike St. Patrick's R.C. this school did not suffer heating problems, presumably because of a regular supply of coal. In fact it was quite the reverse. During the week of the 5th of November 1880 there was a fire in the school which destroyed some classrooms. Happening as it did at that date in that month, light-hearted references would be unlikely, due to the seriousness in mining communities which attached to blazes.

In 1884 further problems beset the area,

'The continuing distress is beginning to tell on the school; fees are considerably lower and several children have left,

Later in that year,

'The distress in the town is having a bad influence on attendance; there are 36 pay-children whose parents are not at work; many of these attend school half-fed.'¹⁵

Yet mixed in with those who would appear to attend school even when sick are those who obviously take every opportunity to avoid lessons,

'Two brothers brought to school after 12 to 15 weeks continuous truant-playing. This case has been brought under the notice of the School Board Officer and action has been taken to force attendance.'¹⁴

Added to local distress and truancy are pupils who did not attend because they were victims of poor diet or insufficient medical care,

'Sent two boys home with sore eyes. Many boys affected thus.'¹⁵
or

'Many children having fits or in delicate health; parental request for no pressure.'¹⁴

With reference to these two problems, Simpson Street became one of several schools in the town which at an early date produced meals on the premises and distributed them to other schools. The later point of medical care, it has been shown, was being scrutinized by the Medical Officer of Health. Even so, it is clear that there

was a continual battle to maintain attendance in the face of both naturally occurring and deliberate disturbances. Even in 1900 (on December 14th),

'Poor attendance average affected by absence of some boys who have not been present since mid-summer holidays. A section of parents is extremely careless and indifferent and does its utmost to defy the authorities.'

Perhaps the most frustrating entry for that year was in September,

'Three boys sent for, and obtained, scholarship at Bede Higher Grade. They should have started after Midsummer Holidays but they commenced work- one at the Colliery on the screens, another as an errand boy, and a third as a doctor's errand boy.'

For all this serves as an example of work interfering with education, it was not such a common occurrence in late nineteenth century Sunderland - no more common than in twentieth century Sunderland.

Towards the end of the century as the influence of the Board system grew, attitudes were changing towards education and thus also towards attendance. By the 1880s the atmosphere encouraged the Government to make universal attendance compulsory. It is open to question whether the compulsory attendance law reflected and confirmed public opinion or whether the people whom the 1870 Act had intended to encourage, simply resisted and thus forced the Government's hand towards legislation. There are comments from this last log book which infer that firm resistance still existed at the very end of the century. There are also comments which infer that attempts were made to enforce attendance,

'The voluntary system just reaches those who want to improve themselves, this respectable class of colliers, but if we were able to reach the class who do not seek education of their own accord and yet want more of it, perhaps more than anybody else we must have more efficient compulsion than we have at present. This was the task of the Elementary Education Act of 1870. It coerced the parental non-consumer.'¹⁶

In the most obvious cases the magistrates supported the schools by imposing fines. Instances of this in Sunderland have already been referred to. This may not, however, have been a rigid policy. Certainly it was not in the capital where the London School Board fought against opinions (which saw child income as crucial to family survival) to impose its byelaws,

'Magistrates said a child's duty was to help its parents; (subsistence was) more important than attendance at school.'¹⁷

Not only that, but the introduction of free schooling seemed to pose a threat to work incentive. In the early years, the London School Board had thought that by their payment of fees they were taking away parental authority and substituting that of the State. The issue had arisen over the collection of school fees. In Sunderland at the end of 1877 a Committee Report book stated,

'The Board should convene a meeting of the General Purposes Committee to consider the present method of the collection of school fees.'¹⁸

By 1878 the auditor commented on the grants earned by Sunderland in comparison with other Boards in the region.

'I was surprised at the smallness of the Parliamentary grant in comparison with other places.

	£	£
Newcastle	2006	842
Gateshead	2025	563
South Shields	924	570
Sunderland	689	513
	Grants	fees

... the declining to receive children without school fees may be questionable policy particularly in these hard times.'¹⁹

It is noticeable that Sunderland was able to collect the same fees for more than two towns with many times higher grant. This zealousness in collecting fees had already brought problems

17 J. Lewis, Parents children, school fees and the London School Board, 1870-1890 H.E., Vol 11, No 4, March 1982., p. 292.

18 S.S.B.C.R.B., 6th Dec., 1877.

to the capital,

'(There was belief in) the poor's ability to pay and a desire of respectable parents to pay... It was necessary for the working class to believe that the bulk of the working class could be persuaded to emulate middle class behaviour and values ... But the Board could only control working-class parents at the expense of educational control over the child; but Boards were seen to be exerting a civilizing effect by the later Board period and exclusion was having its effect on the (poorest) children, thus aggravating the whole system.'²⁰

Once again the child, as the most vulnerable unit of society, felt the effect of social, political and economic forces.

There is little more mention of this matter of fee-collection in the case of Sunderland. However, there may have been sufficient strain to cause concern to some parents. More than that there may have been agony for some children who came to school perhaps inadequately dressed only to be turned away through lack of money. Although possibly some families played upon this situation there must also have been children acutely embarrassed by the whole predicament. The child again was the flashpoint of interests.

It is felt that the problem of attendance was present but not a major concern in Sunderland. The atmosphere of the Industrial school might be considered to indicate how sensitive the problem of attendance might be. However, its regular mention in the Board Minute Book was mainly a proud boast, indicating that the school was operating efficiently. Mention is made again of the Industrial school because it had an important contribution to make. If the Industrial School had problems with pupils, then the town had problems with attendance. The Board never hesitated in conceding to it a grant. Sunderland Board had not adopted towards these children the punitive approach of certain other areas,

20 J. Lewis, Parents, Children, p. 312.

'We have called the offences of the street-child by ugly, legal names and the similar offences of our own children we have looked upon as boyish pranks.'²¹

Sunderland was also a Board which made use of a Training Ship, The Wellesley,

'Various Voluntary managers had successfully applied to the Admiralty for the use of a battleship as a Reformatory or Industrial School.'²²

The Board made contributions towards their maintenance there. However, the rare mention of contact with this institution is sufficiently brief to indicate that the system worked well; indeed, it sounded as though it proceeded with military (or naval) precision,

'He has given instructions that in future when it is known that a boy [for whose discharge from the Industrial School (Wellesley) application has been made] was received upon recommendation of the School Board, they should be consulted before the case is disposed of.'²³

Thus in Sunderland, the Reformatory system appeared to work with minimal fuss; the absence of mention of fines, detentions and other abrasions infers that this was not an area of unusual concern in the town. With weather and health problems militating against Sunderland, it was fortunate that the town's population, in general, cooperated with school attendance enforcement. This positive attitude would not be untypical. Inspectoral reports had hinted at this mood in the North. Others had drawn attention to this,

'The further we go to the North, the greater is the interest taken in education.'²⁴

21 A. Robertson, the Manchester Boys' and Girls' Welfare Society and redefinition of child care 1870-1900, Durham and Newcastle Research Review, Vol. X No49, p.16.

22 B. Elliott, School Boards and Industrial Schools: a neglected aspect of the 1870 Education Act, H.E.S.B.No 22, Autumn 1978 p.39.

23 S.S.B.L.L., 6th Oct., 1874.

24 M.C.C.E.,1844, p.256.

This does not mean, of course, that Northern Counties children were, themselves, keen to go and be educated.

It is important to consider what alternative physical environment the school offered against the home as an encouragement towards attendance. The home would normally be the first consideration of most children. The inability to keep away smoke and dust discouraged the ordinary nineteenth century urban-dweller from introducing colour into the fabric of his home. Hence not only was life smokey in the street; once through the door, the decor was also drab. If painted at all, flat dark colours were often the choice for woodwork. A haphazard collection of household and personal items, constantly moving in and out of pawn, was spread through the house. Since booty was rare, domestic intruders hardly existed in the long, terraced streets. Hence, front doors were left open or left unlocked allowing constant movement between households. With yards to the rear, the only way to meet people was to stand at the door. The week was compartmentalized, as was each day, into the necessary tasks. Thus life for the child was colourless and repetitive. In a place like Old Sunderland district, for the 'middle-aged' twelve year old life was a serious struggle. The earlier evidence showed life amidst terminal disease and constant epidemics of child complaints interdispersed with major plagues. Added to this was the heavy responsibility in terms of both finance and familial tasks. Opportunity for rest or play was limited,

'When one considers how delicately a child is made, how susceptible to the influence of good or evil, the difficulties he will have to contend with, his bodily and mental wants, the necessity for being watchful of his health, of his companions, of the value of his activity, of his temper, of his seriousness, one cannot

help but be sensible how much of his future weal must depend on the right formation of his habits and the training he receives. Does it not seem to be the duty of the State to protect such from incalculable injury resulting from the careless selfishness of these who find profit in ruin?'²⁵

Seen in this light the child was like a newly-hatched fledging being crushed underfoot. In such a situation the intervention of compulsory education was a life-raft. Into their subsistence-level existence, their grey environment, their fearful fight against all-conquering disease, their half-tamed fiercely evangelised mid-Victorian life — came the candle of education trying to prove that all manner of darkness could never extinguish one small flame.

It has been shown that somewhere along the line between the depreciation and the appreciation of school by the lower orders came a positive decision to send the child to school, voluntarily. This crucial dawning of commitment is as important today as it was then. It is the spark of public education which gives rise to the fire which warms all involved. In the nineteenth century it was often the stage at which the child was first treated as a child. The school and its influence became a physical presence in the child's life.

The churches spearheaded humanity into the vulgarity of urban life. Numerically and spiritually the churches had much to gain. The lower orders must have sensed that along with education, some religious commitment was expected in return. Nevertheless, entry into either the twenty-three day schools or possibly into the five Union and Industrial schools and perhaps even into the four efficient adventure schools (all of 1873) must have offered a taste of mystery and occasional excitement for the young child. The Monkwearmouth Colliery School with its emphasis on inspectorial

passes was shown to be austere and rigid. On the other hand the Simpson Street Girls' teacher's notes were seen in a previous chapter to flutter from one interesting topic to another, guaranteeing to hold the attention of the young mind. Under the skilled guidance of an imaginative teacher the children could be led around the world, through the wonders of the new technology, back into the major events of world history - all of these things, the child was told by his teacher, could be unfolded by him opening his book. Under such circumstances the children would not simply be urged towards reading in order to keep up the grants; they would want spontaneously to do so - of their own volition.

