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The school boards of Middlesbrough and North Tees-side: their policies and achievements

K. G. M. Ratcliffe

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K.G.M. Ratcliffe: The School Boards of Middlesbrough and North Tees-side: their policies and achievements. M.Ed. thesis, 1966.

The thesis studies the development of education under the School Boards of Middlesbrough and North Tees-side (Cowpen Bewley, Darlington, Middleton-in-Teesdale, Middleton St. George, Norton, Stockton, Whitton and Wolviston) 1870-1904, and in particular, the policies of these Boards towards the educational and administrative problems which they encountered.

An examination is made of the reasons for the establishment of the School Boards, and also of their elections and the policies of the main interests which sought to control, or gain representation on them. The membership, organisation and finances of the Boards are analysed, along with their policies towards the major problems confronting them: in particular, those posed by the provision of elementary and non-elementary education, the teaching of Religion and other subjects in their schools, and the enforcement of compulsory school attendance. School Board relationships with the Education Department, the rating and technical instruction authorities, and the voluntary and private schools, are also examined.

An attempt is made to assess the extent to which general differences can be discerned between the policies and achievements of the various Boards, such differences being more clearly noticeable between the Boards in the large industrial towns and small villages, than between the Boards ~~in the~~ controlled by opposing political or religious parties.

K. G. M. Ratcliffe, M.A.

THE SCHOOL BOARDS OF MIDDLESBROUGH AND NORTH TEES-SIDE:
their policies and achievements.

M.Ed. Thesis, November, 1966.

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PREFACE

The object of this thesis is two-fold: firstly, to study the development of education under a certain group of English School Boards during the late nineteenth century, and in particular, to examine their policies towards the educational and administrative problems which they encountered; and secondly, to find out how far any general differences can be discerned in the policies and achievements of the School Boards: between those in the large industrial towns and the small rural districts, and between those controlled by opposing political factions. The region covered is that of Middlesbrough and the area immediately North of the River Tees (which came within the administrative districts of the Stockton, Darlington and Teesdale Poor Law Unions). This area was selected partly because it was sufficiently small to allow a relatively close examination of the school boards within it, and partly because it contained a wide variety of school districts: the new great industrial town of Middlesbrough, the older and smaller industrial towns of Darlington and Stockton, the rural town of Middleton-in-Teesdale, and small villages, both rural (Wolviston and Middleton St. George) and industrial (Whitton). Information about the school boards was also easily accessible, except for that of Cowpen Bewley, all of whose records have disappeared.

The thesis is mainly based on a study of the manuscript minutes and published reports of the School Boards, along with local newspapers and the reports of the Education and the Science and Art Departments. Aspects of the work of Stockton School Board have been described in a thesis by H. P. Henigan * but the information relating to the other School Boards of the area has not been subject to previous study. The only other thesis concerning education in the area (Drury's thesis on education in Middlesbrough **) almost completely ignores the School Board.

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- * H. P. Henigan: A History of Education in Stockton-on-Tees with special reference to Technical Education.
 - ** J. H. Drury: History of Education in Middlesbrough with special reference to the Effects of Industrial Development on Education.

I should like to record here my gratitude for the assistance given to me during the preparation of this work: to my tutor, Mr. J. F. Willatt of Durham University, for his constant guidance and encouragement; and to the staffs of Middlesbrough and Darlington Public Libraries, Durham County Record Office, and the Education Offices of Darlington and Stockton, for the friendly help they unfailingly provided in response to my many enquiries.

NOTE: References to sources are given at the end of each chapter and refer to the works listed in the Bibliography (Appendix I). For convenience, and in order to avoid too much distraction from the text, they are sometimes grouped together to cover whole paragraphs at a time.

CHAPTER I: Industry, Population and School Boards

1. Growth of Tees-side

Economists have labelled most of the years between 1870 and 1900 as the period of the Great Depression. It was a time of falling prices, falling profits and a slower rate of economic growth. Apart from monetary factors, such as the scarcity of gold, the main cause of this was increased competition from industrial nations such as Germany, U.S.A. and France, which had caught up on the technological lead which Britain had achieved during her Industrial Revolution; this partly explains the increased contemporary interest in the education of the working classes, and, during the later years, in technical education.*

For Tees-side, however, this was part of the period of its maximum growth, in industry and population, although it did not escape some of the adverse effects of the Great Depression: deeper and more prolonged troughs in the trade cycles, with heavy unemployment and distress among the working classes, which had harmful educational side-effects.** During the early nineteenth century, this had been largely a rural area, with the exception of the two old towns of Darlington and Stockton, and leadmining in Upper Teesdale. It now became one of the major industrial centres, not merely of Britain, but of the world.

The population of Tees-side reflected these changes, rising from 200,000 in 1870 to 380,000 in 1900, an increase of 90%, compared to the national increase of 43%. ***

* The Great Depression is usually ascribed to the period 1873-96, and is not very aptly named: trade and industry did not completely stagnate, but expanded at a slower rate; the period covers three cycles of boom and slump and so is not one prolonged depression; also the working classes benefited in times of full employment by the fall in the cost of living.

** For example, with respect to compulsory attendance; see below p.231

*** Registration districts of Darlington, Stockton (excluding Sedgfield), Hartlepool, Teesdale, Middlesbrough and Stokesley (excluding Hutton).
From the 1871 and 1901 Census Reports.

The period immediately preceding this, had an even greater rate of growth - the fastest in its history - 62% for the decade 1861-71. The increase was confined to the industrial areas, where, in some places, the population grew dramatically in a few years. The rural areas, including old market towns, such as Barnard Castle, usually stagnated in population, or even declined, for the new industrial areas attracted workers from the surrounding countryside, as well as from further afield.

Apart from farming - and, as the H.M.I. for the district said in one of his reports, this area had some of the most agricultural land in the Kingdom² - the main industries were iron and steel production and manufacture, engineering including shipbuilding, and salt and lead mining. Except for lead mining, these industries were all largely the creation of the latter part of the nineteenth century. The natural resources of the area favoured such a growth of industry: as one Geographer has said "few area in Western Europe have such a favourable juxtaposition of geological deposits"³. To the North lies coal and limestone, to the South iron ore, in the centre salt, and in the West lead; there is some good agricultural land, and adequate river and harbour facilities.

a) Iron and Steel

A small iron industry had existed in the area in the early nineteenth century. It had depended on Durham for its ore, as well as its coal and limestone. But the great expansion of the industry came with the discovery by John Vaughan of large ore supplies which could be cheaply mined at Eston, in 1850. The following year, Bolckow, Vaughan and Company built a blast furnace in Middlesbrough, and two years later, other furnaces were erected at Port Clarence by Losh, Bell and Company. Soon several other industrialists had established blast furnaces on Tees-side, including William Hopkins, Isaac Wilson and Edgar Gilkes. As local supplies of iron ore grew insufficient for local demand, much was also brought in from abroad through the port of Middlesbrough. Pig iron production grew from 900,000 tons in 1870 to 2,100,000 in 1900,⁴ and constituted one third of British output. Ironworks grew up in many places on both banks of the

Tees, including Middlesbrough, Darlington, Stockton, Norton, Whitton, Port Clarence and Middleton St. George.⁵

The production of cheap steel, however, which followed the invention of the Bessemer Process in 1856, caused a decline in the Tees-side iron industry. Rails and other wrought iron manufactured goods were now being made of steel, and, as the original Bessemer Process was unsuitable for the phosphoric pig iron of Cleveland, many ironworks were forced to close down: between 1872 and 1878, the number of puddling furnaces of Tees-side was halved.⁶ But the industry was more than compensated when the Gilchrist-Thomas Process (a modification of the Bessemer and Open Hearth methods, which was first demonstrated in 1879, in Middlesbrough) enabled steel to be made from local phosphoric ores. A huge increase then took place in the steel industry on Tees-side, and it became its major industry.

b) Engineering and Shipbuilding

A considerable heavy engineering industry grew up in conjunction with the iron and steel production. Darlington became a major railway works centre in 1862 when it got the main works for the North Eastern Railway Company.⁷ Shipbuilding, using local iron, and then steel, grew into an important industry on the Tees, especially in Stockton and Middlesbrough during the 1870's and 1880's (in 1885, for example, 12,000 tons were built in Stockton and 8,000 in Middlesbrough).⁸ Many other iron and steel goods were manufactured in all the larger towns; bridges, castings, marine engines, etc.

c) Salt

Salt deposits were discovered on the South Bank of the Tees by Messrs. Bolckow and Vaughan in 1859, and on the North Bank by Bell Brothers in 1871.⁹ The industry grew very fast, especially at Port Clarence. By 1895, 300,000 tons were being produced,¹⁰ and most was sent to Tyneside chemical works for making soda crystals and bleaching powder.

d) Lead Mining

Lead mining had existed in the Pennines, including Upper Teesdale, since Roman Times, and in the early nineteenth century it was a very important

industry. But in the last quarter of the century, the price of lead fell rapidly, due to increased output abroad. Many mines were closed down in the North Pennines. The decline in Teesdale, however, was gentler than elsewhere in the North. There, with Middleton-in-Teesdale as its centre, the London Lead Company continued mining throughout the century."

2. Reasons for School Boards

The Elementary Education Act of 1870 did not make the establishment of School Boards compulsory throughout the country. Apart for the case of London, where a School Board was made mandatory, a School Board could only be forced upon a district where there was a deficiency of public elementary school accommodation, and where insufficient accommodation was being provided six months after the Education Department had finally directed that the deficiency should be supplied. Elsewhere, School Boards were only established where the borough council in urban areas voted for one to be set up, or where a meeting of ratepayers in rural areas resolved to petition the Education Department to have one established. (Such a meeting had to be convened by the Clerk to the Parish Union upon the request of 50, or one third, of the ratepayers of the school district).

There were three possible reasons for setting up a School Board. The educational provision might have been inadequate for the population, either because there had been little voluntary initiative, or because of a great growth in the population which had been too fast for the voluntary bodies to provide for. Alternatively, the existing voluntary schools might have incurred financial difficulties, especially after the first enthusiasm of the early 1870's had passed, subscriptions becoming increasingly difficult to raise. In districts, however, where flourishing Voluntary schools were catering adequately for the local population, a School Board might have been set up solely to take advantage of the powers of enforcing compulsory attendance at school.

More than one of these reasons might have caused the establishment of a School Board in any one district: the enforcement of compulsory attendance, for example, often played an important part in attracting support for a School Board, even if one had already been made necessary by a deficiency in

school accommodation. Also, once a School Board had been set up, for whatever reason, it was sometimes given existing schools to look after, especially by the British and Foreign School Society, with the result that, even if the original intention had been merely to enforce school attendance, it was within a short time maintaining its own schools. Darlington was a good example of this.

The most important reason for the establishment of School Boards on Tees-side was the growth of population. Those districts which had the greatest population increases tended to have School Boards, not merely because of the difficulty of providing sufficient school accommodation, but also because they tended to have Liberal-Dissenter policies, being industrial towns, and so were keen to extend education by taking advantage of the compulsory powers of enforcing attendances at School, etc. Of the 44 school-districts within the area covered by this study, those whose populations increased between 1861 and 1901 by more than 100%, or by over 1,000 in total, were :-

<u>School District</u>	<u>Total Increase</u>	<u>% Increase</u>	<u>School Board set up ?</u>
Billingham	2,798	301%	Yes
Cowpen Bewley	578	129%	Yes
Darlington	28,722	182%	Yes
Middlesbrough	81,325	417%	Yes
Middleton St. George	863	294%	Yes
Norton	2,215	96%	Yes
Stockton	37,991	282%	Yes
Whitton	1,099	1,374%	Yes
Eaglescliffe	728	104%	No
East Hartburn	396	243%	No
Evenwood and Barony	1,754	66%	No

All the districts with the largest increases (over 1,000 and over 100%) had School Boards - although Middleton St. George School Board was set up because of financial difficulties rather than an increase in numbers requiring education. The only possible exception was Billingham, which was only served by a School Board for a few years (1876-86), and where

no School Board provision was necessary, as the Roman Catholics and Anglicans managed to cope with the increased numbers.* The districts with lesser increases found it more easy to absorb the increase in school population. The School Boards whose districts had population increases of under 100%, with the exception of Norton, whose increase was 96%, were established for reasons other than a deficiency of school accommodation: Wolviston and Middleton-in-Teesdale School Boards were set up due to financial difficulties, resulting in the Voluntary schools being closed down or not being able to provide efficient instruction. Of the school districts with increases of above 100%, only Eaglescliffe whose increase was late (it only increased 38% 1861-91) and East Hartburn did not have School Boards.**

School Boards could either be set up voluntaryⁱⁱ by petition of the rate payers, or compulsoryⁱ under section 10 of the 1870 Education Act. The only two Boards in the area set up compulsoryⁱ were at Wolviston and Cowpen Bewley.¹²

3. The Establishment of School Boards

a) Middlesbrough

In 1862, Middlesbrough was prophetically described by Gladstone as the "Infant Hercules" for it was then fast mushrooming into a mighty industrial town.¹³ It was an artificial creation of the nineteenth century. At the beginning of the century it had consisted merely of a hamlet of 25 people. In 1829, Joseph Pease and his fellow Quakers had purchased the almost unpopulated site for £30,000 in order to establish a coal exporting harbour there, linked to the Stockton-Darlington Railway, because the River Tees between Stockton and Middlesbrough was not deep enough for large boats. The Company built a new town there on a symmetrical

* Billingham was united with Cowpen Bewley School Board in 1876 to enforce school attendance. See below, p.14

** South of the Tees the same factors clearly operated: of the 41 school districts, all those with an increased population of over 100% and 1,000 had School Boards (Eston, Middlesbrough, Normanby, Ormesby and Thornaby) There were also four other School Boards, mainly in rural areas.

plan, and in 1841 handed its government over to twelve Improvement Commissioners. In 1853, these were abolished, and Middlesbrough became a self-governing borough.

After the discovery of the Cleveland iron ore supplies in 1850, and the establishment of ~~many~~^{many} ironworks there, the town's growth became spectacular, and was only paralleled in the nineteenth century by the gold rush towns of the new lands. 7,000 in 1850, its population grew to 40,000 in 1870, and was over 100,000 by 1900. People came from all over the British Isles to work in Middlesbrough, especially Roman Catholics (in 1871, 10% of the population were Irish immigrants),¹⁴ and in 1878 Middlesbrough became a Roman Catholic bishopric. The largest town on Tees-side in the latter half of the nineteenth century, it became the centre of the iron and steel industry, while salt production also became important. The ironmasters came to dominate the town, especially Henry Bolckow, Middlesbrough's first Mayor in 1853, and first M.P. in 1868, a great benefactor, presenting the town, among other things with new schools.