Once again, it becomes clear that the actual decision of parents to send their children was crucial. It is crucial, in that the child comes to school with a positive attitude and will respond positively to learning and to discipline. Enforced attendance was to be and still is the shabbier side to education. It hints at failure on the part of the educational system. Either the timing and terms of the law on the educational environment were not right if large numbers had to be forced into school. Fortunately most schools offered to children a pleasant atmosphere for learning. Where there were several schools, such as in Sunderland, parents had a choice. It was shown that they exercised this freely (in the Admissions' Register of St. Patrick's). The tradition of schooling built up slowly and was passed around,

'Diffusion (social not scientific) means the spread and application of ideas or innovations...'

they break down thus

'... 1) temporal-they take time 2) geographical they are dispersed over space 3) social - they pass through society. Successful diffusion is measured by the quantity, quality

and permanency of uptake.'²⁶

Such considerations are part of the process of attitude-formation towards school attendance and choice of school. It is equally relevant to note the ways in which British parents reacted to that assault on them by the two main societies from mid-century onwards. These societies developed 'ab initio' a form of teaching, and its effect were then transmitted to the society which surrounded the schools. What originally started as a work of mercy, however, was later converted by grants into a fight for voluntary school survival. The schools therefore, presented a public image, which if it were not attractive, would be overlooked. The ability of the schools to sell themselves to parents and children became central to their survival.

Some groups of schools, however, started off with a better network of organization,

'National schools were more successful because they had the superstructure... British schools relied on enthusiasm (with central support) and lacked the finance (of the Established Church) ... Thus National Schools pioneered the move into universal, elementary education. The Methodists were slow with schools for the poor, thinking it more important to concentrate their efforts into missioning adults ... By 1858 the Newcastle Commission showed that the National Society had 75% and the British Society 10% of the total number of schools.'²⁷

With reference to data from the Newcastle Commission R. Pallister has shown that, 'inaccuracy in statistics can result from semantic infelicities;²⁸—that is, exact definitions of all terms used in

26 W. Marsden, Diffusion and regional variation in elementary education in England and Wales 1800-1870, H.E., Vol.11, No3 Sep.1982 p. 173.

27 W. Marsden, Diffusion, p.181.

28 R. Pallister, The Newcastle Commission Inquiry; a review of its worth as a survey, H.E.S.B.No32 Autumn, 1983, p.10.

a survey are essential. He argues that the original 'quis custodiet ipsos custodes' attack on the officers, collecting information, should be directed more towards the phraseology. The message is clear, however. Those who want to find fault in something will, if determined, manage to do so. Many are involved in such at present with regard to education. Accuracy in the collection of data is, therefore, essential in evaluating the value of different schools and schooling.

Therefore, although the figures might not be exact there is no doubt that the National Schools and their teaching methods were greater in number. For the Non-sectarians, however there was a silver lining,

'The near absolute failure of the Non-Conformists to establish an adequate spread of schools gained them their (1870 Act) rate-supported schools. Whilst for the educationally - dominant National Society, failure was through failure in diffusion through the social ranks. The gaps they left were in the great towns and cities and especially in the poorer parts. Their dominance in the home counties and rival areas counted for nought.'²⁹

Therefore the first main educational and thus, teaching system which was adopted throughout Britain was partly dependent on a successful religious organisational network in certain types of area; this underlines the very long-term influence which early religious, educational innovators have had on education.

The moderately impressive number of schools which already existed in Sunderland shows a positive attitude to education by many parents and children in the town. This positive attitude was, as might be expected, not prevalent as much amongst the very poorest classes in the early years of the Board. Until a school appeared on the doorstep many ignored education. The early

29 W. Marsden, Diffusion, p.187

inspectoral comments on James William Street Infant School support this. Sometimes, as in the case of this next voluntary school, the educational progress of the children was swift,

'Considering that this school has been open less than six months and that many of the children have been to no other school, it is my opinion that a fair start has been made.'³⁰

Also, however, for each piece of progress there might be setbacks ,

'Much in the way of attainment cannot be expected from children of such a class, now, for the first time brought to schools and attending very irregularly.'³¹

Once more, then, it is important to consider that attitude towards education was being demonstrated in such things as attendance and to some extent in attainment. The children came to school reflecting the attitude of their parents and it was thus a slow but positive progress which the schools were making to persuade families to become more concerned about education. As the century drew on, more and more people worked at this improvement of the educational service. More people with more specialised knowledge applied their enthusiasm to ironing out the creases. It has been indicated that the Inspectorate had great influence on curriculum and on teaching method. However, it was also the more perceptive inspectors (in the case of the following extract, a lady) who worked at the pastoral relationship between the school, the parents and the children. She commented on possible improvements,

30 S.S.B.L.B., ref. St. Stephen's, 31st Jan, 1873.

31 S.S.B.L.B., ref. Silver Street School, 15th March, 1875.

'One amongst her many campaigns should be mentioned: the need to secure the interest and cooperation of parents in the work of the school, "Hitherto remarkably little trouble has been taken to interest parents. The children are taken forcibly from their parents. In some cases the doors are shut to them whenever the schools are sitting. As a rule, when they come to fetch their children home on a wet afternoon they have to stand outside the school often in the pouring rain; appoint as managers many more motherly women of education and leisure who could provide tea or some attraction such as music, head - parent conferences or provide open days" '32

These were some far-reaching ideas even for today. This lady inspector devoted much of her time to improving the health and welfare of the school children. She tried to improve inadequate lighting, especially in Infant Schools and pushed for physical exercise in Girls' schools. Her views on Infant teaching were refreshingly maternal in the cold world of inspectorial reports. In comparison with the Sunderland local male inspector who was concerned very much with the acquisition of skills and knowledge, it is possible to see how female inspectors were, and are, in a position to provide an extra dimension. The main acknowledgement of a child's age so far cited by a male inspector with reference to Sunderland schools was the use of the word 'babe'. This difficulty in approaching the young child (by male inspectors) is worthy of note. Edith Deverell felt no such difference,

'It is not an exaggeration to say that the bulk of the child's lessons are begun at such an age and in such a manner as to be injurious to the eyes and extremely trying and fidgety to the nerves. Up to the age of six, the child's proper business in life is first to sleep and second and third to talk and use his limbs and senses; fourth and fifth to observe and to be asked questions thus doing the work which nature has set him. But we give him other work, for the most part useless and often harmful.'

32 P. Gordon, Edith Mary Deverell, an early woman inspector
H.E.S.B., No 22, Autumn 1978, p. 7.

It was also suggested that the children should follow the French system whereby all children go out of class and march or run around the playground in the middle of the morning, and on wet days around the hall or corridors. This would bring air into the class, would stimulate the children's circulation and breathing and reduce later class disturbances. The assumption was that on wet days the children were not already running round the premises in the first place. It should be stated that few timetables included a recreation. This, therefore, was an early suggestion for such. Constantly, therefore, perceptive individuals were expressing increasing concern for all the differing needs of children. This concern, combined with Victorian urge to be brief when mentioning 'certain topics' leaves behind comments such as the following, made with the child's safety at heart,

'Additional urinals seem needful and another exit is desirable in case of panic.'³³

It is only one of many concerned comments, which became more frequent (with the passage of years) relating to the health, safety and welfare of the child.

The child in the Sunderland schools was to be put more and more at the centre of attention as the century drew to a close. There is a fairly clear change of mood between early and late Board period. In this case it is the tone of an Education Department memorandum,

'Stone throwing at insulators or telegraph poles: There is reason to believe that the practice is not confined to so called 'roughs' and idlers of the district but that much mischief is also done by school boys. The practice complained of, though general throughout the country, is stated to be particularly prevalent in the outskirts

of large manufacturing towns in the neighbourhood of mines and collieries and other places where idle persons meet together.'³⁴

This message circularised to all Boards, is supercilious; it sees the urban child as a type of pest. It represents one of the faces of the Education Department; but, as it has been suggested, for their part the Inspectorate softened in their attitude more quickly. An inspector remarked in 1876 with fairly common-place phrasing,

'This is a difficult school but the children should improve in discipline and attainment.'³⁵

Thus there was appreciation of the social problems; but even so he expected an early resolution of the problem. Rules regarding Attendance Registers also began to slacken in late century. By 1899 the Sunderland School Board was able to make concessions such as the following,

'Absence from school of any child for the purpose of attending an annual treat of a Sunday School shall not operate against a child claiming a prize.'³⁶

Sometimes an inspector would react against overleniency by a teacher. The following is one of several instances over a period,³⁷

'The Board will do the utmost to check the practice of children leaving school at 11.30 instead of at the end of the morning meeting.'

The general trend, however, was towards ever-increasing provision for the children. During the last decade of its

34 S.S.B.L.B., 5th Nov., 1874.

35 Logbook James William Street Infants School, 16th April, 1876.

36 S.S.B.L.B., 23rd June, 1899.

37 Log Book, James William Street Infants School; Dec., 1878 - March, 1884.

life the Board expanded its responsibilities in many ways. It employed a swimming instructor for all Board schools at a cost of fifteen guineas. It fitted out and maintained part of James William Street School, for blind children. It employed a Chemistry teacher. It allowed rooms in Stansfield Street Board School to be used for a concert to raise funds in aid of the school football club. It introduced a competitive scholarship system for payment of fees at its Higher Grade School. It opened up its Higher Grade School to pupils from outside Sunderland once the town's needs had been met. Compensation of attendances on the register were made for pupils at the Northern Counties Deaf School. A sum of twenty pounds per annum was given to each child sent to the Jewish Deaf and Dumb home, Notting Mill, London. (Blind, Deaf and Dumb Act 1893). A joiner was employed to teach boys manual instruction. Diamond Hall and Thomas Street School playgrounds were opened up in the evenings for recreation,

'..between 6 p.m. and sunset with a separate caretaker and all damages to be paid by the Council.'³⁸

A piano and typewriter were purchased for use in the School for the Blind. The Board installed electric lights and put both wooden safety-blocks onto all stairs and also partitions into classrooms, to improve teaching conditions for both pupil and teacher.

Thus slowly, the child passing through the Board schools became not the object of fierce attack by inspectors but the young person needing care and consideration. Even though there were strictures built into the system, some argued

that these produced a better quality child in the end. The effects of the Codes, for example on the curriculum, have already have been discussed,

'The great fault of the Revised Code may have been that it fostered teaching by rote thereby introducing a new mechanism into the teaching process; that is, it was affecting teaching method to the detriment of thoughtful teaching. However, if rote-learning achieved personal goals for pupils then it may be found possible to justify the measure from a social and educational point of view as well as on the grounds of political expediency.'³⁹

Nevertheless, for all the sharpness within the academic system, the physical conditions within the schools provided the more noticeable comfort for children's feelings. An inspector noted early in the Board period on a cold 31st January day that 'there should be some means of warming the Boys' school.' This type of basic need disappeared eventually and positive luxuries were even being considered by the end of the century. Basically, as the Board became more confident of its success and appreciation within the town, it became more benevolent and the children were amongst the first to feel the benefit.

In considering the child during the board years, therefore, it is necessary to be aware of many of the unseen factors which influenced him. The starting point is not the classroom, but the living-room. From this situation, his health and the contribution which he makes to the running of the nineteenth century poor household predominate. The vulnerability of the breadwinner's work, the availability of child-employment and the ability to clothe properly and pay fees had to be

39 T. Elkington, Maximum education, p. 18.

considered before the idea of schooling could even be entertained. From that point onwards it is the attractiveness of the school which takes over. The Sunderland Board worked at improving the school environment and making it more attractive and healthy. It made the balance easier by abolishing fees. For their part the inspectors suggested ways of improving conditions for the child, and the Education Department also bent slightly with the wind. Eventually, more and more parents found the decision to send the child to school becoming easier; and once the child came to school with a positive attitude from the home, education became a much more integral part of Sunderland society.

CHAPTER 8

A satisfied glow: the life and achievements of the Sunderland
School Board

There is no doubt that as the 'Board period' progressed, the Sunderland School Board became bolder. In the early years there had been a little trouble with the Council in getting the Board's rate - precept passed onto the ratepayers. It concerned the matter of payment of fees for poor pupils in voluntary schools. It was in fact a storm in a tea-cup, whipped up by the non-conformist owned newspaper (probably out of pique at losing the first Board election to the Voluntarists). Similar situations arose in more than just the Sunderland School Board. In the words of the Education Department in reply to the Sunderland School Board at a later date,

'The existence of voluntary school accommodation keeps out parochial or municipal organization which has been provided by legislation for each locality and if this is so, the managers of these schools are bound to act in respect to the education of these (poor) children in the same way as a Board school would, viz. to charge a reasonable fee and to remit it in the case of proved poverty on the part of the parent. It is, happily, within their Lordships' experience that the children of the poor are admitted to a voluntary school often gratuitously and generally for a reduced fee fairly within the means of the parents.'¹²

The proof of the emptiness of this early fracas is that in Sunderland not one single instance of fee-payment through the Board took place. Even nationally, the figure only reached around five thousand pounds. Before it is assumed that the poorer classes put education as such a high priority that they might forgo food in favour of paying school fees, it should be pointed out that the School Boards were able to put the hot-chestnut into the cool hands of the Poor Law Guardians in 1876.

This incident was almost the only serious disagreement within the thirty year period in which public education nestled into Sunderland. Considering the potential for disagreement

¹² S. S. B. L. B., 1873-1879.

between the Anglicans, Non-Conformists and Catholics (as the main groups were), it gives some idea of the common will-to-succeed which was present in the Board members. There must also have been a toned-down version of this attitude swelling in the breasts of the town's inhabitants. Some of this was evident in the early Board years. Certainly the first few elections produced great interest. This must be due, at least in part, to the fact that all ratepayers were now eligible for voting including single women and widowers. However,

'There is little to suggest that the feminist issue ever played a major rôle in elections. Such tactics could have been unwise as there were few women voters and an appeal to women's rights might have been counter-productive amongst a predominantly male electorate.'¹

Another novelty was the cumulative voting system. It must have given many people a sense of power to distribute, on a whim, upto thirteen votes, in Sunderland. This number of votes equalled the number of Board members. Voters could either 'plump' or share them. One reason for the zeal in the early years was that the electoral platform involved an issue which dominated the newspapers. Religious education was made to seem important to any literate individual by the medium of the newspapers, whose rôle will soon be explained.

Although more people were eligible to vote than in Parliamentary elections there were still certain obstacles to a very high turnout of voters. It was difficult for the working-man to vote because of the voting hours which at first were shorter than the working day,

'Nine to four opening hours of polling booths prevented many from voting; dark Winter nights, impersonation and higher gas bills opposed alteration. The Third Reform Bill of 1885 extended hours from eight a.m. to eight p.m.

1 J. Hurt, Elementary schooling, p. 95.

Often a man had to lose 2/- pay to go to vote having to leave work early and face a long walk.'²

Even in itself this was a far cry from the mass stampede of voting which Lowe had feared,

'Lowe wanted political education to preserve existing class divisions and he hoped that education would repair the breach in the class system which he believed Parliamentary Reform had created. He argued that working-class franchise would lead to mob rule. Classes had little power because of their lack of organisation. The political parties gradually organised the new electors, harnessing the energies of those that were active. This helped in the breaking down of that confrontation between the social classes which was the horror of many Victorians. The mingling of classes was one of the prominent features of School Board Elections and meetings. Through them, democracy actually became a reality extending downwards from Parliament, to parish, to School Board.'³

It was thought that the cumulative voting system would bring a new vigour to the results. The method was intended to ensure the representation of minorities. This would allow a disciplined minority to 'plump' at least one candidate. This was yet another way in which the Board elections added a further facet to the growth of society. It is interesting to see at work the calming, democratising tradition which runs, often almost hidden, beneath the British way of life. The pressure which might build up towards a serious social disturbance is released by yet another development of the constitution. The cumulative system often had a moderating influence on the electoral promises of the candidates. It was upto party managers to decide on the number of candidates. It was foolish to choose a number equal to the maximum Board size. A major party might present a number sufficient to create a simple majority. If any failed they might look to allied parties for support.

2 J. Hurt, Elementary schooling, p. 84.

3 J. Redman, School Board elections in N.E. England - a study in urban politics, (Durham Univ., M.Ed. Thesis, 1982) pp. 9-11.

Where parties felt a victory might be unlikely they might only put up one third of the maximum, hoping for all to be voted in and to work in alliance.

Voting did not always go according to plan, however. Total ignominy might descend on a self-respecting party whose voters did not follow and understand the intricacies of the system. An unfortunate candidate with 'kind eyes' or an 'attractive nose' could relieve the rest of his team of all of their votes. Whimsical 'plumping' caused nightmares for the Non-conformists in Sunderland's first election. It was then, to their horror, repeated in the second election.

Thus, the managers had not managed to persuade the voters to share all votes evenly among the party's main hopefuls. They had not toned down the more popular candidates in order to promote the less well-known in order to avoid polarisation. It is, of course, the most natural thing in the world for a voter to want to support his favourite and to be reluctant to give votes to someone he might not even like, just because an unknown person who appears every three years tells him that he must do it. 'Plumping' was discouraged by Church organisers. It was also necessary to point out to voters that a Roman Catholic might be Liberal in his views. Such levels of explicit instructions were easier for Church parties to organise since they gathered many of their votes together fairly regularly at services. So it was that the system worked to their advantage at first as the early contests proved in many areas. In Lancaster, for example, the seven Unsectarians got 15,599 votes. The Church got 12,982 and won the contest. When a Socialist or Independent candidate was put forward, even greater assistance was given to the discipline within the denominational parties.

It was stated that the press was influential in the political arena of the School Board elections. The radical Sunderland newspaper gave headline space to its 'Unsectarian eight' for the whole immediate pre-contest period. A simple, block advertisement in a prominent position in conjunction with a dismissal to the middle of the paper for the denominational parties' meetings was sufficient to indoctrinate much of the electorate. Before the first election Storey stated that because of the cumulative system there were four sects which could return one representative each; whereas the Radicals, if organised, were strong enough to carry six. Failing this, they expected four at least. Although a compromise was attempted in fact twenty candidates went to poll! The Anglicans concentrated on seven out of thirteen. The Non-Conformists put up eleven including Storey.

In fact the 1870 Board election passed with very little disturbance caused by the cumulative voting system. As suspected by the Anglicans, the Non-Conformists split amongst themselves, were not organised in raising funds nor in joint canvas of the town. They trusted for their victory to the well-known, high character of their nominees; their strength on election day was allowed to ebb; or to put it plainly, they lost. To be fair, so did their ringleaders in Birmingham. If those who had thought up the masterplan could not even beat the opposition on their own home ground ... Even so this was cold comfort for the Sunderland contingent and it certainly left the newspaper in an odd spot. Perhaps Board elections were not such a good idea after all, one imagines the headline!

Non-Conformist jealousies and political disagreements had proved too strong for the Liberal Political Union which

ironically had, itself, opened up the ecclesiastical debate within the town hoping to give a lead to the Unsectarians. The election produced a majority in favour of denominational education on the Board and this led the town to the disagreement on the payment of fees to denominational schools which has already been mentioned.

The second election again saw the defeat of the Non-Conformists with only five of the eight candidates being elected. They had by this time learned to trim their numbers. However, part of the problem lay in a dispute over nominations, and they lost again. The third election was actually fought on educational issues which arrived slightly too late to become the major factor. Once again the newspaper highlighted its own party giving scant coverage to the opponents. Samuel Storey made another bid for a place with a strong eve-of-election speech. In this, he explained how the Board had filled the denominational schools, made them financially self-supporting as increased fees and grants met expenses, where previously deficiencies had to be met by subscriptions. At the same time ratepayers had to pay for deficiencies on Board schools. This election, in fact, brought the first non-conformist victory. The Sunderland Echo's first comment left no doubt as to its allegiance,

'The defeat, by petty men of influence and position, was due to the clear principles of the Unsectarian candidates. They put the education of the people first whereas the Church party put the supremacy of the Established Church, the triumph of the Catechism and the influence of the political parson before education. The Non-Conformists had seen the need for reorganisation after the Church defeat in 1871 and had been working towards organising them. We hope that the result would teach the Church party that hard work and perseverance were required and that it was useless to trust to numbers and strength without organisation.'⁴

4 D. J. Storey, *Samuel Storey of Sunderland: his life and career as a local politician and newspaper proprietor upto 1895* (Univ. of Edinburgh, M. Litt, 1978) Ch. 3.

The Anglican Church was of course weaker than the Dissenting Church in Sunderland and without the divisions and jealousies which had undermined the hopes of non-conformist cooperation in 1871 the Church had lost its strength after the breakdown of the Wesleyan alliance. The Church candidates were wealthy and influential whereas the Liberal party machine was strong enough to obtain the election of a forceful, broadly-representative team, an element of harmony between sects and the ability to organise an election. All of these factors distributed the votes between the Unsectarian candidates.