With such a rapid growth, it was soon apparent to all that voluntary efforts would be unable to satisfy the need for elementary education. Further, the town was strongly Liberal-Dissenter in politics (Bolckow, the Liberal M.P. was unopposed at the 1868 Election), and so was naturally enthusiastic about state education, and the carrying into effect of the compulsory powers of enforcing school attendance. As early as September, 1870, although even the returns of school statistics did not have to be sent to the Education Department before 1st of January, 1871, a proposal of E. Williams to ask the Education Department to set up a School Board in Middlesbrough, was carried unanimously at a meeting of the Town Council.¹⁵ The Town Clerk's provisional investigation had shown that there was probably provision in schools classified as 'public elementary' under the Act, for only about 10.1% of the population, thus leaving a large deficiency.¹⁶ Full investigations by the School Board in 1871, however, indicated a deficiency far greater than this would have suggested. On the Education Department's method of calculation (one sixth of the population, of which 5% could be considered absent from sickness, etc.,) the elementary schools in the

town only providing for 4,785, the deficiency was 1,548.¹⁷ But it was thought that, due to rapid expansion, Middlesbrough had probably one of the youngest populations of the country.¹⁸ A census taken by the Board confirmed this: a minimum deficiency in the town was calculated to be 2,520.*¹⁹ As the Board wanted to enforce compulsory attendance as soon as possible, this left a great task to be done. But Middlesbrough was in the forefront of towns trying to cope with the problem, and its School Board was one of the first in the country to be elected - on 29th November, 1870, only four days after the first one in the country, that of Manchester**.

b) Stockton

Stockton, an old market town, became quite an important port for a time after river improvements in 1810, and the opening of the Stockton-Darlington Railway in 1825 led to the growth of an export trade in coal. Later in the nineteenth century, it grew in population due to the development of a big iron and steel industry there, with blast furnaces, rolling mills, manufacture of iron and steel plates, ships' engines, etc.²¹ Its population grew steadily with the increasing industrialisation: 10,000 in 1850, it was 28,000 by 1870, and 51,000 in 1900. As in Middlesbrough, there was a strong Liberal-Dissenter movement in the town (whose M.P. was Liberal) to establish a School Board, provide more school accommodation and enforce compulsory attendance. At the town council meetings of the 4th and 11th of October,²² J. Dodds, Liberal M.P. for Stockton, pressed for quick action, and complained of valuable time lost in waiting for information about the size of the deficiency to be collected. At the

* The census showed there were 2,468 children 3-4 years old and 7,305 children 5-12. Assuming the 5% always absent to be equivalent to the number aged 13 (and it was thought to have been considerably less), 7,305 places had to be provided.

** Although Liverpool, avoiding an election, was able to have the first School Board.²⁰

latter meeting, the Council unanimously carried his motion that the Education Department be asked to establish a School Board. But there was not the unanimity concerning School Boards that support to his resolution suggested: several denominationalist Tories were absent from the Council meeting. That there was need for a School Board could not be denied: the Mayor's provisional enquiries about educational provision showed a deficiency of about 1,100 to 1,200 school places²³. Attendance was also very bad: several large schools had many empty places. There were also no big schools in course of erection by the voluntary bodies.

As a result, Stockton was one of the first towns to have a School Board elected - on the same day as Middlesbrough, 29th November, 1870. But the demominationalists, while having to admit the need for a School Board, were not prepared to allow the Liberals to have it all their own way when the elections were actually held**.

c) Darlington

Darlington had been an important town in the North East for centuries. An agricultural market town, it had developed a textile industry from Huguenot refugees in the seventeenth century. By the late nineteenth century, this was declining and being replaced by heavy industry²⁵. Railway works were instituted in 1847, and became very important in the 1860's when the North Eastern Railway moved their main works there, and many iron and steel works were established, especially for manufacturing heavy goods²⁴. The town was blessed with wealthy Quaker families, especially the Peases, who did much to benefit it culturally and economically, and so to ensure its continued prosperity.



* The estimated population was 26,500; one sixth of this was 4,400 Public schools provided 2,625 places: 17 private schools (not all elementary) 600 places. The School Board investigation of December, 1870, showed public elementary school accommodation of less than this: 2,490.²⁴

** See below, pp. 89-90

A little larger than Stockton, Darlington, although growing fast in this period, did so at a slower rate than Middlesbrough or Stockton. 12,000 in 1850, its population grew to 27,000 in 1870 and 44,000 in 1900. This slightly slower rate of growth, together with the existence of many wealthy benefactors, meant that Darlington was exceptional as an industrial town in the area in having no deficiency in school accommodation. An educational census taken in June, 1871, by the Wardens showed that there were 559 more places provided by the voluntary elementary schools in the town than were needed*.²⁷ The efforts of the voluntary bodies had made sure that there would be no necessity for School Board schools; the Roman Catholics in particular, made a great effort just before the 1870 Act came into operation: they made additions to their schools (new schools were built at Albert Hill; schools enlarged at Brunswick Street; and a school room rented in Whessoe Lane),²⁸ which meant that they now provided for 1,000 children, more than one fifth of the children of Darlington and more than their own requirements.

The Town Council knew from their provisional enquiries that there was no deficiency. But being strongly Liberal-Dissenter, they decided early in December, 1870, to apply for a School Board, solely in order to put into force the powers of compulsory attendance.²⁹ They optimistically expressed the hope that such a Board would not cost much on the rates, although the fees of some poor children would probably be paid. As a result, a School Board was elected on 13th January, 1871. Its June census confirmed that school attendance in the town was unsatisfactory: 750 children aged between 5 and 13 years were not attending any elementary school, and the 4,019 children on school lists had an attendance of only 2,861 (71%).

* There were 4,779 children aged 5-13 years and 1,506, 3-5 years. Subtracting 898 (one seventh of the total) as children receiving 'superior' education at home or middle class schools, the number of places required was 5,387. But there were already 5,946 places at existing public elementary schools (6 British, 5 Anglican, 3 Catholic and 4 other schools).

In 1874, portions of Cockerton and Haughton-le-Skerne parishes were included in the school district on the request of the ratepayers of those parishes.³⁰

d) Norton

Norton was a pleasant residential town for professional gentlemen and merchants of Stockton.³¹ As well as farming interests, ironworks had been built there in 1855, but were all shut down in 1877 during the depression in iron production. Its population grew steadily, but much more slowly than in the industrial towns.

The School Board was set up there partly as a result of the increase in population, and partly due to the financial difficulties of the National School. This school had been in a bad condition for years, and had been condemned since 1867 by the H.M.I.³² with respect to its accommodation and position. The number attending it in 1870 was 170, but one sixth of the population for which efficient school accommodation had to be made available was 400. There were also two other elementary schools and three small private ones in Norton, but they were all overcrowded. As the educational appliances and sanitary arrangements in every case were most unsatisfactory none of these schools was recognised as efficient by the Education Department.³² The Denominationalists, however, tried to fight the setting up of a School Board - in November, 1870, the "Northern Echo" reported that Norton was ready for a desperate battle.³⁴ In October, 1870, the vicar of Norton had convened a meeting of ratepayers to discuss the matter of providing school accommodation: whether to try to collect sufficient money to build a new National school, or to allow a School Board to be established. When, after a discussion, the majority, led by Congregationalist minister Rev. G. Allen, urged for a School Board, the meeting was persuaded to agree to the matter being discussed again in a fresh meeting to be held a week later. Sometime later, it was reported that new National Schools for 500 pupils were about to be erected at a cost of £2,000. But the Denominationalists failed to raise sufficient money, and they could not put off the establishment of a School Board indefinitely; thus one was finally set up on 19th December, 1872.³⁵

e) Cowpen Bewley (and Billingham)

By the 1870's, Cowpen Bewley consisted of large ironworks fringed by farming land. Its population, and that of Billingham, had grown in the nineteenth century because of the growth of industry, especially at Port Clarence. Port Clarence had been built in 1834 to ship coal. From 1853, when Losh Bell & Co., (later Bell Brothers, and taken over by Dorman Long in 1899)³⁶ built a blast furnace there, it grew to be an important centre of iron production. By 1881 there were 12 blast furnaces. Bell Brothers also developed salt production there from 1881.³⁷ As a result, the population of Cowpen Bewley doubled between 1861 and 1871, and rose more slowly thereafter, while the population of Billingham rose from 1,000 in 1870 to over 3,000 in 1900.

Due to this increase, Cowpen Bewley had not sufficient school accommodation by the 1870's. A National School for 40 children had previously been built, but it was earning no annual grant by 1870. There was also a British School at Port Clarence, but a School Board was compulsorily established on 24th December, 1873, because of the deficiency of school accommodation.³⁸ In 1876, Billingham School District was united to that of Cowpen Bewley, so that the School Board could enforce proper school attendance.³⁹

The local inhabitants, however, did not want a school board. Although the Board took over the British School and ran it until 1883 when Bell Brothers became responsible for it, all the time it was maintaining the school, it got large annual donations of £90 to £255 a year from voluntary sources* which largely covered the costs of school maintenance, and so kept the rates down to about 1/4d in the £, which represented general administrative expenditure.⁴⁰ Also, a National School was built in 1874 for 60 children at Cowpen Bewley,⁴¹ and the Roman Catholics built a school

* Such voluntary donations were unusual for School Boards: the Boards' accounts in the Education Department's Annual Reports show very few such donations in any one year.

at Port Clarence, within the Billingham School District. The Catholic School was at first refused an annual grant by the Education Department on the grounds that it was unnecessary,⁴² but started receiving a grant in 1883. As a result of this activity by the voluntary bodies, a School Board was no longer necessary, as it was merely enforcing compulsory attendance (once Bell Brothers had taken over the Board School) and this could have been equally well done by the attendance committee of Stockton Union. The School Board was thus dissolved in 1885 by the Education Department on the application of the ratepayers, and with the agreement of the School Board itself. Such dissolutions of School Boards were unusual: between 1876 and 1886 only 8 Boards were so dissolved throughout England and Wales*.⁴³

f) Whitton (and Stillington)

Whitton grew in population due to the establishment of ironworks by Samuel Bastow, one mile from the village.⁴⁴ In 1870 these were taken over by the Carlton Ironworks, and by 1890 there were 3 blast furnaces and 40 coke ovens. As a result, Whitton grew from a hamlet of 40 people in 1861 to quite a large village of over 1,000 by 1891. Stillington, an agricultural village, grew between 1861 and 1901 from 40 to 80 inhabitants. This increase in population made necessary the establishment of a School Board to supply sufficient school places for the children of the district. The villagers were keen to provide schools now that industry was growing: a meeting of ratepayers to discuss the setting up of a School Board, was attended by nearly every ratepayer in the parish, and they were unanimous

* Cowpen Bewley School Board will not be mentioned much in this thesis, partly because it lasted for only a few years and was very limited in activity, and partly because of lack of information: the minutes cannot be traced, and the Board was not important enough to attract much mention in local newspapers.

in petitioning for a School Board to be established for the united parishes of Whitton, Stillington, Foxton and Shotton.⁴⁶ One was set up for the United District of Whitton and Stillington (including Foxton and Shotton) on 23rd July, 1874,⁴⁷ and proved most enthusiastic to supply the deficiency; although the Education Department required accommodation for only 100 children to be provided, the School Board justified a school for 200 because of the Ironworks' plans of expansion.⁴⁸

g) Wolviston

Wolviston was a small agricultural village with a population which decreased slightly during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. A School Board was forced upon the parish by the Education Department which issued an order for the compulsory formation of a Board on 21st March, 1875, to supply a deficiency of school accommodation. Voluntary efforts had not been able to meet the educational needs of the village: a National School did exist, and had received a building grant since 1838, but it was not of a sufficiently high standard to receive an annual grant. The election of the School Board was held on 8th April, and the parish of Newton Bewley was brought within the administrative area of the Board.⁴⁹

h) Middleton-in-Teesdale

Middleton-in-Teesdale was a market town and lead mining centre, the miners also having small plots of land to eke out their existence. The London Lead Company dominated the town as the chief employer, and provided many services for its employees: in addition to medical and housing services, it did much for education, helping to support day and Sunday schools, building a day school in Middleton-in-Teesdale in 1819, and insisting that the miners' children attend school as a condition of employment.⁵⁰ But the lead trade was in difficulties throughout the period, and although the mines were kept open in Middleton, the population of the town declined slightly from 1870.

In August 1878, the London Lead Company discontinued maintaining its school, probably because the uncertainties of the lead trade had forced it to trim its budget. The endowed elementary school, which had been founded

in 1729, was also closed in 1875, and the income devoted to paying the fees of poor children who were receiving an elementary education.⁵¹ A committee of ratepayers rented and managed the London Lead Company's school for a few months after its discontinuance, with great financial difficulties, until the School Board was set up on 7th February, 1879, to take the school over from the.

i) Middleton St. George

The agricultural village of Middleton St. George grew fast during the 1860's due to the establishment of ironworks there. But these were closed down in the depression of iron production, and by 1881 the four blast furnaces were idle.⁵² The population increase thus took place mainly between 1860 and 1870 during which period it nearly trebled. From 1870 to 1900 the level of population was more static, rising only by 40%, and with a temporary decrease after 1881.

The reason for the establishment of a School Board in the village was not the increase of population - a National School erected by subscription in 1871 had rendered unnecessary a School Board during the 1870's - but the financial difficulties of the Voluntary school which had made the standard of education it was providing inefficient. The Education Department refused to give the school an annual grant because of its unsatisfactory state, and because of this a School Board was elected on 17th October, 1884.⁵³ But a minority of Denominationalists were unexpectedly elected to the Board; the Voluntarists became alarmed at the intentions of the majority party on the School Board and decided to fight back. The Trustees of the National School now claimed that, as they had received sufficient funds to enable the school to continue after all, there was no need for a School Board:⁵⁴ the school had accommodation for 260 and one sixth of Middleton's population was only 186. The Education Department backed the majority on the School Board and declared that the latter had a duty to supply the deficiency created by the failure of the Voluntary school to reach a satisfactory standard.⁵⁵ This started a fierce struggle between the supporters of the National School, the School Board and the Education Department*.