For all Storey's speech making he did not, at that point, gain a seat on the Board. He had to wait until a place came up by retirement of a member in 1877. Even then he relied on the casting vote of a fellow Non-Conformist. The newly-elected non-conformist Board immediately raised teacher's wages in an attempt to attract a better class of teacher, as they said. This must have done wonders for the morale of the 'second-rate' set which they had inherited! It was no surprise that the apparent success of this Board should encourage the Fourth Board to be filled by almost the same eight members. This time Samuel Storey was elected top of the poll. Six out of seven Churchmen and two Catholics were also voted in. The fifth Board saw the resignation of Storey (in 1883) upon whom Parliamentary pressure had now increased. Clearly, his presence on the Board had been a minor part of his influence over education. A broader view of his career will follow. The sixth Board was the same as the fifth. It was almost a decade before any major change took place in the mind of the electorate. Each time the 'unsectarian eight' were wheeled out like a set of wooden soldiers, which eventually they felt like. A type of predictable inevitability

lay like a mist over these middle Board years. The change from denominational to non-denominational majority made virtually no difference to the activities of the Board. There is something satisfying yet unnerving in this consideration. It makes local politics appear to be basically a redundant appendage.

The long term of office for the Non-Conformists inevitably led to the possibility of a change for its own sake. Accusations of mismanagement and rumours of overmanning were, possibly, just the swing of the historical pendulum. In short, in 1895, following somewhat the nationally discernible move, the Denominationalists were returned. Six Churchmen, two Catholics and six Unsectarians were voted into office. In 1898 the influence of the incipient Labour movement was visible in the form of two Workmen's representatives and two Labour candidates. By this point,

'The Church saw it could not compete but that it was also unlikely to disappear.'⁵

The pendulum unexpectedly rebounded in this latter election, probably without the electorate being aware of such. It was in fact this Board which would be in power in time for the final approach to the 1902 Education Act. Out of the candidates, one Labour representative obtained a seat. This final election had proved that unity was the key to power. From the 1870s onwards, however, the Liberals were in a powerful position in the town. The two MPs were Liberals, the Council was largely Liberal and the Board throughout its life had been largely under unsectarian control. The 1880 General Election proved their complete

5 J. Redman, School Board elections in the North-East with special reference to Durham, Hedworth, Monkton and Jarrow (Durham Univ., M.A. Dissertation, 1977), Conclusion.

ascendency.

The Cumulative system, it was hoped, would have encouraged people with a strong view on education who felt that something was missing in the main parties to whomsoever they were seen to ally. However, it suffered from an excessive number of candidates and in fact there was no place for the tiny minority interest. Its effect to some small degree in Sunderland and certainly other places, was to break up compacts between the major parties, creating confusion and stopping the general progress and harmony.

Possibly one of the most alarming facets of Board politics in Sunderland was the power of the press. Storey's newspaper must surely have indoctrinated the electorate. Nor was it even subtle,

'All the world knows the physical, even moral evil that arises from bad cooking. Yet Sectarian schools taught cookery to 4.7% of pupils, whilst Board Schools taught it to 17.7%.'⁶

There are modern analogies to excessive media influence favouring certain political parties. This was occurring one hundred years ago in Sunderland.

Nevertheless as the newspaper occasionally stated in its more benign moments the Sunderland Board was successful and free from excessive discord. In spite of this the later contests, especially, were devoid of excitement and the voting public appeared to become more apathetic the longer the Board period continued. Some of this may be accounted for by the fact that the pre-election period lay over Yuletide; but even when this was removed it did not create much difference in attitudes.

6 S. T. 1897, 1st Nov.

Perhaps also the public felt that the cause of education was indeed safe under either party.

Some of the potentially controversial issues, therefore, never generated any heat. The status of women and the representation of working-class interests hardly materialised in Sunderland. It may well be that the Sunderland inhabitants were 'low key' politically. Bearing in mind the strength of Non-conformism in Sunderland and the fact that this was likely to be the most explosive issue,

'Forster's Act simply transferred the intractable religious problem to local councillors.'⁷

... it is likely that the Sunderland councillors and Board members transferred the problem one stage further - out of the window - or as Jones put it,

'Board establishments moved much of the religious controversy from the centre to the periphery.'⁸

The educating of Board members, new to local politics was also being undertaken,

'Denominational members eventually learned toleration, less well-informed educational members learned education. Thus, the basis of the loose British system of education, run mainly by amateurs, was formed. Political controversy has now overtaken religious controversy.'

One can only hope that the third stage of educational controversy (for the good of the child), might emerge in the future.

Fortunately in Sunderland there were people with sufficient sense to make sure that the education service continued to flourish.

7 J. Redman (Durham Univ. M.A. Dissertation, 1977), Conclusion.

8 D. Jones, The Education system, p. 72.

For the system of public education to be successful, then, it was essential that there should be individuals to push it along, especially when its progress halted. In this respect, politicians with experience of such - in Westminster or in local Council chambers - were essential components. One such person, John Candlish M.P., still provides dignified evidence of his influence. His statue stands but fifty yards away from the Local Education Authority offices looking proudly towards the fine, residential area of the town. He stands tall and proud in his frock-coat with a determined gaze in his eye. It was Victorians such as these with a grand plan and equally grand zeal who had the vision to push for the public good. It has already been shown that he played a major part in the introduction of the 1870 Education Act into the town. This was no scheming politician; he was the epitome of upright integrity. His attendances at sessions of Westminster and Sunderland Council, sometimes almost within twenty-four hours of each other, belie explanation. He had one of the highest attendance records for a member of Parliament. Although he used political skill in bringing public education to the town it was not for personal, but municipal gain. Education was dear to his heart. He was a Presbyterian turned Baptist; he maintained two schools, made a donation of £300 to Tatham Street Girls' Reformatory and was one of the founders of the Sunderland Ragged School and Orphanage. He favoured a national, compulsory system of education. In his efforts to move the town in his chosen direction he pointed out that it occupied the worst position for the education of women out of a list including Berwick, Southampton, Scarborough, Hull, Whitby, South Shields, Newcastle, Tynemouth and Liverpool. The

town's infant mortality rate was higher than most nearby towns. This he thought was partly due to women being less instructed in the rearing of children and the necessities of infant life.⁹ In 1865 38% of women signed the marriage register with a mark whereas 21% of men did so. From his address on Elementary Education on 13th of April 1870 he showed his support for compulsory education especially in connection with Reformatory schools and relevant clauses of the Factory Act. He also advocated that parents should contribute one third of the cost of education in order not to break the ties between parent and children. He objected to denominational or sectarian education stating that religion was too diverse to be taught by one authority and that there were too many religions to be taught separately. His particular contribution had been most important from mid-century.

His influence on education had been felt at the time of the creation of the Board. Of Tory origins, the writings of Cobden and Bright had brought him round inevitably to the Presbyterian faith. He was influenced in Sunderland by Reverend Wilson, a prominent and popular local who wielded considerable moral and religious influence over the youths of the town. He baptised Candlish and frequently preached in the Baptist Church in Sans Street. The Reverend Wilson himself became an important member of the School Board which itself had been initiated mostly by the efforts of Candlish and which was treated at length in an earlier chapter.

Also of note was Reverend Thomas 'Coke' Squance whose father had gained fame on missions in India and Ceylon. The son, in Sunderland, became eminent in Wesleyanism. Another of

⁹ The Political life and speeches of John Candlish, Sunderland, 1886, p. 49.

the same faith was Mr. Pemberton who, like two other Sunderland Board members, was to be elected as Member of Parliament. Thus there is no doubting the influence which non-sectarian energies had had on the development of the School Board.

However, perhaps the best documented and most controversial School Board member is Samuel Storey. Unlike John Candlish his legacy is not in bronze but in the paper, of the daily journal, the Sunderland Echo, presently owned by his relative Sir Richard Storey. Samuel Storey grew to fame within the newspaper which he created on the 22nd of December 1873 immediately prior to the second Board election. It was his fascination for political life which drew him in the direction of the paper. He needed to secure representation of Radical views in the Sunderland press. Politically, he grew from being a Liberal party worker in Sunderland in the mid 60s to be leader of the advance Liberal party in the town and later one of Sunderland's two Members of Parliament for fourteen years (1881-95). It is important to consider again briefly the background to his attainment of such a position and the atmosphere of the town when he did so.

The dangers of overdependence on shipbuilding became obvious in the depressions of the 1840s, from 1885 to 1886 and from 1900 to 1909. By that time only shipbuilding itself was the industry providing ship-related employment. On the political scene it was only from 1867 onwards that the Whig-Tory power struggle was broken by the advent of a strong Liberal-Radical vote. Hitherto Lord Londonderry, the Williamsons, the Lambtons or powerful newcomers such as George Hudson had made the only impact on the voters. This new period was to see the rise of the Liberals over a 30-year period. In Durham all thirteen seats went to the Liberal

party in 1874. This coincided with the improvement in communications. Telegraph, printing-processes and News agencies improved the promptitude and impartiality of news, affecting the provincial paper to an even greater extent. Such was the background to Storey's grasp for the publishing world in Sunderland.

It was, in fact, Storey who was a proposer of a scheme of national education at the Sunderland Political Union Conference. He showed himself to be in favour of direct compulsion and efficient teaching for girls. This latter component of his manifesto, teaching for girls, was the type of thing which crept from one candidate to another. Once some manager, pouring through town records had dragged up something relating to Sunderland's position in a league table, it was highlighted. Candlish had done something similar with regard to Infant mortality. Storey was against the denominational issue, inferring that Religious Instruction inspection might remove the Conscience Clause. He wanted the immediate creation of the School Board - one should assume that he also wanted himself to be on it! He thought that the Board, however, should not have total discretion over attendance.

In his address before the 1870 Board election Storey described himself as a neutral and said that he had a first-hand knowledge of teaching, wanting every child in the borough to be well-educated compulsorily. He favoured the use of the Bible without clerical interference. He also wanted, inevitably, to keep down the rates. In spite of his position of strength in the town he knew in advance of the likely defeat for the Radicals due to their disunity. Yet he acted as an essential organiser who was prepared to put the interests of his cause before his personal

advancement by standing down in cause of unity - or disunity as it resulted. He vainly tried to stop a polarisation of voting towards himself, away from the remainder of the unsectarian group. The electoral agitation gave him useful experience for later contests.

As Council member he soon showed his strength in the early months of the first Board by successfully moving that the £1,600 Board precept be struck off the estimates. Two more confrontations later with the Council and it was agreed to ask the Board to come to an out-of-court compromise in order to save ratepayers' money. Storey was still too busy at the second election to stand for Board office even though he was chairman of the non-conformist Committee.

Again, as it has been shown, the Non-conformists came last. By this time, however, Storey had founded the Sunderland Daily Echo (1873). Although he may not have known such at the time, this single event was to have an enormous impact on his later years.

The Sunderland Post accused him of acting as party leader during his period of office as mayor and returning officer. He also opposed the purchase of Education offices in Fawcett Street for £16 000, recommending successfully those in John Street for £2,000. He was instrumental in appointment of T. Bryers from Head of Monkwearmouth Colliery School to post of Inspector. In all of these situations ownership of the Echo provided defence and coercion which was otherwise unattainable for the ordinary citizen.

Once having been elected into the third term of office the Unsectarian eight complained (perhaps in unison) of an unnecessary contest for the fourth term of office. It was a neat ploy but rather obvious. Storey would not have it; after all, he had not

had his turn! In fact, he came top of the poll. He was voted into office also in 1885, 1892 and 1895. In spite of his first success he was elected to Westminster in 1881 and his attention was diverted to national rather than local affairs. He was absent from the town for upto six months in the year. He was thus unable to give the close, personal attention to leadership for his supporters (especially in the Council) to which they were accustomed. The effects of this were not immediately apparent but must have contributed to the divisions in the declared influence of his followers which were increasingly noticeable as the 80s passed. The Home Rule split gave added impetus to this trend. Liberal unity had resulted largely from the Radical domination of the Whigs but in the early 80s an independent group of Liberals emerged who supplemented Tory opposition to the Storeyites.¹⁰

The fact that he owned Sunderland's main newspaper was of great advantage to Storey in his career in politics and one of which he took great advantage. He was able to broadcast his opinions, publicise what he was doing and suppress both of these in his opponents. It has been suggested that this, indeed, he did very efficiently. This produces a certain paradox in the life of this man. He obviously had the intention to do well for the town; however, by deliberately choosing to obtain his ends through the newspaper and actually affecting public voting thereby, his integrity becomes slightly tinged around the edges. Under the Sunderland Times or Herald, Sunderland Liberalism might have been more moderate and Samuel Storey would have had a more difficult life. As it was, he was able to retire from office on

10 D. Storey, (Edinburgh Univ., M. Litt. Thesis 1978), Chap. 7.

a frivolous issue of the presentation of mace and garments to the mayor, the Council and officials.

Towards the end of his career he was able to make concessions. In 1895 he stated that if Voluntary School managers could show that the present grants were not sufficient for them to do their educational work effectively, he would support efforts for an increased grant on the understanding that the money did not originate locally. The Sunderland Post treated this as a 'volte face' in order to obtain the Catholic vote and voters' self-interest.

As the 1902 Act approached, Storey held an important position in preparing for the new order. He led, with others, the creation of a scheme to transfer the School Boards to the Council. His skill in organisation and his broad experience in matters relating to school made the institution of the new system a clear success.

It would seem fortunate, therefore that such a person as Samuel Storey had lived his life in Sunderland at such a time — in some respects. He acted as a foil for Candlish, complementing the other's personality. In that period of awakening to social distress it was important that both the Establishment and those agitating for change should have a formal expression within the town. Samuel Storey was obviously a man of nerve, on his way to the top. That his drive should have benefitted Sunderland was important. It is proven, also, that he was a good businessman of foresight since the Echo newspaper is still owned today by his successors. Given, therefore, the importance of the skills of Samuel Storey it must be conceded that his interests in education can only have benefitted the whole town. Taking over, as it were, from the mid-century influence of John Candlish, Samuel Storey

was also influential in the creation of the Board; he provided an essential balance to the denominational parties in the early years of the Board and was even able to usher it into its next phase by the end of the Board period. Sunderland had, indeed, been fortunate to have men of such skill and drive, or in the case of Storey 'overdrive'.

This is how his contemporaries saw Samuel Storey,

'Mr. Storey passed away last evening at the patriarchal age of 85. He was indeed patriarchal, in every respect a commanding figure physically, mentally and morally. And in his closing days he had lost nothing of the fire, presence, the air of distinction which was innate in the rapier-like intellect which in the past had made him so formidable a foe in debate and such a tower of strength to the cause he espoused; for he was no slave to a party. He cared more for causes than for men. And he cared nothing at all whether a cause was popular or not. Suffice it that he was satisfied the cause was just and reform necessary and he fought it with all his might. A man of indomitable will, of granite character right through, intolerant of shams and pretence of every sort of evil. He was bound to make enemies, to make them freely. But in himself, no bitterness remained unless he felt that there had been betrayal or uncertain action. It is doubtful if he ever forgot, even if he forgave. His local achievements were: lighting, policing, paving, drainage, the library, the museum, the town hall, the infectious diseases hospital and the economic provision of a reasonable system of Board schools.'¹¹

Thus read the obituary of a person who showed that the education of a town could be influenced and controlled more from without than within the School Board. This he proved by the short amounts of time he spent as a Board member and by the total dominance of his Liberal party on Board politics.

Two other points should be noted in connection with the obituary itself. Firstly, it appeared in a leading newspaper of Newcastle. The rivalry between Newcastle and Sunderland has already been mentioned in an earlier chapter and cannot be

¹¹ Newcastle Daily Journal, 19th Jan. 1925.

overstressed. This partially explains the expression 'a reasonable system of Board schools.' However, for the ex-Member of Parliament of a rival town this obituary shows the strength of his impact. Secondly, the choice of words in this last phrase echoes the terms of reference of the Newcastle Commission. It may thus have been an extra tribute that this man had obtained a certain degree of success towards the aims of Parliament where the House itself had not been so fortunate.

This apart, when it is remembered, once again, that the potential for religious discord at the hands of someone such as Storey was always high, the relatively-harmonious, productive and well-mannered Board period which the town produced, might not have been as assured, but for good fortune.

Thus, individuals made a vital contribution towards the success of the Sunderland School Board as the town came to rely increasingly on the improving quality of its public educational system. The town also came to rely on the amount of space available and the location of these schools for pupil accommodation. It has been shown that there was an improving attitude towards education as the Board became more confident. However, it would be naïve to say that the Board alone altered the face and mind of education in the town. Only if the town had been divided exactly in two and one part allowed to continue unaffected whilst the Board applied itself to the other, would it then be possible

Plate 9
Barnes School
(ref. Appendix V p. 284)

Plate 9

Barnes School

(ref. Appendix V p. 284)



to assess its influence. In some respects, however, the town had been split and educated separately for part of the Board period since the voluntary schools for many years had (and still) continued to educate their own. This provided no proper 'test group', however, since Board schools interacted and, as it has been shown in the case of St. Patrick's register, pupils were free to move from one to the other.

When using expressions such as 'the Board period', therefore, the historian must be cautious not to view the improving education of the child in terms of the Board's influence, alone; similarly (locally and on a national level) the last three decades of the nineteenth century should not be seen as a period of osmosis of the children of Britain from the voluntary into the Board system, all being determined at the rate at which space in Board schools became available. Accommodation was of course important.

The total accommodation for pupils as late as 1840 in Sunderland was equally shared between the Voluntarists and the Board. Nationally there was an even bigger difference in pace favouring, even more, the Voluntarist defensive action,

	1870	1880	1902
Voluntary	13/4 Million	31/5 Million	33/4 Million
Board	0	1 Million	29/10 Million

12

Even Board districts adjoining Sunderland showed a strong resistance to a state-provided accommodation increase (Southwick [1902]; Voluntary places 2 996; Board 2828). A closer analysis

12 F. Watson, An inquiry into the place and value of voluntary schools in the education of Sunderland and district (Durham Univ., M.Ed Thesis, 1955) p. 20.

of Sunderland's accommodation increase shows the very rapid pace of encroachment by the Board. With a total requirement for school-age children of 18,169 in 1873, the Board started at zero provision and moved to 19,258 by 1902. This reflected the completion of fifteen large schools and a further one under construction - the equivalent of one large school opening every eighteen months. Voluntary places dropped, eventually, by 34½%, thus exaggerating the Board's pace.

Nor was the massive accommodation increase a non-conformist spending-spree. Indeed, one third of the new Board schools were opened or planned by the first two Boards which had a voluntary majority. Possibly of equal significance is the fact that they were placed in areas where there were already voluntary schools. Mostly, these were the poorest areas of the town which have since been razed and partly rebuilt. Indeed by the end of the Board period out of the total number of schools built, half were in or near the poorest areas of the town. These poor areas occupied not even one quarter of the town's surface area. This suggests that the Board was trying to reach first those most vulnerable in society and those who had not hitherto benefitted from education.

An important consideration in the Board's decision to place upto half of its schools in the poorest areas was that they did so after they had been reminded that these areas were due for clearance,

'It appears that some decrease in this district may take place in consequence of the projected Borough improvements.'¹³

In spite of this official admission of deterioration of Old

¹³ S. S. B. L. B., 7th Feb., 1873.