* For further details, see below, pp.76-80

In 1890, Low Dinsdale, from which parish several of the scholars of Middleton St. George Board School came, was made a contributory district, and its ratepayers elected two members to sit on Middleton St. George School Board.

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CHAPTER II: Elections and Politics

1. Campaigning and Polling

The first School Board elections in 1870 and 1871 were keenly fought, although the later elections especially in the rural areas, were often very quiet affairs, only occasionally being enlivened by correspondence in the local press.

In the large towns, the campaign usually lasted in earnest for about two weeks. Committees were, in general, organised for all the candidates, who also published notices in the local papers to the electorate, declaring their main principles of policy - although in the 1871 Darlington election, two candidates, Pease and Dale, were so well known that they stood aloof from the campaign, having no committee, calling no public meeting, and relying solely on a circular and the fame of their personal names. Bills were plastered throughout the town with such slogans as "Elgee and Free Education", "Stephenson the Unsectarian Candidate" and "Vote for Fallows the sure friend of education", and sometimes all the candidates came together jointly to address a public meeting. In 1876, the Mayor of Middlesbrough called such a meeting in the Town Hall, to hear the views of all the candidates. It proved to be extremely lively. Each candidate (except the Roman Catholic priest, Father Lacy, who was on the Continent at the time) was present and made a short statement of his policy. There ^{were} frequent interruptions and heckling at provocative assertions made by the candidates, and when question time followed, it got completely out of hand. As there was no hope of establishing order, the meeting was declared closed. A party on the left of the platform then started to sing "God Save the Queen" and "Rule Britannia", and after this, cheers were given for the Church Party, Nonconformists, and others, and in the words of the "Northern Echo", "one of the most uproarious meetings that ever has been held in Middlesbrough, terminated".

In many districts, the contestants made deliberate attempts to dampen down any excitement on polling day, and, as a result, polling day often came somewhat of an anti-climax, and was remarkably quiet after the excitement of the days before. One way to keep down the heat of polling,

was for the candidates to agree not to use cabs to take sympathetic voters to the polls, as was agreed in Stockton and Middlesbrough in 1870. Middlesbrough continued this arrangement in the 1873 Election and later ones (although some sick people came by cab, and it was reported that some other people, such as the Jews, hired themselves cabs).⁴ But this arrangement broke down in Stockton in 1873, when the two parties being so close, the struggle for control of the Board was fought as energetically as possible, and no effort spared to get people to the polls.⁵ In 1876, cabs were again extensively used, and, although some candidates professed to be using none, in fact many cabs which went to the polls with no placards, were discovered to belong to those candidates or to their friends.⁶

The quietness of the elections often surprised reporters: the "Northern Echo" declared of the 1870 Stockton election: "The interest evinced in the matter was immeasurably short of what we might have reasonably expected", and the "Middlesbrough and Stockton Gazette", referring to a typical Middlesbrough election, that of 1873, said that little excitement or bustle had occurred.⁷ No cabs had been used, and the working classes had not felt that the election affected their material interests and so had had rather an aloof attitude to the polling, feeling they were bestowing an honour on the candidates by voting. It went on to describe the scene: "Little groups of men could be seen standing at street corners, eagerly discussing the chances of the various candidates, and small demagogues giving forth their views of the question of 'heddication' and the 25th clause. Workmen, as they came out of the poll stations, were looked upon as superior beings by admiring groups of small boys, and having been initiated into the mysteries of voting by ballot themselves, would kindly explain to their mates the instructions given by the presiding officer". The ballot was a cumbrous system, and when half a dozen illiterate voters came down on an unlucky presiding officer together, some delay would take place. Even with detailed explanations, the voters did not always master the method of voting: it was reported that in a Darlington election, several voters, intending to 'pump' their votes on Rev. Wade or Mr. Bowman, placed a cross against their names instead of '11' and so

only gave them one vote.⁸

Norton's first School Board election, in 1872, was also reported to have been very quiet, the only stir being at lunch time and after the works closed, when large numbers of workers went to the polls, which were open from 12 o'clock to 7 p.m.,⁹ while the "Teesdale Mercury" complained that proceedings at Middleton-in-Teesdale's first election had been almost as dull as the weather on that day. The only incident to relieve the monotony had been when an elector driving a donkey cart placarded "To carry voters to the poll free" had failed to persuade the animal to participate in the joke - the donkey had lain down in the street, got rid of its harness, and his duties.¹⁰ In Stockton's 1876 election, life was infused into the proceedings by what was known as "Nelson's Army" and caused much amusement: two score or so boys, each armed with a huge board ^{bearing} ~~being~~ such words as "Give 9 votes to Alderman Nelson". These youngsters, delighted as the idea, cheered the conveyances with Nelson's voters, while they groaned with equal ardour at the carriages or cabs of any other candidates.¹¹

The only excitement occurred when the election was keenly contested by two parties both of which had a good chance of winning a majority, and was partly caused by the cumulative voting system. By using check clerks, it was possible to estimate the relative position of the candidates while the poll was still open, and so steer some votes away from the candidates who were certain to get in, to help other candidates of the same party whose return was doubtful.¹² But check clerks could only be used by the parties if there was general agreement to use them by the candidates, and the three Church candidates at Norton, by refusing to agree, prevented their use in 1872, and so the candidates had no idea of their relative position until the polls closed.

The interest of the ratepayers in a contest varied considerably, and can be gauged by the numbers entitled to vote, who did so. In the first elections, often the poll was very high: in Darlington's 1871 election, 3,600 voted out of a register of 4,000. But enthusiasm often fell after the first election, unless there was some exceptionally important controversy which caught the interest of the electors. In Darlington, where

there was a 90% poll at the first election, only 58% voted in the second, and even those who did go to the poll did not always use all their votes: 69 spoilt their ballot papers in 1874, and 274 votes were not used.¹³ Apathy became a real problem, and the Liberal "Northern Echo" wrote "It is evident that the apathy which we deprecated, although it has not lost the election, has yet deprived it of much of the moral force which it would otherwise have possessed". In the 1877 election, under half of those eligible voted (of the 5,924 names on the register, only 2,834 voted, of which 53 spoilt their papers).¹⁴

On the other hand, where a matter of principle was at stake which interested the ratepayers, there was a large turnout. In 1887 at Middleton St. George, for example, came the climax to the Church party's sometimes violent opposition to the School Board Party's actions over the previous three years, when they won control of the Board: in this election, 177 of the 198 ratepayers voted.¹⁵ In Norton's election of 1875, when the Unsectarian party managed to win control of the Board from the Denominationalist party and the unpopular vicar was rejected along with all but one of the old School Board members, there was an active election, which created more stir than the Parliamentary election.

At nearly every election there was an attempt to avoid a contest completely, and often much of the debate during an election was over the desirability of having a contested election, or whether the issue should be declined beforehand by an agreement among the candidates, the School Board places being divided between the parties.

There were two main arguments against holding a contested election: to avoid arousing sectarian bitterness, which contests were apt to do, and to save the expense of one to the ratepayers. The cost of a contested election was regarded as great: the contested election in Darlington in 1891 cost £242. 6. 5d, nearly a 1/2d rate, and this was typical of the elections in the large towns: but the 1888 Darlington election, which was not contested, cost only £9. 11. 3d. The elections of the smaller districts were relatively more expensive: in the rural village of Wolviston, the contested election of 1881 cost £19. 10. 4d. (or 1d rate), while the uncontested one of 1890 cost only £4. 15. 2d.¹⁶ On several

occasions, the School Boards complained to the Education Department or returning officer about what they considered the excessive charges for an election, and advocated a change in the law which forced them to use the services of the Clerk to the Union or the Mayor or Clerk of a town.¹⁷

On the other hand, the main argument in favour of a contested election, was that it was a fundamental principle of the system that the ratepayers should have a free choice of policies, and that if an election was 'fixed' by a compact between the parties, the ratepayers were being deprived of this freedom of choice. W. C. Parker, for example, in the 1871 Darlington election, stood partly on the grounds that many working people had expressed a dislike of the sects arranging the nine places among themselves, and Rev. W. H. G. Stephens who opposed the proposed pact to avoid a contest said that he was certain that the burgesses as a whole, many of whom never attended any church or chapel, would not agree to a quiet family arrangement by the churches of Darlington to divide up the nominations between themselves.¹⁸ In the 1876 Middlesbrough election, after the Church party had failed to agree with the other parties to avoid a contest, it passed a resolution saying it was against "depriving the ratepayers of their suffrage."¹⁹

Such arguments about the desirability or not of a contested election, to a large extent probably merely masked a party's intention to retain or to capture a majority of seats on the School Board. Inevitably, the party in power tended to side with those who wished to avoid a contest by continuing the status quo, while the party which wanted to break such a control of the Board by its rivals, would force an election if it thought it had a good chance of winning.

There were three main reasons why attempts to avoid a contest in School Board elections failed:

- 1) When agreement as to how many places each party should have on the Board could not be reached: this was usually the result of a party which wished to take over control of a Board insisting on enough candidates of their standing to gain control. But sometimes a minority interest felt it was not being fairly represented, if at all (for example, the Wesleyans in the

1894 election at Darlington, who had not been allocated a seat by the Nonconformist party, put up two candidates to get their voice heard on the next School Board).²⁰

- 2) When an official party failed to ensure that only its allotted number of candidates stood at the election. On numerous occasions, even if all were agreed on the number of candidates who should stand for a particular party, agreement could not be reached within the party, as to who should be its candidates.
- 3) When it was felt that an uncontested election deprived the ratepayers of their freedom of choice. In Middlesbrough's 1876 election, for example, Rev. J. K. Bealey made it one of his election principles that an election was a constitutional privilege and should not be stopped by arrangements of the candidates. (However, this sounded a little hollow in view of the fact that previously he had been prepared to accept such a pact, so long as it had made him one of the members of the new School Board, and, when this had not been accepted by the other candidates, had suggested that the election should be settled by putting the ten names of the candidates into a hat, and allocating the nine School Board places by lot, which would have given him a nine-tenth's chance of being elected. It was only after this had failed, that he had declared his support for a contested election on principle).²¹

How these factors worked out in practice, can be best appreciated by examining the elections of one Board in detail.

The first election of Darlington School Board took place on 13th January, 1871. Early in December, 1870, the churches began to nominate their candidates: on 4th December, for example, the Roman Catholics (there were many Irish Catholics in Darlington) chose as their candidate, their priest Henry Coll.²¹ Coll made an appeal to get wider support by declaring that he would not be exclusively Catholic in his actions, and was prepared to co-operate with any denomination in seeing that the education of the town was well looked after. On 13th December, the main interests in the election met in a conference to try to avoid a bitter sectarian struggle by agreeing on an allocation of places for the new

Board. They agreed that the Church of England should have 3 places, Quakers 2 (there was great Quaker interest and wealth in the town, and their main candidates, Pease and Dale, were recognised as great benefactors of Darlington), Roman Catholics 1, Wesleyans 1, other Free Churches 1, and, as a sop to the working classes, 1 place was given to a working class candidate.²³ Although there was some grumbling by the Free Churches that they were under-represented, the pact would have probably worked and a contested election avoided, had it not been for the inability of the Anglicans to agree among themselves as to which candidates should represent them. It was they who broke the pact.

The problems which resulted in the Anglicans failing to agree, threefold: there were four parishes in Darlington but only three places allotted to the Church Party; there was a keen rivalry between Holy Trinity, the wealthiest and most powerful parish, and the other three, St. Cuthbert's, St. John's and St. Paul's; and there was a controversy as to whether it was desirable to have clergymen sitting on the School Board - there was a prejudice against them, and in the words of Middlesbrough's Edward Williams, himself a Liberal Churchman, a feeling that preacher and pulpit should be kept out of School Boards.²⁴

Trinity Church insisted that the three Church candidates should be chosen by a general meeting of the parishioners of all the four parishes; they were the strongest parish and felt they could dominate such a meeting.²⁵ For the same reason, the other three parishes said that this was not desirable: a general meeting would be too large for a reasonable consideration of the possible candidates, and a keen church might pack the meeting and get it to appoint three of its own members as the Church candidates for the whole town. Instead, they said that each parish should send representatives to a meeting which would chose the three candidates. When Trinity refused to accept this on 19th December, a meeting was held of the clergy and wardens of the four parishes, and the three parishes then considered allowing Trinity to select one candidate, and the other three parishes two, by their own separate methods, but Trinity turned down this idea. On 23rd December, a last attempt was made to reach agreement. A combined committee of

the three parishes (composed of 20 members each, in addition to their clergy and wardens) met at St. Cuthbert's Girl's School, while, at the same time, a committee from Trinity met at the Central Buildings Reading Room. The Combined Committee sent a deputation to the Trinity Committee to ask them to join in choosing the three candidates. Trinity Committee refused, and told them instead to make their choice of three candidates, which Trinity would afterwards consider whether or not to accept. The Combined Committee then chose as the Church candidates Rev. H.J. Stephens, Vicar of St. John's, H. J. Grieveson of Trinity Church and R. Luck of St. Cuthbert's. Trinity Committee accepted Stephens and Grieveson, but said they wanted their own Vicar, Rev. A. H. Hughes in place of Luck (thus giving them two candidates).²⁶ As the Combined Committee rejected this, the meeting broke up without agreement. There followed several days of mudslinging and bitter personal antagonism and bickering, in a series of further meetings and correspondence in the local press. In one such letter, Stephens claimed that he had been publicly insulted by Grieveson several months previously, and since then, Grieveson had cut him dead. Further negotiations came to nothing, as when the Combined Committee offered to withdraw Stephens if Trinity withdrew Hughes, or to drop Grieveson.²⁷

Meanwhile the Undenominationalists were keeping to their part of the pact, and were able to agree on their candidates: the Quakers chose Dale and Arthur Pease; the Wesleyans, Bowman; the United and Primitive Methodists, Teasdale; and a workingmen's meeting chose Kane. But when it was obvious that the Church would exceed their three candidates, a large number of other candidates also decided to stand, especially from the Free Churches who had resented being allocated only one candidate. By 3rd January, the number of candidates had risen to 23. It was obvious that the election was turning into a sectarian squabble. A leader in the Liberal "Northern Echo" denounced this, and urged a peaceful settlement before polling date: "All this division of candidates into representatives of religious denominations is not in every instance the work of the candidates themselves, but is accomplished apparently by a natural process by their partisans amongst

the various religious bodies to which they belong. It should, however, be constantly borne in mind that the duty of a member of a School Board is not to conserve the interests of any particular sect, but to carry out the provisions of the Education Act".²⁸

An attempt to get a peaceful settlement was once again made on 4th January. A public meeting at the Central Hall was called to try to persuade all but nine candidates to withdraw. Several candidates said they would obey a vote of those present on the best nine candidates. Such a vote was taken:

First nine:

D. Dale	264	votes
A. Pease	208	"
J. Kane	181	"
H. Teasdale	166	"
H. Pease	156	"
J. H. Bowman	137	"
H. J. Grieveson	106	"
Rev. A. H. Hughes	99	"
J. Morrell	87	"

Others:

J. Dresser	88	"
Rev. H. Coll	75	"
J. F. Clapham	54	"
H. Penry	45	"
W. C. Parker	42	"
R. Luck	38	"
Rev. W. H. G. Stephens	38	"
W. Mossom	34	"
W. Forster	32	"
J. Mackay	22	"
W. S. Shewell	10	"
J. G. Grace	5	"

The Nonconformists supported the validity of the vote, saying that

it was held at an official meeting presided over by the Mayor. But many of the Church party refused to take any notice of it. Rev. W. H. G. Stephens called it a "Christmas Pantomime where there was plenty of gestures, and the best joke of the season could be enjoyed". He said that it had been arranged by the Nonconformists to support their own cause, and he now came out on the principle that arranging pacts to avoid contests was denying freedom of choice for the ratepayers. On the other hand, Grieveson, a Church candidate, who had been one of the top nine in the vote of the meeting, said that the arrangement had been quite fair.²⁹

By 6th January, several candidates having withdrawn because of the Central Hall meeting, the number still standing had been reduced to 12; there was thus once more a possibility of a peaceful settlement. A Nonconformist committee had tried to make the decision of the meeting generally acceptable by asking Morrell who had been ninth on the list to stand down in order to allow Rev. H. Coll, the only Roman Catholic candidate, to become one of the top nine - they had believed that not only would this make for fairer representation, but also Coll would have been certain of getting elected in any case due to the effect of the cumulative vote - but he had refused. However, Arthur Pease, * although he had been second top at the vote, with becoming Quaker modesty had stepped down to allow Coll a place.³⁰ This had made the proposed representation: 5 Nonconformists, 3 Churchmen and 1 Roman Catholic (which was considered fair, as these bodies had provided approximately the same proportion of the town's school accommodation: Nonconformists 2,520 places; Church of England 1,480 places; Catholics 698 places). Only two Churchmen (Stephens and Luck) and one Quaker Independent (Parker) were still now forcing a contest.

The School Board election resulted in the same representation as the Central Hall Meeting pact had provided for (5 Nonconformists, 3 Churchmen and 1 Roman Catholic) and a very similar one to the original pact of December.³⁰

* Mayor of Darlington 1873-4 and Liberal Unionist M.P. for Darlington 1895-8.

Elected:

Rev. H. Coll	Roman Catholic (Liberal)	4,185 votes
W. C. Parker	Quaker (Liberal)	2,878 "
D. Dale	Quaker (Liberal)	2,754 "
H. J. Grieveson	Church (Conservative)	2,655 "
Rev. W.H.G. Stephens	Church (Conservative)	2,619 "
H. Pease	Quaker (Liberal)	2,594 "
J. Morrell	Independent Undenominational (Lib).	2,371 "
J. H. Bowman	Wesleyan (Liberal Conservative)	2,282 "
Rev. A.H. Hughes	Church (Conservative)	2,282 "

Not elected:

R. Teasdale	United Methodist (Liberal)	2,186 "
J. Kane	Independent (Working Men)	1,971 "
R. Luck	Church (Conservative)	814 "

In the 1874 election, the Church party was prepared to reach an agreement with the other parties, and accepted the number of places they had won in the 1871 election.³¹ But again the Anglicans could not agree as to who was to represent them. This time it was St. Cuthbert's Church which would not co-operate, nominating three candidates from their own parish.³² The other parishes wanted only one candidate to be from St. Cuthbert's, and asked two of St. Cuthbert's candidates (J. G. Grace and R. Luck) to retire, but they refused, and, as a result, 5 Church candidates stood with the 1 Catholic and 5 Nonconformists, and a contest was forced. The Liberal "Northern Echo" denounced this contest as being the result of "the perversions of an unconsiderable number of ambitious individuals whose aspirations are ridiculously out of all proportion to their real strength". In the election, only three Churchmen again were returned (Luck was elected, but Grace and Hutchinson were rejected). The result, however, brought one shock to the Liberals: apathy had caused a big drop in the Liberal vote, and, as a result, the five Liberal candidates, although returned, received less votes than the four successful Denominationalist candidates.³³ The lesson was clear:

had the Denominationalists been as united as the Unsectarians, they would have won control, for their members had been far less apathetic.

Total votes in Darlington School Board
Elections

	<u>1871</u>	<u>1874</u>	<u>Decrease</u>
Liberals	14,895	12,454	2,441
Church	8,657	8,506	151
Catholic	<u>4,841</u>	<u>4,101</u>	<u>740</u>
	<u>28,393</u>	<u>25,061</u>	<u>3,332</u>

The 1877 election at Darlington was almost a repetition of that of 1874. Again, the official Church party agreed to having only three members on the School Board, to the applause of the "Northern Echo" which said: "Whatever advantage may arise from a contest when a question at issue is one of principle, there is no counterbalancing advantage of a contest which is purely personal"³⁴. But again, some Church candidates, in addition to the official three ones, stood. Rev. Hughes one of the official candidates, retired in favour of Luck, one of the unofficial ones, but the other two unofficial candidates insisted on forcing a contest by continuing to stand. Again, the Catholics and Nonconformists only put up the agreed number of candidates, and again, the election resulted in no change in the number of places each party had on the School Board.

In 1880, the number of places on the School Board was increased from nine to eleven. In order to avoid a contested election, the Nonconformists offered the Church party one of the two extra places, but the Church party insisted on putting forward two extra candidates, one a Denominationalist and one an Independent, and thus forced a contest.³⁵ The result proved similar to those of the previous elections: 6 Unsectarians, 4 Churchmen and 1 Catholic. The Church Party, by its manoeuvring, had only achieved losing the seat of their most representative candidate: the Vicar of Darlington.

In 1883, the Church party decided against any peaceful settlement based on the status quo, and it made a determined effort to win a majority on the School Board. It collected a large amount of money for election expenses beforehand.³⁶ The Liberal press denounced this as selfish: there was no principle in dispute, about religion in Board schools, or about the way the Board schools were run; the Church party was merely making vague charges of lack of economy which were meaningless because, counting the working man's candidate, there was a majority on the old Board pledged to keep the rates low: if the Church party had really been serious in desiring economy it would not have forced the expense of a contested election. The Liberal "Darlington and Stockton Times" went on to say that the contest was pointless, as, on past performance, the Church party could not hope to gain a majority. Eventually, it only put up 4 candidates, but the Catholics by this time had decided to increase their representation, and put forward 2 candidates, thus forcing an election.³⁷ But the poll result vindicated the Denominationalists' action, for they won a majority on the School Board: 2 Catholics, 4 Churchmen and 5 Unsectarians were elected. The Catholic candidates had attracted more voters than there were Catholics on the registers, and so obviously several Church people had voted Catholic, in spite of Church candidate Reed's declamation against such "an unholy union".

In the 1886 election, it was naturally the Unsectarians who would not accept the idea of a settlement on the basis of the status quo and forced a contest, while the Denominationalists only put up enough candidates to retain their majority, who were all elected. However, in 1888, the Unsectarians were resigned to being in opposition, and, although 20 candidates originally were nominated, 9 withdrew, and a peaceful settlement was possible. The Unsectarians put forward only 5 candidates, including J. Todd, Chairman of the Darlington Co-operative Society, nominated by Darlington Trades Council, as a Working Class candidate. This avoided a contest.³⁸ By this time, the members of the School Board were in general agreement on policy: "So much so, that the minority representing the Nonconformist and secular section of the community, has

been able to give cordial assent and willing assistance" declared the "Darlington and Stockton Times" in 1891.³⁹ But the Unsectarians did force contests in 1891 and 1894; the latter was caused by the Unsectarians not being able to agree among themselves, the Wesleyans insisting on being represented on the School Board. Had the official Unsectarian party chosen a Wesleyan as one of its candidates, there would have been no contest. In 1897, the Unsectarians decided not to force a contest, which was thus avoided. But in 1900, the election was again contested because the Unsectarian party could not agree as to who should represent it. It selected 5 candidates, but ignored the Wesleyan who had been a member of the late Board, and so the Wesleyans put forward a candidate of their own. There was no dispute over policy at the beginning of the campaign, but once it was obvious that a contest could not be avoided, the Unsectarian party suddenly decided that a new Board school was necessary at Bank Top. (It had not demanded one there previously, and there was already a voluntary school at Bank Top with sufficient accommodation and a Board school nearby). The election, however, made no change in the composition of the Board.⁴⁰

The other School Boards follow a similar pattern of attempts to avoid contests, and many failures to do so. The only difference was that in the case of the small school districts, where there were fewer board places to fill, and fewer candidates, it was easier to reach agreements to avoid contests.

<u>School Boards</u>	<u>No. of Disputed elections.</u>	<u>No. of undisputed elections.</u>
Middlesbrough	10	1
Stockton	10	1
Darlington	9	2
Middleton-in-Teesdale	6	2
Middleton St. George	4	3
Norton	7	4
Whitton	7	4
Wolviston	4	6
Cowpen Bewley	1	3

One technical factor that sometimes upset calculations about making

or avoiding a contest, was that of securing valid nominations by the last date allowable before the poll. In 1878, Wolviston avoided a contested election mainly because the four candidates who were opposing the Board members who were standing for re-election, had failed to fill in their nomination papers properly, which rendered them invalid.⁴¹ On the other hand, sometimes unwanted nominations were handed in. In the 1877 election at Darlington, there were many complaints of persons nominating individuals without consulting them. On 23rd December 1876, Richard Willan wrote a letter to the press saying that he had been nominated as a Church candidate and had no intention of standing. Four days later, "Pater Familias" complained that three ladies had been nominated without their consent or knowledge: "Each of these ladies is thus innocently made to incur the odium of causing an unnecessary contest in the town, unless they personally attend at the Returning Officer's office and withdraw their names". In total, there were six persons nominated without their consent in that one election, and there was a real danger that someone might be nominated without knowing it and be too late to withdraw, thus unwittingly causing a contest that the parties might have agreed to avoid.⁴² In the Stockton election of 1870, one candidate left it too late to retire, and so his name appeared on the ballot paper, and, in spite of the fact that he had published that he was not standing, he attracted 11 votes.⁴³ Indeed, there were suspicions that the nominating of unwilling persons was a deliberate attempt to sabotage attempts of the parties to avoid contests.

2. Replacement of Retiring Members

When a sitting member of a School Board died, resigned, or was rendered ineligible to sit by bankruptcy, committing a crime, or not attending meetings for six months without a reasonable excuse, and unless the next election was due within a few months, the School Board was required to fill the vacancy by itself electing a successor. This procedure was not always considered right: Norton School Board on one occasion petitioned the Education Department that a vacancy should be filled by election by the ratepayers, as in town council elections. All the School Boards in the area had vacancies created in such a way at some time. On occasions, the members were only temporarily ineligible, and were soon returned to the Board: when Wilson and Gilkes,

partners of an Ironworks, became bankrupt in 1879 and had to vacate their seats on Middlesbrough School Board, they were re-elected a month later, as their affairs had by then been put in order. ⁴⁴

There were two principles on which the successor could be fairly selected: that the proposed successor represented the same interests as the member who had just retired; or that he had stood at the last election and had attracted the most votes of the unsuccessful candidates. In some cases selection according to both principles returned the same person, as, for example, when T. French was chosen to replace J.G. Blumer, an Unsectarian member of Darlington School Board in 1887; French had polled only 50 less votes than the lowest successful candidate at the previous election, easily coming top of the list of unsuccessful ones, and had also stood as an Unsectarian. ⁴⁵

Most School Boards selected persons to replace retiring members on the principle that they represented the same interest. There is no case of any School Board of the area whose majority party deliberately used their majority to elect one of their own party to replace a member who had supported another party. Thus Darlington School Board, in their 1878 Annual Report, said that in filling vacancies the Board was guided by the belief that the fair and right course was to choose gentlemen who held substantially the same views as those who had retired, and when Rev. C. D. Turnelli (Roman Catholic) and R. Luck (Church) retired, they choose Rev. P.P. Wade (Roman Catholic) and Edward Hutchinson (Church) to replace them. ⁴⁶ In the latter choice, they selected the person who had attracted the most votes of all the unsuccessful Church candidates at the previous election. Rev. Wade had not stood at the last election. This policy was carried out in all the later replacements of members of Darlington School Board, whichever party was in control. Sometimes they tried to make the replacement even more suitable than merely appointing someone who held the same party allegiance. In 1900, when Miss Fry, the only lady member of the Board, resigned, she was replaced, not merely by another Unsectarian, but also by another lady, Mrs. Marshall, who had never previously contested an election. ⁴⁷ Only once was there an attempt to break with this principle: in 1880,

Unsectarian T. Fry retired on becoming M.P. for Darlington, and the Unsectarian majority party proposed another Unsectarian (J. Williamson) to replace him, but the Church party opposed him and instead proposed Rev. T. Hodgson, Vicar of Darlington, on the grounds that he had come top of the poll of unsuccessful candidates at the previous election. This was defeated by 5 Unsectarian votes to 4 Church votes. The Church party then proposed the Independent candidate at the previous election who had come second to Hodgson, but again were defeated.⁴⁸

The other School Boards followed a similar policy. In 1899, when F. Sanderson, Unsectarian member of Stockton School Board, died, the majority Denominationalist party agreed to accept the nomination of the five Unsectarian members, even before they had considered whom to propose.⁴⁹ The Amalgamated Society of Engineers and Stockton Trades Council asked the School Board to accept E. Edwards, an Independent, for the vacancy, on the grounds that he had come top of the unsuccessful candidates at the last election. However the Unsectarian party ignored these requests of the Labour interests of the town, and nominated Thomas Braithwaite, who had polled 443 fewer votes than Edwards at the election. When Roman Catholic priests resigned in Middlesbrough School Board, they were always replaced by other Catholic priests, except on one occasion when a Catholic doctor was chosen; often an Anglican or Nonconformist clergyman was chosen to replace a retiring clergyman member, in many cases ignoring candidates of their own party who had stood at the previous elections.⁵⁰ In nearly every case, the elections of replacements to retiring members were unanimous.