Plate 10

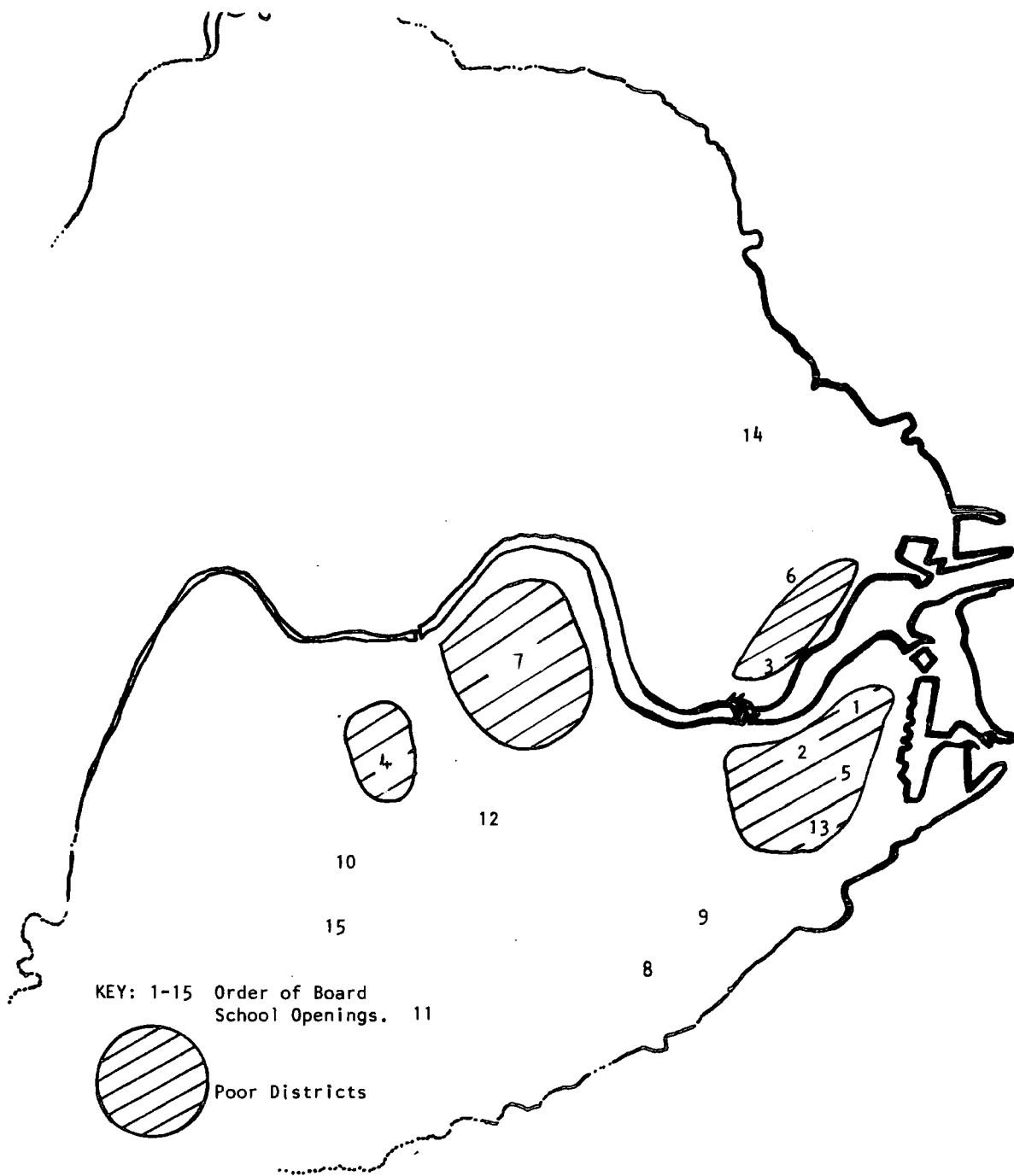
Order, on map, of Board School openings

(ref. p.256).

Plate 10

Order, on map, of Board School openings

(ref. p. 256)



Sunderland District, the Department was still putting pressure on the Board to build there. This produced a problem which must have faced other Boards — that of having to supply long-term accommodation in a declining area. It might have appeared that the sensible solution was to rent property. This they did, but with such selectivity that it was clear that they were still thinking long-term for that poor area. It is certain that the Department wanted a proper solution,

'My Lords will not at present urge upon the Board the erection of a third school in this district but it is scarcely possible that the two schools in contemplation can permanently be sufficient to meet the deficiency of this district of the town.'¹⁴

These events infer that the Board was acting with pastoral concern (for the welfare of the poor), careful municipal husbandry and cautious providence. It saw beyond the rotting fabric of the Port area with a vision of terraced, worker cottages. Furthermore it indicated that the Board was in no unholy haste to build and recruit pupils in the newly-forming artisan areas nor to compete unnecessarily with existing voluntary schools there. This single-minded pursuit of the town's educational bonanza, free from political and religious strife, must have simply been a fanciful daydream by those framing the 1870 Education Act. However, such harmony in Sunderland was a reality.

14 S. S. B. L. B., 7th Feb., 1873.

Yet again then, an echo of confidence is projected from the annals of the Sunderland School Board. During its last ten years, the Board felt sufficiently buoyant to send a message of support for other Boards in Britain seeking legislation for several main issues: that the school-exemption minimum-age be raised from eleven to twelve; that capitation grants be increased; that Parliament should limit the amount to be raised by means of local taxation and that more should be forthcoming from Imperial funds; and finally that Higher Grade schools should be made legal under the 1870 Act. This last request was no doubt prompted by the introduction of the Backhouse scholarship for entrance to its own Higher Grade school on a free scholarship,

'The Board offered for competition fifty scholarships for boys, entitling the holders to free tuition and books at the Higher Grade School; this was open to boys, whose parents reside in the town, from public elementary and be under instruction in Standard IV. Boys other than in Public Elementary school must be between eleven and twelve years of age. The examination is to be before the Summer.'¹⁵

It must have been an ebullient Board that was able to announce to the town this '11 plus' system, some ninety years ago. The scholarship of the Sunderland Board, however, went one stage further,

'The H.M. Inspector for schools who conducted the exam should report the names of candidates most successful and most likely to benefit from the same.'¹⁶

This very last comment and ones associated with it confirm that the Board had the intention of selecting from amongst the successes, pupils who were in social need — the early appearance of social mobility through educational opportunity.

15 S. S. B. C. R. B., 7th June, 1895.

16 S. S. B. C. R. B., 5th July, 1895.

The Sunderland School Board's benevolence towards the end of its life could be seen in all manner of ways. The caretaker's post at Hudson Road school, for example, was advertised for a married couple. The husband was to be at the whole disposal of the Board and was also to act as an attendance officer. However, in return he would receive £84 per annum in addition to a free house, coals and water. By 1901 the Board was so confident that it wanted to turn the tables completely on the Council which had caused trouble over the first precept — especially after having originally agreed in principle to fee-payment in Voluntary schools. The Board did not just pass on its charges to the Council, it did so with the offhanded manner of one who knows his services are so highly valued that fees will not be questioned,

'... the changes introduced establishing new regulations for Night Schools are so great that this Board cannot undertake to guarantee that this amount will not be exceeded.'¹⁷

The Evening Continuation Classes were certainly a little luxury in the town. In order to add extra kudos, entry was strictly vetted by testimonials (written in Class Log Books by different headteachers) to confirm minimum attendance. Throughout the Autumn months of 1896, however, the sessions appeared to clash with swimming galas and attendance was logged as 'poor'. In fact by the end of five weeks the teacher closed one class. By February, the H.M.I. reported that it was a well-conducted school. Average attendance was 70.4%. Subjects offered were: Mensuration, Shorthand, Ambulance, Sound, Light and Heat, Arithmetic, Writing and Competition. The explanation for improved attendance might lie in the fact that the class

17 S. S. B. C. R. B., 14th April, 1885-30th June 1903

fought back against the competition with its own attractions,

'A short description story on "Men who face death" - a story of our Fire Brigade was read and fully illustrated with lantern views.'

Inevitably, attendance rose. One senses that the determination to try to keep alive and invigorate the Evening Classes was pride mixed with frustration,

The School Boards tried to introduce as a novelty the Evening Schools. They flashed lights and lanterns into their pupils' faces; they encouraged exercise, abolished fees, made lessons simple and easy and were prepared to try out all manner of inducements to keep classes open.

The Board continued to push up academic standards. In 1895 Sunderland was made into a local centre for Oxford Senior and Junior Preliminary Examinations. This greatly enhanced the pupil-teacher provision. With the curriculum already expanding into French and other such specialisms it was with pride in 1896 that the Board was able to offer prizes of £50, £20 and £10 for design of its penultimate school, Redby. The school was to include a Pupil-Teacher Centre for the instruction of 300 Pupil-Teachers and a Junior Mixed School with cookery and dressmaking rooms for use of the Pupil-Teachers attending the Higher Grade Girls' School.

The building was eventually insured with the Liverpool, London and Globe Insurance Company for £12,400 with a further £850 for books and furniture. This was nearly three times the cost of its first Board school, nor were prices rising that noticeably. The whole venture breathed confidence. With Higher Grade provision beginning to appear in several other departments in the town (Valley Road, Hylton Road) the town was clearly on

the move. It would come as no surprise to learn that the rate-precept in the town had risen from £2,000 in 1873 to £19,700 in 1897, nor that the schools had cost £196,300 to build. With an initial target accommodation in excess of 18,000 this put spending per head in the region of £10 per pupil. People were so confident in the Board eventually that even the Ecclesiastical Commissioners lent the Board £11,500 being unable to lend it to its own voluntary schools due to their lack of security.

The position of the voluntary schools at the end of the Board period was not, however, that of genuflection. In fact the whole voluntary system throughout the country had put up such a good fight that they were rewarded in 1902 with some rate-assistance. It was almost the equivalent of the same trick which the numerically inferior British Schools had played on the National Schools thirty years earlier. Sunderland non-sectarian Council did not view it with such equanimity. The chairman of the Council in Sunderland with the weight of his non-conformist majority behind him was heard to mutter something about being willing to follow the letter but not the spirit of the 1902 Bill; and that voluntary managers would not expect the same cooperation from the Board. In fact the Council were not to cooperate, but in the process the Anglicans had to give up some of their schools; the Roman Catholics gave up none and the Wesleyans transferred the last of theirs. By 1919 the voluntary organisations were to be responsible for only one fifth of children, which continued the pattern of below-national levels of voluntary provision that had formed during the Board period. As stated, this happened in spite of the fact that early and later Boards had denominational majorities.

By 1900 the Committee of Council Minutes were starting to confirm some of the proud boasts of the town. Out of 54 County Boroughs, Sunderland Board was first in drawing proportionately less from the rates than it had earned in grants. Also, except for Hull and Walsall it was first in the lowness of cost per head for maintenance of schools. In June 1903 the Board wrote its own epitaph, speaking of the large number,

'... of very large schools in excellent condition, well-suited for educational purposes and such as children might spend seven to eight years in without any danger of their health suffering... '18

The Board was obviously still sensitive about Medical Officer of Health comments,

'... Not only were there buildings to hand over, there was also the care of 21,242 children at present in Board schools; and furthermore there was an army of teachers who had worked for so many years in sympathy and harmony with the Board, a harmony which accounted largely for the success of educational work.'19

One feels that the figures and descriptions would have continued to expand, the longer they had taken to describe their achievement.