Most School Boards replaced retiring members by persons of the same party, although Whitton usually chose the person who had attracted the most votes of the unsuccessful candidates at the last elections, although on two occasions when the local Anglican priest retired and they chose Anglican priests to replace them.⁵¹ In the smallest districts, such as Wolviston, neither principle seemed to be much followed, as religious allegiance was considered largely irrelevant, and there seemed to be a general consensus of opinion as to who was the most suitable successor; thus, ^{when} the Chairman W.J. Young, Denominationalist 'Gentleman' died in 1886, the School Board elected R. Noddings, Undenominationalist farmer to replace him, and soon

afterwards made him vice-chairman. Noddings had not stood at the previous two elections, although he had been a member of the Board 1875-81.⁵¹ So also did Norton School Board often ignore the unsuccessful candidates at previous elections when choosing replacements, and even the religion of the person replacing a member: when J. Lumley, Churchman, was declared ineligible for not attending board meetings for six months, the all Anglican School Board chose William Fothergill, a Nonconformist, to replace him; Fothergill had not stood at the previous election, which had been uncontested.⁵³

Thus, in general, the School Boards replaced their retiring members on the basis of their party, or, occasionally, on the basis of the next in order of the poll at the previous election. But this was most apparent in the larger towns, and least apparent in the small rural areas where often the choice was purely pragmatic: who was the best candidate for the job, an approach which was only really practicable in a small place where every prominent person was well known personally.

3. The Cumulative Vote

The School Board elections differed from most other elections in two respects: the female voter and the cumulative vote. Allowing female rate-payers to vote was not seriously criticised, and its effect was not very noticeable in the area. Stockton and Darlington were the only two School Boards in the district to have lady members: Stockton had Miss Findlay (1891-4) and Mrs. Baker (1900-4); Darlington elected Mrs. Pease (1883-6), Miss Fry (1891-1900), Miss Lucas (1894-7) and Mrs. Marshall (1901-2). But occasional gibes were thrown in their direction. In the 1880 Darlington election, a "Darlington and Stockton Times" reporter told two stories "for the benefit of those who wish for arguments in favour of removing electoral disabilities from women". One was about a lady voter who had been determined to return Rev. Hughes, who was not a candidate at that election, and had written his name on the ballot paper, saying he should have been nominated; the other was about a lady who had been so afraid to open the ballot paper that she had returned it with the names written on the back.⁵⁴

However, the cumulative system of voting, which was an electoral innovation, did arouse serious controversy. Its aim was to enable minority interests to gain representation on the School Boards, but its introduction

was an invitation to parties to try to manipulate the ballot by somewhat devious electoral tactics.

Under the system of voting established by clause 29 of the Elementary Education Act 1870 for electing School Boards, each ratepayer or burgess was allowed to vote (lodgers, who could vote in Parliamentary elections, were not allowed to vote for School Boards)⁵⁵ and they had as many votes as there were places on the School Board. They could use the vote as they liked: either "plumping" all their votes on one candidate, or distributing them more evenly among several candidates.

There was much opposition to this system of voting, especially from Liberals. At a Liberal meeting in Barnard Castle in 1874, the two Liberal M.P's for South Durham, questioned as to their opinion of the cumulative vote, both said that they disapproved of such fancy franchises,⁵⁶ while the "Northern Echo" in 1871 forcefully argued against the system. It said that, except that it would enable Roman Catholics to get representation, who they felt had a right to be represented, the cumulative voting system had been found to be very unsatisfactory. The system encouraged sectarianism; instead of a fair representation by ordinary voting, when the will of the majority would have prevailed, sectarian minorities were aroused and could get their representatives on the Boards, which then became merely a collection of factions.⁵⁷

Another criticism of this system of voting was that it made elections more of a gamble, with results becoming very unpredictable, and encouraging a lot of tactical manoeuvres of voting by the parties who wanted to make the best possible use of their votes. Many "plumpers" would delay voting to see how they could best serve their party: they would wait until a short time before the close of the poll, in order to see which of their candidates was safe and whom they could best help by plumping all their votes on them.⁵⁸

It was the Church party who first used these tactics to a large extent on Tees-side. In the 1870 elections in Middlesbrough and Stockton, they put up the minimum number of candidates that would serve their purpose, and plumped their votes on them. At 3 o'clock in the Middlesbrough election, the Church party felt that one of their candidates, Haigh, was safe, but that another, Hopkins, was in danger, so they ordered their voters to switch

to Hopkins, and thus secured the return of both. By this, they did far better than had been expected, and, in spite of the weakness of the Church in Middlesbrough, managed to get all their four candidates elected.⁵⁹ In Stockton, the Church party won a majority while the unsectarians frittered away many of their votes by putting up too many candidates.

However, such manoeuvring of votes could be dangerous. In Stockton's 1873 election, the Trades Council were so confident that their Working Class candidate would attract all the working class votes and so come top of the poll, that they advised some of their supporters to vote for the other Liberal candidates: the result was that their candidate was the only one to be defeated.⁶⁰ In Darlington's 1880 election, the Church party made a similar tactical error. Early in the afternoon they believed that Rev. Hodgson, Rev. Davies and Mr. Mountford had enough votes to secure their election, and so all Church voters were instructed to divide their votes between the other two Church candidates, Mr. Grace and Mr. Reed. As a result of this "rather too great acuteness of the wirepullers", the Church party lost their most representative candidate, Hodgson, Vicar of Darlington, who failed to get elected by 53 votes.⁶¹ Cumulative vote electioneering became very similar to speculation on the Stock Exchange.

The Liberals learned from their mistakes during the 1870-1 elections. In the Darlington election of 1874, they tried to prevent any such accidents of the cumulative vote system: before the poll, their five candidates published their advice as to how their supporters should use their 9 votes:⁶²

<u>Wards</u>	<u>Dale</u>	<u>Fry</u>	<u>Kane</u>	<u>Morrell</u>	<u>Parker</u>
North	2	2	2	2	1
Central	2	2	2	1	2
South	2	2	1	2	2
East	2	1	2	2	2
West & North West	1	2	2	2	2
Total	9	9	9	9	9

As a result the Liberal vote was used to the best advantage: the difference between the number of votes their top candidate and their bottom candidate won was less than with the other two parties (Liberal candidates received

between 2882 and 1951 votes; the Denominationalists between 4101 and 52 votes). In this way they secured the return of a majority of Liberals on a minority of votes (even ignoring the two unsuccessful Church candidates, the five successful Liberals received fewer votes than the four successful Denominationalists). The Denominationalists later recovered and proved themselves superior in organising the voting than the Liberals: in the 1900 Darlington election, they were able to achieve a far more even spread of votes (the difference between the highest and lowest number of votes for the candidates of each party were: Catholics 69; Church 422; Unsectarians 2114). They thus got all their candidates elected.⁶⁴

That the cumulative vote "falsified" public opinion, was generally accepted. How much it did so, was shown by analyses of the voting at the elections, comparing the number of cumulative votes for each candidate with the number of persons who had voted for him. In the 1877 Darlington election, for example, although no candidate who won a place on the cumulative vote would have actually lost had the electors only been able to give one vote to each candidate, the relative order of the successful candidates would have been very different.*⁶⁵

Order of candidates:

<u>Under the cumulative vote</u>	<u>Under a system of one vote for each candidate</u>	
1 Rev. Turnelli (Roman Catholic)	3913 votes	Dale 1223 votes
2 Rev. King (Church)	3275 "	Fry 1160 "
3 W.A. Wooler (Church)	2582 "	Brooks 1080 "
4 D. Dale (Unsectarian)	2385 "	Blumer 998 "
5 H. Brooks (Unsectarian)	2361 "	Parker 995 "
6 T. Fry (Unsectarian)	2334 "	King 789 "
7 J.G. Blumer (Unsectarian)	2047 "	Wooler 682 "
8 W.C. Parker (Unsectarian)	1852 "	Luck 609 "
9 R. Luck (Church)	1705 "	Turnelli 530 "
not elected: E. Hutchinson (Church)	1397 votes	Hutchinson 444 votes
J.G. Grace (Church)	309 "	Grace 107 "

* This slightly exaggerates, as some Church plumpers would have voted for more of the Church candidates, had they not been allowed to put several votes on single candidates.

In the 1886 Darlington election, however, Rev. W.A. Rigby, who came 5th in the cumulative vote, would have come 12th and lost his place, had the electors been allowed only one vote per candidate, and then the Denominationalists would have lost their majority on the Board.⁶⁶

The most obvious beneficiaries of such a system of voting were minority groups who were well organised and very loyal: in a town as Darlington, the Roman Catholics. In the 1887 election, their candidate came top of the poll under the cumulative system, but would have been bottom of the poll of the successful candidates under a system of one vote for each candidate. The same situation occurred in other elections, such as Darlington's 1874 election, when Catholic Father Coll easily came top of the poll (4101 votes to his nearest rival's 2882), but would have come bottom of the successful candidates if his supporters had each been able to give him only one vote. "Plumping" of all votes on a single candidate was clearly a vital factor in election tactics, and the Denominationalist candidates, able to draw upon closer loyalties, attracted more of these than their rivals. In the 1877 Darlington election, the candidates attracted the following number of "plumping" voters:⁶⁵

Rev. C.D. Turnelli	Roman Catholicis	394
Rev. J. King	Church	173
W.A. Wooler	Church	97
E. Hutchinson	Church	40
R. Luck	Church	31
H. Brooks	Unsectarian	27
J.G. Blumer	Unsectarian	21
T. Fry	Unsectarian	21
W.C. Parker	Unsectarian	14
J.G. Grace	Church	13
D. Dale	Unsectarian	6

It can be clearly seen from this, that the main "plumpers" were the Roman Catholics (although Turnelli attracted 136 voters who split their votes, as well as his 394 "plumpers"); with the Church coming second. The only Denominationalist candidate who in this election attracted few "plumpers" was Grace, but he attracted few votes anyway, and failed to win

election. This fact, which was repeated in the elections of other School Boards, tended to irritate some ratepayers, especially if their candidates suffered from it. After the 1873 Stockton election campaign, "A Lover of Truth" wrote a letter to the "Northern Echo", after being annoyed by Rev. Carlile (the Roman Catholic candidate, who had come top of the poll) who had issued a bill thanking the burgesses of Stockton for allowing the Denominationalists to triumph over the secularists. The writer pointed out that the analysis of the returns had shown that had the cumulative voting system not operated, the Roman Catholic candidate would have attracted only 755 votes, compared to the unsuccessful Unsectarian candidate's 797 votes, and so the Catholic would not have been elected and the Denominationalists would not have had a majority on the School Board. Carlile's "triumph" was the result of the fact that 429 of his 755 voters had plumped all their seven votes for him.⁶⁷

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CHAPTER III: Politics

1. School Board Party

There were two main parties in School Board politics: the School Board party, constituting the "left wing", and the Denominationalists, the "right wing", although, as is shown below, the elections and debates of the School Boards were not clean conflicts between two clearly defined parties: many Independents stood, and even members who did represent certain parties did not always press for a complete implementation of all their parties' principles carried out to their logical conclusion; they tended to be more pragmatic in their approach, and rather showed a left or right wing attitude to problems, than insisting on a doctrinaire solution based upon logical principles. In addition, the two sides were not really organised parties, but rather loose associations of groups holding similar views.

The party which was the more enthusiastic on the work of the School Boards and Board schools, was known by various names: School Board Party, Liberals, Undenominationalists and Unsectarians. In 1870, the most organised part of this party was the National Education League. The League had been founded at Birmingham in 1869, to press for universal, compulsory, free and unsectarian education, supported by the rates and managed by public control, while the 1870 Elementary Education Bill was being debated. It had several local branches in the Tees-side towns, and several meetings were held by them in 1869 and 1870 in such places as Stockton and Middlesbrough.

Edward Williams, President of the Middlesbrough branch of the National Education League, and T.H. Bell, Vice-President, were to become important members of Middlesbrough School Board after its establishment. (Williams was Vice-Chairman of the School Board 1870-85, and Bell Chairman 1885-97).¹ Before the 1870 School Board election, the Middlesbrough branch of the National Education League, which was sponsoring five candidates, published its chief principles of policy:³

1. Local authorities should be compelled to see that sufficient school accommodation be provided for each child in the area;

2. Elementary schools should be built and maintained out of local rates and government grants;
3. All rate-aided schools should be managed by local authorities;
4. Rate-aided schools should be unsectarian;
5. Rate-aided schools should be free;
6. Attendance at school should be compulsory.

It declared that its leading principles had been put into the 1870 Act, but it also claimed that its policy had been unfairly presented by the Denominationalists:

"The opponents of the League have loudly maintained that its promoters made a special point of excluding the reading of the Bible from rate-aided schools and that they wished to sweep away the present Denominational schools. Both these assertions are simply untrue. The League has always consistently urged that the reading of the Bible should be permitted in rate-aided schools, but it has resolutely opposed the teaching of any creed, catechism or dogma in all these schools..... The League has never proposed to interfere with existing Denominational schools but simply to promote the establishment of additional schools for those children who are at present growing up in most abject ignorance - a disgrace to the state and a danger to the community"

The League's principles were largely supported by the Nonconformists and also by working class organisations such as the Trades Councils. Even some Anglicans were prepared to support them against the Denominationalist party - for example, Edward Williams, President of the Middlesbrough branch, was a keen member of the Church of England.