18 S. I., 10th March, 1902.

19 S. I., 30th June, 1903.

The Board now had both unity of control and legal existence; also the power of its precepts gave financial strength and security. There was also a continual flow of able men to serve on the Boards. Income and fees grew through the programme of spending; and the policy of building large schools gave bigger grants: 1891, £5,900 from 6,876 children. This, in turn, allowed the Board to raise teachers', pupil-teachers' and even monitors' salaries. It produced money to remove fees altogether. There was a balanced feeling between the voluntary and non-conformist parties - at least privately - in this strongly-religious town. The teachers and pupils all felt happier in the improved surrounding of better books and better equipment. Any problems about religious teaching had been agreed on (by a consensus on use of the Bible with individual discretion within the school for lesson content). There was certainly nothing like the Liverpool catechism controversy and certainly it was quite the opposite of their experience,

'Boards were characterized by religious strife.'²⁰

In Sunderland, too, attendance was improving; if there had to be a skeleton in the cupboard, however, then this might be it. Not that it was much different in other places, but for all the glamour, it was still a headache trying to keep up the percentages. The newspaper even made covert references to it,

'The figures show that there are more on register than the schools can hold.'²¹

20 P. Pritchard, Interpreting the Cowper-Temple clause: the Liverpool Catechism controversy of 1899, H.E.S.B., No. 32, Autumn 1983, p. 21.

21 S. T., 17th March, 1902.

Such comments, however, probably caused slight puzzlement in the electorate, more than anything else.

In reality, accommodation was more than sufficient for the expected numbers. Furthermore, everyone could afford to use it. Provision within the curriculum for girls was improving and girl academics were going on to higher levels at Training Colleges. Also it has been shown that inspectors such as Mr. Jarman were moving Sunderland in a direction opposite to the national trend of the rôle-orientated curriculum which was being upheld in most Training Colleges.²²

The health of pupils was improving as slums were cleared and better conditions of schools became more extensive. There was also the 'constant interchange of opinions' between the Medical Officer of Health and the Board. Hurt points to the school food and health issue as being one of the important aspects of School Board elections.²³ It is certainly noticeable that the Board epitaph, which was referred to, contains a very strong indication that children's health would not now suffer in the Board schools.

Parents were also becoming more school-minded as more of them originated in 'schooled' homes. Science and Art provision was also tripping along. The best-run voluntary schools were holding their own under very little threat. There was thus an acceptably broad choice of schooling in the town.

For their part, in assuming that the educational wellbeing

22 K. Bailey, Sex discrimination: a note on industrial training in Training schools, 1871, H.E.S.B., No. 32, Autumn 1983, pp. 54-57.

23 J. Hurt, Elementary Schooling, pp. 101-127.

of the town was well, it would have been comforting to report that the people of the town voted with enthusiasm and in large numbers. Although there could be no doubt generally as to the popularity of the School Board, it is singular that for the most part, contests were devoid of excitement. Indeed,

'Apathy is the more striking feature.'²⁴

Whenever this other sensitive matter of voting is raised, the reader is asked by Sunderland newspapers and local guide-writers to accept that this apathy originated in satisfaction. The fact that this voting apathy was evident in other towns might well infer that the peculiar British personality does, indeed, pair these two reactions in a sense of satisfied contentment.

It is naïve to judge reactions from the ballot box because the town was, in fact, responding well to the total educational experience. Inroads were clearly being made into raising levels of literacy, as the system scooped lower and lower with a net of finer mesh. The diversity of outlets for self-fulfilment in schooling and in literature were now greater. There was also by the end of the period an improved quality of educational experience and its variety in the form of Board, voluntary, industrial, private and other schools was acceptably broad. The school was now becoming part of the total social relationship. Its teachers, although varying in rôle and status (with far too many still untrained) were well entrenched into society. A strong reflection of the influence of the school on the attitude of the town was that it was attracting back to Evening Classes, former Elementary School pupils. There was

24 S. T. 5th Jan., 1889.

also a strong body of prominent and unobtrusive individuals with foresight and energy who were pushing forward the whole system. The entire educational and social experience which was peculiar to Sunderland, displayed an improvement right down to the very fabric of society.

CONCLUSION

The strong emphasis on education in modern Sunderland may well have taken some of its origins in the success which surrounded the life of the School Board and the fine legacy it handed to the Education Authority at the start of this century.

Educational success stories in the public sector are a source of interest at any time but especially so when the profession becomes reflective. In this town the 'Board period' was successful; it was successful, also, in other areas of the country. For many decades before the Bill was passed, however, it seemed that public, elementary education was to be the 'bête noire' of the expanding welfare provision. When the creature finally was born its pleasant nature surprised everybody. In effect, the more controversial aspects of public elementary education had either been removed in, Westminster or were so well-hidden that even local councillors did not appreciate what the Act contained. In reality the whole concept was a typical exercise in British compromise.

In this work an attempt has been made to piece together a broad range of considerations which had bearing on this important stage in the town's educational progress. In doing so, the application of existing research work to the historical events has raised new questions, often having implications for modern educationalists.

For the nineteenth century Sunderland, however, the success was sweet for a number of reasons. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the somnolent fishing hamlet of Sunderland - by - the - sea had not risen to the bait of expansion which groups such as the Durham bishops had held out to it. Biding its time, Sunderland was retaining its energy for a massive leap into the

nineteenth century. With entrepreneurial patience and opportunism it converted itself into a voracious coal-exporting town which had the capacity to build ships at the same rate, in order to move the commodity. Performing a masterful conversion it changed its cholera notoriety into a regeneration of the town's source of power. In a similar manner, geological and geographical hindrances, were ironed out and used to advantage. The bends of the river, the steep cliffs, the unusually-placed Town Moor, the town's incline, the town-centre re-location — were all used to longterm advantage. The broad and dedicated religious cross-section provided a social frame-work for a wide range of personal responses to the growing cosmopolitan population.

The existing educational provision in the town had put the Council in a position to decide whether it wanted further provision. The rôle of the outstanding personalities, all offering the town direction and support, ensured that major decisions were taken with care. The political accord continued steadily through the period. Disagreements seemed to occur as if to produce a balanced, healthy atmosphere, never hindering progress seriously. The good spread of buildings, concentrating first on areas of social need, and then moving into areas which allowed more architectural interpretation, produced an unusually, broad spread of styles and land-use. The strong tradition of education had bequeathed a dedicated supply of teachers which although as in other towns was largely untrained, (widespread teacher training still being in its incipience) had exerted its influence on the curriculum all the way up to the quality of the local inspectorate. During the period under study the child became more the object of concern, and all efforts were

taken to ensure its welfare in spite of the normal nineteenth century obstacles to this. Attendance was mostly satisfactory in comparison with other areas, although this was to be a problem throughout the country for many years.

It has been stated that this study has raised some questions which have been dealt with herein; there are others, too, which go beyond the terms of reference. Many of the latter apply to present-day educational considerations in the town. The introductory chapter seems to request some current reconsiderations by educationists. For example, the historically-initiated enthusiasm for self initiative and self-employment must demand the attention of curricular planners within the town. Before this, however, it would seem useful to have a reappraisal of the town's geographical, social and economic complexion in order to reassert or redefine the response to the future growth in which education will play a major rôle. Any future new school-building is of relevance here.

Socially it is also important to consider the rôle of groups which have had influence on the town's early history. These include both religious and ethnic groupings. It has been indicated that, the apparent, inevitability of the 1870 Act should not be taken for granted. In Sunderland, existing educational provision had created a climate in which resistance to public education could always be possible. This infers that such resistance might also have occurred elsewhere in Britian where compliance had been assumed, thus offering room for investigation.

A later chapter drew attention to the fabric of school buildings. This raises the question of the durability of Board Schools in comparison with the vulnerability to damage of modern schools. If a

compromise between the two were reached there could be some affect on educational budgets. The positive public response to Board schools, as a type, also deserves attention at a time when there are rumblings of unease felt towards the public sector. Similarly, effort was made in this work to draw the reader's attention to the response of the child to the design and layout of the school. Numerous types of ground plan and distribution were indicated. Perhaps today's designers might reflect upon these alternatives, if it is felt that their own efforts are being directed along narrow lines.

One further point, related to the public response to educational provision, is that it was during the Board period that expectations towards State control grew. Currently the whole assumption of State control appears to be up for debate. Perhaps a study of the development of the provision from the Board period onwards would give new directions to the debate.

The ever-present question of standards within the schools, presently has two further considerations which exert extra pressure. Government demands, channelled through the altering rôle of the Inspectorate, coupled with the curricular innovations, made even more necessary by changing technology were both a feature of late nineteenth century education also. Another Revised Code, over one hundred years later would not seem beyond the realms of possibility with the present Government. The quality and educational background of the teacher to carry through any major revitalisation of the public sector is as important now as it was then. The rôle of the University Schools and Departments of Education along with the Training Colleges, which was discussed in this work, are also part of the same question. The interplay of all of these considerations in the nineteenth

century has striking relevance for current educationalists, seen against the background of history's strange ability to repeat itself.

It was shown that attitudes towards education and schooling affected attendance and the child's learning processes. The question was also raised whether successful presentation of education to the public should really require enforced attendance. Generally, the move to put the child back in the centre of consideration appeared to keep education on the correct course. The appearance and improvement in Health, Safety, Feeding and Welfare provision all improved the whole learning environment. The implications of reducing any of these in times of recession would, therefore, seem to push educational progress back into the previous century.

It would seem then that there are sufficient similarities between the development of education then, as now, to assist with planning for the future. Care should always be taken, of course, not to make broad generalisations. Some of the detail, however, does lend itself for comparison; and it is in the pursuit of detail (which at first often appears to have tenuous connections with the problems in hand) that much useful information can be obtained. The School Board periods are a popular starting point with researchers since they are well-defined and often have good archive support-material. For all the large number of School Boards which have been studied and their apparent similarities, rarely does the detail overlap. It is this detail which must be put to good use. Fortunately, the new technology is applying itself to the spread of research findings so that in the future the conveyance of ideas will be more thorough.

For the present, suffice it to state that the town of Sunderland

was fortunate enough to have a very propitious initiation into public education; and when at times, the present appears gloomy, the inhabitants of the town should remember that, once, the town was one of the most important in the country and had one of the most successful School Boards. The high educational priority in the town now indicates that if such peaks are to be reached again, the future lies in the places of learning.

Appendix I

Inspectorial statement of schools to be included in
existing provision based on the census of schools taken in 1870

Source: Sunderland Schools Board Letter Book, 7th Feb., 1873.

Appendix I

Inspectorial statement of schools to be included in existing provision based on the census of schools taken in 1870Schedule A. PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

	Boys	Girls	Infants
Monkwearmouth Colliery	365	280	195
St. Benet's R.C.	155	100	45
Monkwearmouth National Church of England Girls' Industrial	241	-	-
Whitburn St. Wesleyan	175	175	142
Gray National	-	-	-
St. Patrick's R.C.	294	294	
Nicholson St. Wesleyan	253	253	
Robinson St.	122	122	247
King St. Wesleyan	85	85	135
St. Paul's Hendon	112	112	169
St. Barnabas	159	159	123
Pallion National	57	57	-
St. Mary's R.C.	98	98	
St. George's	272	272	
Trimdon St. Wesleyan	-	-	165
Deptford National			147
Deptford Yard	236	243	162
Bishopwearmouth National	161	168	141
	402	416	400
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	3111	2933	2133

Schedule B. SCHOOLS WHICH WILL SEEK AID

St. Thomas Church			126
St. Peter's Cumberland St.	129	129	
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	129	129	126

Schedule C. EFFICIENT SCHOOLS WHICH WILL NOT SEEK AID

Boys' British	490		
Girls' British		325	
Bethany School		279	
	<hr/>	<hr/>	
	490	604	

Appendix I

Inspectoral statement of schools to be included in
existing provision based on the census of schools taken in 1870
continued

Schedule D. EFFICIENT ADVENTURE SCHOOLS

Westbury School	78	78
Scotch Church	53	53
Whickham St.	118	118
Salem Court	102	102
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	355	355

Schedule E. SCHOOLS RECENTLY COMPLETED OR IN COURSE OF ERECTION
OR IN CONTEMPLATION

* St. George's Villiers St.	343	101	
St. Joseph's R.C. Deptford	196	196	128
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	539	297	128

* recently opened as a Board school.

Schedule F. UNION AND INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS

Chester Lane Union	70	75
Boys' Industrial	98	
Girls' Industrial		39
Girls' Reformatory		53
Orphan Asylum and Barracks	47	
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	215	167

Source: S.S.B.L.B., 7th Feb., 1873.

Appendix II

Title: Results of the Religious Census taken on the
21st April 1861 (in summary)

Source: S.I., 24th December, 1870

APPENDIX II

Title: Results of the Religious Census taken on the 21st April 1861
(in summary)

Established Church	12 churches	-7008 congregation
Wesleyan Methodists	13	-5061
United Free Wesleyan	12	-3883
Primitive Methodists	2	- 748
English Presbyterian	2	-1178
United Presbyterian	4	-1750
Calvinist Independent	1	130
Independent	4	-3015
Baptist	4	-2409
Friends	1	- 227
Unitarian	1	- 95
Jewish	1	- 42
Roman Catholics	3	-3170
Missions	-	680
Workhouse	-	190
Approx. totals		
1861 Non-c 21thousand	Anglic 7th.	R.C. 3,170
1851 21th.	9th.	.

Source: S.I., 24th Dec., 1870

Appendix III

Title: Statistics for Sunderland Registration District (Poor Law Union)

Source: Census of Religious Worship in Sunderland , 1851

APPENDIX III

Title: Statistics for Sunderland Registration District (Poor Law Union)

Numbers of places below	Attendance with Sunday Schools Scholars		
	Morning	Afternoon	Evening
<u>CHURCH</u>			
C. of E. 10	4571	1061	3526
Presbyt. 5	1675		1714
Independ. 5	1387	23	1603
Baptist 6	894	123	1407
Quaker 1	136	93	-
Unitar. 1	20	-	200
Wesl Meth. 16	1410	321	2123
Meth New Connex. 3	328	-	452
Prim Meth. 6	1510	-	2080
Wesl. Assoc. 5	637	-	-
Wesl. Reform. 4	722	93	1320
Discipl. of J. Chr. 1	16	-	20
Seaman's Bethany 2	-	260	-
R.C. 1	950	-	-
Jewish 2	<u>52</u>	-	28
	14308		
		<u>2218</u>	
			<u>15244</u>

APPENDIX III

Title: Statistics for Sunderland Registration District (Poor Law Union) continued:-

Number of places below		Attendance without Morning	Sunday School Afternoon	Evening
<u>CHURCH</u>				
C. of E.	10	3389	266	3572
Presbyt.	5	1431	-	1569
Independ.	5	1083	-	1550
Baptist	6	814	125	1377
Quaker	1	134	93	-
Unitar.	1	-	-	200
Wesl. Meth.	16	1345	263	2139
Meth New Connex.	3	263	-	452
Prim Meth.	6	1310	-	2080
Wesl. Assoc.	5	456	132	733
Wesl. Reform	4	700	37	20
Discipl. of J. Chr.	1	16	-	-
Seaman's Bethany	2	-	260	-
R.C.	1	950	-	-
Jewish	2	52	-	28
		<u>11950</u>	<u>1176</u>	<u>14820</u>

Appendix IV

Places of worship

Source: Sunderland Year Book, Sunderland, 1903.

APPENDIX IV
Places of worship

Church of England	19
Congregational	9
Presbyterian	6
Wesleyan Methodist	12
Baptist	1
Primitive Methodist	10
United Free	11
Methodist New Connexion	2
Christian Lay	7
Friends' Meeting House	2
German Lutheran	1
Wesleyan Calvinistic	1
Unitarian	1
Bethseda Free	1
Hebrew Congregational	2
Salvation Army	6
Roman Catholic	3
Jewish	2

Source: Sunderland Year Book, Sunderland, 1903.

Appendix V

A list of schools and Board number which opened them.

APPENDIX V

A list of schools and the Board number which opened them.

<u>Name of School</u>	<u>Opened by Board number</u>
1. James William Street	1
2. Garden Street Infants'	2
3. Thomas Street Infants'	2
4. Diamond Hall	3
5. Moor School	3
6. Stansfield Street	4
7. Simpson Street	5
8. Valley Road	5
9. Hendon School	5
10. Hylton Road	6
11. Bede Higher Grade	7
12. Chester Road	8
13. Hudson Road	9
14. Redby	10
15. Barnes	10

Appendix VISalaries of Sunderland School Board Teachers1877

Source: S.S.B.C.R.B., 1896.

APPENDIX VISalaries of Sunderland School Board Teachers.1877

<u>Head</u>	£130 and half gross earned including half pupil-teacher grant plus half the Drawing grant.	
<u>Headmistress</u>	£80 and half gross earned including half pupil-teacher grant plus half the Drawing grant.	
<u>Infant Mistress</u>	£80 and half gross earned including half pupil-teacher grant plus half the Drawing grant.	
<u>1st Assistant Master</u>	(trained and certificated) to rise by £5 p.a. to	£90 £120
<u>2nd Assistant Master</u>	£60 to rise by £5 p.a. to (untrained and uncertificated)	£90
<u>Assistant Mistress</u>	£70 to rise by £2.10 p.a. to	£80
<u>Assistant Mistress</u>	£40 to rise by £2.10 p.a. to (untrained and uncertificated)	£50
<u>Pupil Teachers</u>	<u>Male</u> £	<u>Female</u> £
1st year	15	10
2nd year	17.10 shillings	12.10 shillings
3rd year	20	13
4th year	22.10 shillings	17.10 shillings
5th year	25	20.00

Source: S.S.B.C.R.B., 1877.

1896

<u>Headmaster</u>	£300 plus half drawing grant
<u>Infant Headmistress</u>	£150 plus half drawing grant
<u>1st Assistant Master</u>	at Higher Grade School up to £160
<u>2nd Assistant Master</u>	at High Grade School up to £140
<u>1st Assistant</u>	in other than large schools up to £130

Source: S.S.B.C.R.B., 1896.

Appendix VII

Lists of staff at North Bridge Street School and Villiers
Street School

Source: S.S.B.L.B., 1873

APPENDIX VII

Lists of staff at North Bridge Street School and Villiers
Street School1874North Bridge Street School(Temporary school not exceeding 2 years)

<u>Principal</u>	<u>Walter Turnbull</u>	<u>Elizabeth Wilson</u>
<u>Teachers:</u>		
<u>Date of birth:</u>	10th January 1846	October 18th 1847
<u>Start of Duty:</u>	19th August 1872	19th August 1872
<u>Certificate:</u>	1871	1871
<u>Class:</u>	2nd	3rd
<u>formerly</u>		
<u>Pupil teacher:</u>	No	North Hartlepool Girls' Yes
<u>Trained:</u>	Yes	No
<u>At:</u>	York	
<u>Date of entry:</u>	January 1868	-
<u>Quitting:</u>	December 1869	-
<u>Formerly in a school under inspection:</u>	Yes	Yes
<u>At:</u>	Framwellgate Boys York	Ryhope Girls'
<u>entry to:</u>	June 1870	January 1872
<u>Quitting:</u>	June 1872	July 1872
<u>Any teacher qualified in public ministry of Divine worship:</u>	No	No
<u>School:</u>	on lease of £48 p.a.	
<u>Building Condition:</u>	Excellent repair	

Source: S.S.B.L.B., 1873

APPENDIX VII

Lists of staff at North Bridge Street School and Villiers
Street SchoolContinued1877Villiers Street School

<u>Principal</u>	<u>Anthony Cooke</u>	<u>Agnes M^CCabe</u>	<u>Jane Bryce</u>
<u>Teachers:</u>			
<u>Date of birth:</u>	-	January 1847	January 1847
<u>Start of Duty:</u>	April 1877	April 1877	April 1877
<u>Certificate:</u>	1858	1867	1871
<u>Class:</u>	2nd	2nd	1st
<u>formerly</u>			
<u>Pupil teacher:</u>	No	St James Epi- sposal, Leith	No
<u>Trained:</u>	Yes	Yes	Yes
<u>At:</u>	Chester	Durham	Glasgow Free Church
<u>Date of entry:</u>	January 1855	January 1856	February 1870
<u>Quitting:</u>	December 1858	December 1867	December 1871
<u>Formerly in a school under inspection:</u>	Yes(3)	Yes	No
<u>At:</u>	Boldon Boys'	Alston Girls'	-
<u>entry to:</u>	May 1869	August 1868	-
<u>Quitting:</u>	April 1877	April 1872	-
<u>Any teacher qualified in public ministry of Divine worship:</u>	-	-	-
<u>School Building Condition:</u>	Very good repair		

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- b) Official publications
- c) Magazines, newspapers etc.
- d) Contemporary sources
- e) Directories, guides.

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N.B. The place of publication is London unless stated otherwise.

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Monkwearmouth C. of E. Girls' Industrial

Monkwearmouth National

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