The principles of the League did not commit its supporters to a rigid detailed programme; indeed, its policy was rather vague on certain controversial points. An example of this, was what was meant by its insistence on "unsectarian instruction": was undenominational Religious Instruction permissible? or should there be no instruction at all, and merely the reading of the Bible without comment? Both the Denominationalists and Undenominationalists were divided over this, and Religious Instruction was not made an issue in any of the elections in Middlesbrough or North Tees-side, partly because none of the parties took up an extreme

position with respect to it (their members would not have been able to agree on any such policy), and partly because no-one wanted such a potentially bitter sectarian issue to be raised, which might irrevocably divide the Boards and the electors. The School Boards tended to keep the issue uncontroversial and were ready to compromise over it to damp down emotions.

The Undenominationalists were divided between those who wanted undenominational instruction in the Board schools and those who preferred religion to be completely left to the home and the church. At a meeting of the Unsectarians at Stockton in Novemebr 1870, the speakers showed various attitudes to Religious Instruction in Board schools. One observer commented that while the lay candidates were for the Bible being read in the schools, the Dissenting ministers (Revs. G. Allen, J.T. Malyan and W. Elliott) were for its total exclusion.⁴ In the Middlesbrough election at the same time, the Wesleyan candidate, J. Hunter, argued against day school time being taken up with Religious Instruction: it should be left to the home, and only Bible reading be done at school.⁵ At Darlington, the two extreme wings of the two parties united over this issue against the centre group of both parties: the National Education League members united with the strong Denominationalists in opposing the colourless Religious Instruction of the Copper-Temple Clause.⁶ Dale (Quaker Liberal) declared that he preferred that no Religious Instruction be taught, and instead that facilities be given to allow the schools to be used by priests and ministers for Religious Instruction out of school hours. (This had been suggested a few years before by the Liberal "Northern Echo" as a basis of settlement for Religious Instruction, to avoid bitter controversy).⁷ Blumer (Unitarian Liberal) argued that undenominational Religious Instruction was logically impossible: the New Testament could only be taught from either a Unitarian or Trinitarian position; it was no use saying that limiting instruction to explanations of the Bible made it undenominational, as the Bible was the source of all sectarian difference. They were backed by the Roman Catholic member who believed that the only true religion was denominational religion. They were thus able to defeat by 5 votes to 3 a proposal in 1877 for the

adoption of the London School Board syllabus of undenominational Religious Instruction for all the Board Schools. The motion had been proposed by Rev. J. King (Church Independent) and W.A. Wooler (Church Conservative). Wooler argued that if they only gave the proposal a trial, they would find that there was little religious difficulty in practice: of the large number of children under the London School Board, only 129 had been withdrawn from Religious Instruction. In 1872, Rev. A.H. Hughes (Church Conservative) and W.C. Parker (Quaker Liberal) proposed and got passed a motion for Bible reading and undenominational Religious Instruction in Board schools, and defeated an amendment by D. Dale (Quaker Liberal) and J.H. Bowman (Wesleyan Liberal-Conservative) that, while recognising the importance of Religious Instruction for children "it would be oppressive to the consciences of many ratepayers and consequently inexpedient that such Religious Instruction should be given by the masters or mistresses of its schools at public expense", and that it would be "best not to make any provision in its regulations for such teaching". The voting on this shows how this issue cut across party lines:

for undenominational Religious Instruction: Rev. Hughes (Church)
 Rev. Stephens (Church), H.J. Grieveson (Church), W.C. Parker (Quaker);
 against Instruction: Dale (Quaker), Bowman (Wesleyan), Morrell
 (Nonconformist).

abstentions: Pease (Quaker), Coll (Roman Catholic).⁸

By 1880, however, at Darlington, the issue had fallen more into party groupings: a proposal to use a hymn book written by a Board school headmaster in the Board schools was carried with all the Unsectarian members voting for it, all the Church members voting against it, and the Catholic member abstaining.⁹

A policy on which the School Board party were more united was that of opposing help to voluntary schools from the rates. The main way of helping them was by generously paying the fees of poor children attending denominational schools, thus subsidizing them out of the rates. But even on this issue, the party was torn apart by a conflict between

two of its principles: that of giving no rate aid to denominational schools on the one hand, and, on the other hand, that of helping the education of the poor and allowing parents freedom of choice of schools for their children. As a result, members of the School Board party varied in their attitude towards payment of school fees, until the controversy was removed by the 1876 Act which transferred payment from the School Boards to the Poor Law Guardians.

Where the School Boards did pay the fees of poor children attending denominational schools, the extreme Undenominationalists made repeated attacks on this, attempting to end it, or at least, to register their disapproval. In 1873, when the Nonconformists of Stockton School Board proposed a resolution to discontinue payment of fees to denominational schools, they were defeated by the casting vote of the chairman: Stothart (Presbyterian), Sanderson (Wesleyan), and Dodshon (Quaker) supported the motion; Newby (Church, chairman), Trotter (Church) and Carlile (Roman Catholic) opposed it. Carlile said that the Board had no right to interfere with the parents' choice of school, and that the ratepayers had spoken very decisively on that point by recently voting in a Denominationalist majority.¹⁰ When J. Dodds, Stockton's Liberal M.P., sent Stockton School Board a letter offering to pay the fees of poor children himself, in order to prevent rate money being spent on denominational schools, the School Board rejected the offer by 3 Nonconformist votes to 4 Church and Roman Catholic ones. The Nonconformists argued that the offer would do away with the conscientious objection that many people had to paying the fees through their rates, and that Darlington and Thornaby had accepted a similar offer. The Denominationalists argued that the offer was unnecessary, and it was undesirable to call upon a private gentleman to provide what an Act of Parliament had decided should be provided out of the rates; the offer was an attempt to obtain from the School Board a verdict against the 25th Clause of the Elementary Education Act of 1870, which was one of the safeguards of the poor and should be upheld.¹¹ Norton School Board which had a Denominationalist majority refused to commit themselves, when given the same offer by Dodds, by replying that it was unnecessary as there were no denominational schools within their

district.¹²

In Middlesbrough, however, this issue did not result in such a clearly cut party conflict. The School Board in its bye-laws provided for the payment of fees to denominational schools, and when Edward Williams moved "that it is inexpedient to pay fees for children in private and denominational schools and that no such fees be paid in future so long as there are Board schools not full", he was defeated.¹³ The voting shows that the parties were divided over this, three Liberals voting for the payment of fees to denominational schools, and two Church of England members voting for no payment:

for the motion:

Williams Liberal (Anglican)

Head Liberal (Anglican)

Elgee Liberal

Calvert Liberal (Nonconformist)

against the motion:

Wilson Liberal (Anglican)

Smith Conservative (Anglican)

Lacy Independent (Roman Catholic)

Brentnall Liberal (Wesleyan)

Fallows Liberal (Unitarian)

Darlington School Board, typically, was able to reach a settlement which satisfied the maximum number of members of all parties, through the generosity of its great Quaker families. Several members felt quite strongly about this issue. In July and November 1871, the School Board seriously debated whether or not to pay fees to denominational schools. A proposal that fees up to the value of the maximum Board school fee (4d a week) should be paid for poor children attending denominational schools was passed (Bowman, Wesleyan; Hughes, Church; Dale, Quaker; and Parker, Quaker, voting for it); but it was opposed both by an Undenominationalist, Morrell, who insisted that fees be only paid for pupils attending Board or unsectarian schools, and a Churchman (Grieveson) and Catholic (Coll), who wanted no limit to be placed on the amount of fees to be paid. In November, Morrell violently objected to any payment to denominational teaching, threatening to go to prison rather than pay rates for such a purpose: "It would be the cry of the Nonconformists throughout the country if this were to be done. There would be a determination to refuse.....for his part, he would not pay the rate, no matter what the consequences". A fortnight later, the extent of the feeling in the town

concerning this issue was shown when two petitions were handed to the School Board: one, signed by 1100 ratepayers, asked the Board to rescind its resolution in favour of payment of fees to denominational schools; the other, signed by 512 ratepayers, supported the payment of fees. Deputations to present these petitions attended the School Board meeting on 7th December 1871. The former petition said that "denominational schools confessedly exist mainly for denominational purposes. All funds passing into their exchequer necessarily increase their efficiency for those purposes; the fees furnish a powerful instrument for the proselytism and for the diffusion of denominational peculiarities in as much as they enable the managers of the schools to carry on with fewer subscriptions and with less voluntary effort..... We regard the system as oppressive to the conscience of ratepayers who are hereby required to contribute to the teaching of dogmas with which they entirely disagree..... We believe the Act leaves it optional to School Boards to pay these fees or not, and that the Education Department have admitted this view by endorsing bye-laws of several Boards which have declined to pay such fees....." The counter-petitioners said that they did not believe that the resolution condemning the payment of fees at a ratepayers' meeting on the 24th November was in accordance with the wishes of the majority of the ratepayers. Fees and grants did not cover the cost of teaching in the schools, and left much to be met by voluntary subscriptions. "As you have adopted the compulsory clauses of the Education Act, we notice with pleasure you have reserved to the parents their inalienable right of selecting the school to which their children should be sent. We would observe that the religious liberty of the parents who may be too poor to pay for the education of their children would be as much infringed by a law compelling them to send their children to a school where no religion is taught as by one which forced their attendance at a school of a denomination to which they objected". They also made an appeal to the aim of keeping the rates as low as possible: if poor children could have attended only Board schools, it would have meant that the School Board would have had to erect costly new schools, despite the fact that there was an excess of school places for children in the town requiring education at that time: this would have

been intolerable to the ratepayers. ¹⁴

Because this issue created a danger of causing great sectarian bitterness in Darlington, David Dale and Henry Pease proposed that fees to denominational schools for poor children should in future be paid, not from the rates, but from a voluntary fund, and they pledged themselves to share any financial deficiency which the fund might incur, for the time being. This compromise was agreed to by a majority of the Board, which also rejected a counter-resolution by Bowman, Morrell and Parker that the bye-law authorising payment of fees to denominational schools be rescinded; a further resolution, proposed by Pease, Dale, Bowman and Parker, that the Education Department be informed of the arrangement "in the hope of allaying the irritation caused by the contemplated payment of fees to denominational schools as provided by section 25 of the Elementary Education Act 1870, and also in the confident expectation that certain impracticable sections of the present Act will be removed by the passing of an amendment act" was defeated. The arrangement lasted until 1877; when Pease withdrew from it in 1874, Theodore Fry, another wealthy Quaker, replaced him as joint guarantor of any deficiency. After 1877, it was left to the Poor Law Guardians to pay fees to denominational schools, under the 1876 Act. ¹⁴

But the 1876 Act which transferred payment of fees of poor children to denominational schools to the Poor Law Guardians, did not settle the problem completely and satisfy everyone. Both Denominationalists and some Liberals opposed the Act: the Denominationalists, because the payment of school fees now had a stigma of poverty, which might deter parents from applying for them, preferring to get remission of fees at a Board school than asking the Guardians to pay them at a voluntary school. Some Liberals disliked the fact that the Act now made payment of fees from the rates normal, and no longer dependent on the option of the School Boards. ¹⁵

When Northampton School Board asked Darlington School Board to support their petition to the Government for the repeal of the 1876 Act on the grounds that many poor people were reluctant to apply to the Guardians, and so were induced to change from voluntary to Board schools, where their

fees were remitted, only one Catholic member (Rev. Wade) and one Anglican (Rev. King) supported the petition, while three Unsectarians (Brooks, Blumer and Parker) and one Churchman (Wooler) opposed it. A few years later, the Denominationalist majority on the Darlington School Board passed a proposal to petition the Education Department for the re-enactment of Section 25 of the 1870 Act, 4 Churchmen and 2 Roman Catholics voting for the petition, and 3 Nonconformists opposing it.¹⁶

Other ways by which the School Boards could aid the voluntary schools also raised sectarian protests. For example, when in 1898 Stockton School Board allowed pupil teachers from voluntary schools to be taught at the School Board Pupil Teacher Centre, the Unsectarians protested: 4 Nonconformists (Ordish, Bainbridge, Sanderson and Hudson) voted against such help, but 4 Churchmen (Sharrock, Pickworth, Seaman and Wood) and 1 Roman Catholic (Carlile) voted for the help.¹⁷

In general, what divided the two parties most, was the keenness of the School Board Party to extend the activities of the School Boards as much as possible, even if it entailed increasing the rates. But even this was complicated by the fact that, in order to gain votes from the ratepayers, they also claimed to be just as efficient and economical as the Denominationalist party - indeed, when they were in opposition, they suggested that they be even more economical.

The School Board party did not trust the Denominationalists in control of School Boards. They feared that they would curtail the Boards' educational activities to favour the voluntary schools, and that they would try to influence the children in Board schools towards joining the Church of England, through the Religious Instruction there - indeed, Denominationalist boards did authorise syllabuses of Religious Instruction which were very Anglican in content, in some towns elsewhere in England.¹⁸ In the Middlesbrough election of 1876, E. Gilkes said that although he was a Quaker, he did not intend ^{to make} all children Quakers, but if the Church Party gained control of the School Board, they would try to make all children Anglican.¹⁹

There are numerous examples on all the School Boards of the School Board party proposing extentions of Board education in their districts,

and often, although by no means always, being opposed by the Denominationalists, usually on grounds of economy. The voting was sometimes confused by the fact that an Unsectarian also stood for economy and so opposed an expensive advance in education. The Denominationalists also opposed increases in the salaries of Board school teachers, or reductions in Board school fees because this would have increased the financial difficulties of the voluntary schools in trying to compete with them - although they sometimes used other arguments: when Parker, a Quaker, proposed that the fees at the new Brunswick Street School in Darlington in 1879 be less than at other Board schools, for the children of the working classes who could not afford the normal fees (it would make them feel more independent than if they had to ask for their fees to be remitted), Rev. King (Church) opposed it on the grounds that this would have turned them into charity or ragged schools, and this would not have been fair to the teachers.²⁰

When some ratepayers at Portrack sent a deputation to Stockton School Board in September 1898 asking for a Board school to be built there because all the nearby schools were overcrowded, the 4 Unsectarian members who voted that the deputation be heard were defeated by 4 Churchmen and 1 Roman Catholic member. Later, when the amount of land for the proposed new Portrack school was being purchased, the Church and Roman Catholic members successfully passed a motion to reduce the amount to be bought against the opposition of the Unsectarian members. When the Denominationalist majority had several times delayed accepting any tender to build the school, it was the Unsectarians who got a resolution passed (due to the absence of one Denominationalist member) finally to go ahead and accept a tender; the Church and Roman Catholic members opposing them.²¹ On a later occasion, when the question as to whether the School Board should make a payment towards the cost of a piano for one of their Infants' schools, 4 Unsectarians and 1 Independent voted for helping towards the cost, but 5 Churchmen, 2 Catholics and 1 Unsectarian against.²¹ Likewise, when the Unsectarians on Darlington School Board in 1895 proposed that the Board set up a committee to consider the sufficiency of

school accommodation in the Bank Top district, the majority of Churchmen and Catholics rejected this, as they naturally did a provocative motion of the Unsectarians that the School Board send the Government a petition that "in the interests of education and economy as well as justice and of religious freedom, it is desirable that the School Board system be extended throughout the country and no further contribution made from the public purse to denominational schools", and retaliated by themselves passing a resolution that the Government be petitioned to provide more money for both voluntary and Board schools. A few years previously, the same party line-up was shown in the voting over such questions as the setting up of a joint Industrial school with other Tees-side school boards (for setting up a school: 4 Unsectarians; against setting up a school: 2 Churchmen).²³ Likewise, it was usually the Liberals who were the keenest on getting higher standards of exemption from compulsory education: in 1891 on Middlesbrough School Board, for example, it was 2 Nonconformists who proposed raising the standard of total exemption from Standard V to Standard VI, but they were defeated by 3 votes to 4.²⁴

In their election campaigns, the School Board party tried to counter the attraction of the Denominationalist party to the electorate through their claim to be the party which kept the rates low, by themselves also claiming to be efficient and economical in their administration. In particular, when they were in opposition, they tried to climb on the band waggon of the public's hostility to the increasing rates, by using the cry of economy as a weapon with which to fight for power. It was the Unsectarian party on Stockton School Board, which, after it had won control of the Board in the 1885 election, made several administrative changes in order to reduce rate expenditure.²⁵ Likewise, the Unsectarian party on Darlington School Board, when in opposition, from time to time criticised Board expenditure as excessive: in 1895, for example, it proposed that an enquiry be set up into the expenditure on evening schools, and to suggest a method of supervision to make it more efficient and economical; but this was rejected by the majority Denominationalist party.²⁶

The most thorough attack in Darlington of the Unsectarians on the Denominationalist party in office, came in 1886 after their first triennial

period in control of the Board. It was launched by J. G. Blumer, who wrote a long pamphlet criticising their policy and record ("Darlington School Board: Past, Present and Future: a Retrospect and Review, 1885"). He was backed up by the Liberal "Northern Echo". The pamphlet declared that the Denominationalists had only won control of the School Board in 1883 by forming a coalition between Churchmen and Catholics, which, with the help of the cumulative voting system, had enabled a minority of ratepayers to elect a majority of Denominationalist members, and also by the Denominationalists making unfounded accusations of extravagance on the Unsectarian party when in power 1871-82, and promising to be more efficient and economical if they were elected. It set out to prove two things: that the Denominationalists were "sham economists", unable to reduce the Board expenditure by greater efficiency, and that they had ruled only in the interests of the voluntary schools, allowing the Board schools to deteriorate while they had had control of the School Board. It also accused them of concealing the true facts of their rule by refusing to publish annual reports and by giving only scanty information with no comparative statistics in their triennial report: "The manifold omissions of this report may be due to incompetency or they may be due to deliberate intent. In either case, they show their authors to be unfit for the duties entrusted to them."⁺ 27

The pamphlet summarised the policy of the Unsectarian party at the 1886 Darlington election in seven points:

1. to ensure sufficient accommodation in Board schools for all children who wanted places in them;
2. to see that Board schools were well equipped;
3. to supply adequate teaching staff for Board schools;
4. to provide Cookery classes for older girls;

⁺ for details, see below, pp. 311-13 and pp. 368-9

5. to provide evening classes at low fees for older children who had left school;
6. to reintroduce annual accounts and reports of the School Board's work;
7. to revise the system of getting the assistance of outsiders in the management of Board schools, which the Denominationalist party had discontinued in order to achieve greater control.

The Unsectarians tried to attract as much support in elections from as many sorts of people as possible. They tried to break the natural alliance within the Denominationalist Party between the Church and the Roman Catholics. During the Stockton election campaign of 1870, the Liberal "Northern Echo" tried to achieve this by its leading article: "Why should the Catholics consent to allow themselves to be made a cat's-paw of the Tory Party is a mystery ... Surely the Catholics ought to know to whom they are most indebted for the religious freedom they now enjoy! We should have thought they would have been content to leave the care of their children in the hands of Liberal educationalists who would deal as fairly with one denomination as another." After the result of the Darlington election of 1871, the newspaper tried to prove the same lesson: the Roman Catholic candidate Rev. H. Coll had come head of the poll with more votes than his Catholic "plumpers" could have given him; this showed, the "Northern Echo" concluded, that many Liberals had voted for him: "No further proof is necessary, so far as Darlington is concerned, that the interests of the Catholics may safely be entrusted to the guardianship of the Protestants, when they are also true Liberals and that the cumulative vote is not needed even by Catholics." ²⁸

Another ally, which the School Board party wooed, this time with greater success, was the Wesleyan Church. This had been the largest Nonconformist group to be in favour of denominational education. In 1870, they still tended to be half-way between the Denominationalists and Unsectarians. In September 1870, the Whitby and Darlington District of the Wesleyan Church (of which Thomas Brentnall, member of Middlesbrough School Board 1870-6 and 1877-82, was treasurer of the

"Wornout Ministers Fund") decided to build as many day schools as possible to avoid a school Board being established in as many districts as possible, or, where that was impracticable, to co-operate in the establishment of a School Board. But by late 1872, it was reported that even the most conservative of the Wesleyans had changed to support Unsectarian, as opposed to Denominational education.³⁰

Natural allies to the Unsectarian party were the Working Class representatives: the Trades Councils (joint councils of the local trade unions) in the towns. These usually associated themselves with the School Board party, as their aims were similar: free compulsory unsectarian education. In the 1873 Stockton election, the Stockton Trades Council selected as the Working Class candidate, R. Bainbridge, who also stood as a Nonconformist; at Darlington in the 1871 and 1874 elections, Darlington Trades Council selected J. Kane, who stood as an Undenominationalist Independent.³¹ In the Stockton election, the Trades Council was so much in support of the Undenominationalist party that, believing that its candidate was safe, it rather rashly advised many working class men to vote for the other three Undenominationalist candidates, with the result that its candidate was the only one to lose.³²

But the fact that the official representatives of the working classes were usually allied with the School Board Party, did not necessarily mean that all working class people supported them. The working class electors were often more interested in the size of their rates than in the quantity and quality of the education the School Board provided. During the 1885 Middleton-in-Teesdale election, there was a long correspondence over how extravagant the late School Board had been, and a strong letter in support of the economical party appeared in the "Teesdale Mercury" signed by "Working Man": "It is all very well for gentlemen with plenty to support a policy of expense, but it does not answer for the working man with his 12/6d. a week, who, after supplying his wife and family with the necessaries of life, has not much left to waste." It was unfair to expect him to curtail his smoking to pay the extra rates, as a previous correspondent had suggested.³³

In votes on questions of expenditure, on more than one occasion, the Working Men's candidate lined up with the economical Denominationalist party rather than the Liberal School Board party. For example, in 1897, when there was a division on Middlesbrough School Board as to whether to increase the salary of a headmaster, 5 Unsectarians and 3 Denominationalists voted for the increase, and 2 Denominationalists, 3 Independents and the 2 Labour members opposed it. On the other hand, when the 2 Labour members on Middlesbrough School Board proposed in 1896 that the Education Department be petitioned to authorise the provision of at least one meal a day for poor children before school hours, they were defeated by the combined votes of the Denominationalists and Unsectarians.³⁴

2. Denominationalist Party

The Denominationalist party usually consisted of an alliance of the Church of England and Roman Catholic members of a School Board, and tended to be conservative in policy. Because it stood largely for keeping the rates as low as possible, it was often called the "Economical" party. But not all the members of the Church of England belonged to the Church party, and several Independents, and even Nonconformists (such as W. C. Parker on Darlington School Board) tended towards the Economical party on many issues. In the 1876 Stockton campaign, an Independent, W. R. Graham, stood for election on a policy of reducing the rates by abolishing the Clerk to the Board and making one of the Board members to do his work (although he declared that he had not been able to discover any work which the Clerk in fact did); dismissing one of the school wardens, and running the schools at one-third of their cost by cutting out all embellishments. The ratepayers must have considered this irresponsible, for he came bottom of the poll.³⁵ In April 1887 on Middlesbrough School Board, W. Bulmer (Independent member 1885-1900) carried out a violent campaign against the continued rise in expenditure:³⁶ he said that the teachers were getting too much pay for the work they were doing - headmasters were receiving £220 a year for working five hours a day, five days a week, with six weeks

holiday a year. Such high Board salaries also forced voluntary schools to pay similar amounts. The children were also being educated far above the standard they should have been. He put forward a series of proposals for reducing the rates:

1. all children under 5 years and over 13 be discharged from Board schools;
2. the three wardens at £200 a year be replaced by two at £55 a year;
3. only one certificated master be appointed to schools where there were only three pupil teachers, and his salary be limited to £180 a year.

The Roman Catholic members, Dawson and Martin, supported him on these resolutions, but they were overwhelmingly defeated by the other members, and another resolution of his, that the Clerk and School Superintendent be sacked and a Clerk be appointed at only £100 a year, found no seconder, and, amid laughter, was dropped. In later meetings, he resumed his campaign, but met with little success.

The official Denominationalist policy was threefold, and was summarised in his election address by Rev. H. Coll, Roman Catholic candidate for Darlington School Board in 1871.³⁷ He stated that his principles were:

1. to look after the interests of his own religion (every section of the population having a right to have their interests represented);
2. to achieve economy for ratepayers, in particular by encouraging the building of as many voluntary schools as possible;
3. to achieve compulsory education, but with freedom for parents to choose the type of school and religious instruction they wanted for their children.

There was little controversy over the last point of this policy. No party officially opposed compulsory education - after all, the voluntary schools gained as much from it as the Board schools, especially in a place like Darlington where there was an excess of voluntary school accommodation - although certain individual Denominationalists did tend to be less enthusiastic about it than many others. Rev. W. H. G. Stephens (Church member of the first Darlington

School Board) described the enforcement of compulsory education as "hopeless and impracticable",³⁶ and when Stockton School Board debated compulsory attendance in 1871, it was three of the four Denominationalist members who were the most forward in prescribing limitations to its enforcement: Law (Church), supported by Lockwood (Church), said that compulsion should not have been enforced in every case, because he knew of cases where parents were ill, and their children were kept at home to wait upon them, and there were other cases where lads were working and could not come to school; Rev. Carlile (Roman Catholic) said that in such cases it would have been cruel to have compelled the children to come to school.³⁷ There was also a fear by the Denominationalist party that compulsion would have been expensive, as it would have entailed extra accommodation being provided by the School Board. On the other hand, the two members of Darlington School Board who were the keenest to get compulsory education implemented, were a Catholic (Rev. Coll) and a Quaker (Parker): seven weeks after the first Board had been elected, they proposed that a warden be appointed - but were defeated by an amendment that this be delayed until after the bye-laws had been adopted.³⁸

The Denominationalist party was more united over its policy of trying to educate as many children as possible in voluntary schools, and to give parents the opportunity of sending their children to a denominational school if they wished. Before School Boards were set up in any district, the Anglicans and Catholics built as many schools as they could, in order where possible to prevent the necessity of establishing a School Board. This was particularly noticeable in Norton,⁺ and also in Middleton St. George where there was a violent battle over the School Board's attempt to take over the National School.⁺⁺ In 1870, the Denominationalist "Middlesbrough Exchange", in a forceful leader attacking the erection of School Boards, called

⁺ see above, p. 13

⁺⁺ see below, p. 76-80

upon church members to be generous with their financial support for the schools of their churches, in order to make less necessary the building of rate-aided schools:⁴¹

"We hazard the prediction that the new system will become the stalking horse of political rancour and theological irritation - it will dry up or divert the streams of private bounty, it will discourage voluntary contributions and chill into ice the glow of individual exertion; it will derange and dislocate a system which is widely and increasingly beneficial ... The establishment of rate-aided schools must be a shock to the religion of the country, because it will be proclaimed that religion is the only thing which is not to be thoroughly taught ... We maintain that not even a secular instruction can be good, which is not based upon, as well as accompanied with, religious truth."

Once a School Board was established, the Denominationalist members tried to limit the number of Board school places provided by it; for example, when Stockton School Board was estimating how many places were necessary to fill the deficiency, the number calculated by Law (Churchman) was 921, which was half the number calculated by Dodshon (Quaker).⁴²

It was the declared policy of many Church and Roman Catholic Board members that voluntary school expansion should be given priority over that of Board schools. Rev. W. A. Rigby and G. Webster, the two Roman Catholic members of Darlington School Board, said in their election address of 1883: "We hold that Board schools were only intended by the legislature to aid the voluntary schools in the work of education and not to enter into unfair competition with such schools to their destruction." H. B. Reed, a Church member, declared at the same time that his primary object would be to promote voluntary schools, because as long as the latter flourished, they were doing great educational work at no cost to the ratepayers, and were doing it quite as well; his main objection to the School Board party was that the great tendency of their policy was to blot out the very existence of voluntary schools. A fellow Church member, R. Mountford, said that "they had endeavoured to check as far as they could

expenditure on Board schools because that was one thing which had a tendency to add very materially to the difficulty of conducting voluntary schools".⁴³ Rev. H. Coll (Roman Catholic member of Darlington School Board 1871-6) voted quite consistently against the School Board accepting voluntary schools being handed over to them to run, by their managers and trustees,⁴⁴ and it was one of the chief complaints of the School Board party in the 1886 election that the Denominationalist School Board 1883-5 had allowed average attendance at board schools to decline, while in voluntary schools it had increased.⁺

The Denominationalists claimed that one of the chief advantages of their schools was that they gave a thorough and sound religious education. In contrast to these schools, they often made accusations that the teaching of religion in board schools was "godless, almost worthless and utterly inadequate".⁴⁵ In 1870, the "Middlesbrough Exchange" attacked the Middlesbrough candidates who stood as supporters of the National Educational League, on the grounds that they were hostile to religious education.⁴⁶ It declared that the League used to be for the total exclusion of the Bible from rate-aided schools, although by then it was supporting undenominational education. It claimed that the members of the Middlesbrough branch of the League were mostly men who sympathised with Mill, Huxley and Maurice who attacked the religious opinions of the mass of the English people. The League members had stated that they would "allow" the Bible to be read, but not commented upon, and that the teacher was not to deduce any lessons from its pages:

"Why must the only book in the world that is an authority in religion or morals be forbidden to the explanation of the teacher? Why should he alone be gagged and manacled in handling this, the only life-message that can be given to men? We do not bar out the sunlight, we do not oppose the admission of fresh air into our dwellings, but we propose in every possible way to eliminate that power in Christian and moral teaching which is to the mental, as sun and air are to the physical, world."

⁺ see below, p. 368

By allowing "no note or comment" when the Bible was being read, half of its value was being excluded. The only policy mentioned in the election letter of the Church candidates in the 1870 Middlesbrough election, was that of securing the use of the Bible as the basis for Religious Instruction in rate-aided schools.⁴⁷

Apart from wishing for the maximum number of children to be educated in denominational schools, however, the Denominationalists were not united over what should be done to ensure that the children were brought up religiously. They were just as divided as the Unsectarian party as to whether it was desirable to teach undenominational Religious Instruction in Board schools along the lines of the Cowper-Temple Clause of the 1870 Act. Catholics objected to the Authorised Version of the Bible being used for Catholic children. On Stockton School Board, Rev. Carlile declared that the conscience clause was an insufficient guarantee, and stated that he would only allow children of his faith to attend Board schools if the Douay Bible was used for them - but the other Denominationalists refused to support this demand. Extreme Denominationalists preferred no religion to be taught in the schools, but only in the homes and churches. More moderate Denominationalists, such as Rev. A. C. Smith of Middlesbrough supported the teaching of religion in the Board schools, whether the teachers were Anglicans, Baptists or of any other Church, and opposed mere Bible reading.⁴⁸ In 1883, Rev. Bealey and Dr. Ellerton, two Church members on Middlesbrough School Board proposed a resolution for a more systematic method of religious services and instruction to be established in the Board schools, but they were defeated by two Liberal Church members (Wilson and Williams) and three Nonconformists.⁴⁹

Because of the disunity within both parties over the question of Religious Instruction in Board schools, the issue did not cause much partisan conflict on the Boards of the area, and both Denominationalist and Unsectarian Boards reached a compromise in their policies. This is illustrated by the case of Darlington School Board: although the Denominationalist party had fought the 1883 election with a

policy of getting more religion taught in Board schools, after they had gained control of the Board in that election, they did nothing to change the policy of the previous Unsectarian Board towards religion in Board schools (merely reading and explaining the Bible), as the Unsectarians pointed out in the 1886 campaign, and the Denominationalists had to admit to their own supporters.⁵⁰

The policy which the Denominationalist party stressed more than any other at elections, for obvious reasons, was that of being efficient and keeping the rates as low as possible. Their policy was one of "Piety and Parsimony"⁵¹ as their opponents called it. An election bill issued by the Church Party in the 1874 Darlington election mainly appealed to this:

"If you wish to ECONOMISE the School Board Rate
VOTE FOR THE CHURCH CANDIDATES.

Bear in mind that the CHURCHMEN, WESLEYANS, and CATHOLICS SUPPORT THEIR OWN SCHOOLS WITHOUT ANY TAX ON THE RATEPAYERS.

There is ample School accommodation already provided in all parts of the Borough for our present population. We see one British School after another thrown on the Ratepayers to support.

It is very easy for the unsectarian candidates - as they call themselves, to be "LIBERAL", in spending your money when they do not intend in future to support Schools at their own expense.

Vote, then, only for those Candidates who will give the Parents the FREE CHOICE OF SCHOOLS; who will support their own Schools in efficiency; allow the Bible to be taught without any sectarian bias; and who will try to prevent all needless and lavish expenditure of the Ratepayers' money.

VOTE FOR THE CHURCH CANDIDATES.

A REAL LIBERAL"

In the election campaigns, Denominationalists often put forward, sometimes quite ruthless, proposals for reducing the rate expenditure of Unsectarian Boards. Rev. J. K. Bealey, a Church candidate standing for election to the Middlesbrough School Board

TO THE RATEPAYERS OF THE BOROUGH OF DARLINGTON.

If you wish to **ECONOMISE** the School Board Rate,

VOTE FOR THE CHURCH CANDIDATES.

Bear in mind that the **CHURCHMEN, WESLEYANS, and CATHOLICS SUPPORT THEIR OWN SCHOOLS WITHOUT ANY TAX ON THE RATEPAYERS.**

There is ample School accommodation already provided in all parts of the Borough for our present Population. We see one British School after another thrown on the Ratepayers to support.

It is very easy for the unsectarian candidates—as they call themselves, to be “**LIBERAL**” in spending your money when they do not intend in future to support Schools at their own expense.

Vote, then, only for those Candidates who will give the Parents the **FREE CHOICE OF SCHOOLS**; who will support their own Schools in efficiency; allow the Bible to be taught without any sectarian bias; and who will try to prevent all needless and lavish expenditure of the Ratepayers' money.

VOTE ONLY FOR THE CHURCH CANDIDATES.

A REAL LIBERAL.

Election handbill.

Darlington School Board election 1874.

DARLINGTON SCHOOL BOARD ELECTION.

CENTRAL COMMITTEE ROOM,
TRINITY BOYS' SCHOOL-ROOM,
Union Street, January 3rd, 1874.

At a Meeting held this day, on the announcement that Mr. EDWARD HUTCHINSON had retired from the contest, it was resolved to give the most earnest and vigorous support to the FOUR remaining CHURCH CANDIDATES, viz. :—

Messrs. Stephens, Hughes, Luck, and Grace.

These Gentlemen are *all* in favour of RELIGIOUS EDUCATION, and would permit the Parents of Children to select the particular School where their Children should receive Instruction.

A Sub-Committee for each Ward has been formed.

The Committee hope to have your co-operation and support, in securing the return of the above Gentlemen.

HENRY J. GRIEVESON,

CHAIRMAN.

NOTE.—You have **NINE VOTES**, and can give all or part of them to any of the Candidates. You are respectfully requested to **DIVIDE THEM** as you think proper for—

**GRACE,
HUGHES,
LUCK,
STEPHENS.**

The Election will take place **TO-MORROW** (Tuesday, January 6th). The Poll will commence at Twelve o'clock at Noon, and close at Seven in the Evening. **POLL EARLY.**

Election handbill.

Darlington School Board election 1874.

in 1876, suggested to a general meeting of candidates and electors various ways of reducing expenditure: the salary of the Inspector of Schools should have been much less than the £300 a year he was receiving - some of the voluntary schoolmasters would have done the job for £100 a year; and only books for children of poor parents should have been provided free: to pay for the books of all children was an unnecessary expense.⁵² In the 1883 Darlington election, the North Star declared that "active co-operation is urgently required on the part of all who dislike the fussy crotcheteering and expensive faddiness of those who constitute the majority of the Darlington School Board".⁵³ However, after the Denominationalists, who had been elected on a policy of economy, had been in power for three years, they found themselves attacked by the Unsectarians for not having achieved much in this connection.⁺ In the next election campaign, in 1888, the Denominationalists felt obliged to defend their establishment of cookery classes, on the grounds that otherwise they would not have met the government conditions for grants for girls; they also claimed to have made various economies in board expenditure, such as reducing teachers' salaries, and to have spent 2d. in £ less than any previous Board (only 11⁷/₈d. in £ for three years, excluding building).⁵⁴

When in opposition, the Denominationalist party continually attacked proposals by the School Board party which would have increased the rates; for example, on the Darlington School Board in 1871, Rev. Coll (Roman Catholic) opposed the recommendations of a School Board committee that Darlington should join other Tees-side School Boards in erecting an Industrial School, and that the Board erect a free school under Section 26 of the 1870 Education Act: as there was more accommodation than pupils in attendance in Darlington, the Board's policy should have been to fill existing schools and not to erect industrial and rate-aided ones. Some years later, when this proposal was revived by Parker, a Quaker, two Churchmen, Mountford and

⁺ see below, Chapter IX, pp. 311-13

Grace, opposed a joint Industrial school on the grounds that rates were high enough as it was.⁵⁵ On numerous occasions, voting against salary increases, equipment for board schools and other items of increased expenditure followed party lines, although sometimes with an Independent or Unsectarian voting with the 'economical' party.⁵⁶

3. The Politics of the School Boards

The School Boards can be divided into two categories: that in which religion had a decisive influence in the elections and subsequent voting of the members, and that in which it did not.

But to label the members of a school board as members of a particular church can be misleading, as it is then readily assumed that on that account they belonged to the Liberal or the Denominationalist-Conservative Party. Certain School Boards were not so divided, and, indeed, the candidates of some boards did not even publish the church to which they belonged. Even when the religion of a candidate was made known to the electors, this did not necessarily mean that the candidate cared to stand for his church's interest. In the 1876 election at Middlesbrough, the Church's official candidates were Rev. J. K. Bealey, John Gjers and Rev. A. C. Smith. But the Church Party also claimed that Edward Williams and Isaac Wilson belonged to their party. These two, however, although they were staunch members of the Church of England, wished to stand as Independents (Williams had said that he wished to keep parson and pulpit out of the School Boards); the Nonconformists had said that they were quite happy with the election of these two candidates. It was believed that this action of the Church lost Williams and Wilson several votes, although they both were returned.⁵⁷

Likewise, it must not be assumed that the Roman Catholics and Church members were always Conservative, and the Unsectarians always Liberal. Both 'Conservative' and 'Liberal' were very imprecise terms, and, due to lack of party organisation in the modern sense, a member of a School Board might well be Liberal on one issue and Economical or

Conservative on another. If Liberal and Unsectarian, Denominationalist and Conservative, are taken as synonymous, the terms become almost meaningless when applied to School Boards - although on the majority of occasions in practice, they did tend to go together. As mentioned above, Isaac Wilson and Edward Williams of Middlesbrough were both Anglicans, yet Williams was extreme Liberal and a keen member of the National Education League; and Wilson, an Independent, tended towards Liberalism in policy. Likewise, in the Darlington election of 1871, the Roman Catholic member, Rev. Coll, was described as a Liberal, and J. H. Bowman, a Wesleyan, as a Liberal-Conservative! However, if "Conservative" meant support for economy and the voluntary schools, the Denominationalists in general did tend towards that policy, and the Undenominationalists, towards spending more rate money on Board schools, etc., although there were some exceptions.⁵⁸

In only three School Boards on North Tees-side, can one see religion as the key factor in the elections and the voting on them: Stockton, Darlington, and, for the first few years, Middleton St. George. Middlesbrough had strong partisan groups, but the elections and voting on the Board were complicated by the fact that several Independents stood and were elected. In the other School Boards, it appeared for the most part that religion was almost irrelevant. This is probably partly explained by the fact that they were the smaller Boards: when the electors and School Board members in a district were few in number, there was less likelihood of there being organised pressure groups, and the electors knew the candidates and voted for them for what they were, rather than for what party tag they wore; the members of the Boards dealt with people and children whom they often knew personally, and so were less likely to be guided solely by abstract principles in dealing with them. In some cases there were no voluntary schools in their districts with which the Board schools might compete, fewer problems thus faced them, and they were well acquainted with the local concensus of opinion. In the cases of Whitton, Cowpen Bewley and Middleton-in-Teesdale, the religion or

party of the candidates was not published, and so it may be safely assumed that religion did not have a partisan effect on the elections.⁺ In fact, Cowpen Bewley, apparently by common assent, dispensed with its School Board altogether after twelve years.⁺⁺ The Minute books of Whitton School Board show no instances of divisions over any religious or party issue, and indeed, the large number of occasions when not even a quorum of members were present, suggests an absence of controversy and great apathy. The only heated debate on the School Board was whether to hold the Board meetings in the morning or evening of a weekday (the evening was more convenient for regular workers). This dispute lasted from January 1893 to June 1899, with many reversed decisions, the voting depending on who was present at any particular meeting; it aroused much bitterness and caused disputes over the election of the chairmen, and eventually led to Rev. Newsome (who wanted morning meetings) boycotting the evening meetings, until after six months of this the Board declared that he had forfeited his seat, which the Education Department confirmed.⁶⁰

Middleton-in-Teesdale School Board revealed a similar pattern, with no major divisions over party or religious principles, often without a quorum present at Board meetings, and with quiet elections. The only signs of opposition along party lines were in the 1879 election, when there was a move by a group of people whom Rev. Milner claimed to be strangers to the town to secure the removal of the two Anglican members from the Board, but which achieved little,⁶¹ and also in the elections of 1885 and 1891 over the amount of rates spent on education. For many weeks before the election of 1885, there raged a controversy in the letter columns of the local press, concerning charges of extravagance by the late School Board, and in particular, over the cost of teachers' salaries. Part of the concern was due to the fact that, because of the decline of leadmining in the area, the

⁺ Except for the Middleton-in-Teesdale election of 1879, when

³ Nonconformists and 2 Churchmen were returned.⁵⁹

⁺⁺ see above, Chapter I,(3)(e).

rateable value of the town had recently declined from £12,000 to £9,000, which meant that the educational rate was higher for the same amount spent. An 'economical party' grew up in the town to oppose the return of the old Board, which, led by Anglican Rev. Milner, was united in the face of the opposition, and defended the expenditure on teaching as right: lower salaries would have meant less efficient teaching and thus lower government grants. The agitation was to little avail, and only one member of the old Board was defeated. "Ratepayer", writing against the 'economical' opposition in the local newspaper, belittled the effects of the educational rate. He said that the charges of extravagance had been invented by some meddlesome persons who had wanted thereby to get themselves elected onto the School Board. Against their cry that it was the working man with his 12/6d. a week wage who suffered most, he wrote that such a man "lives in a £3 cottage and with a 6d. rate, he will have to pay 1/6d. a year. Raise the rate a ½d. and he will have to pay just three half pence a year extra - the price of half an ounce of tobacco. Why, with a whiff or two less per day for a week, and lo, he has saved it." In any case, such working men often used to get away with not paying school fees, as they were often let off when they got deep in arrears. However, not all working class people were prepared passively to accept such complacency about the increased rates, and "Ratepayer" got as forceful a rejoinder in the press from such a working man, the following week.⁺⁶²

The next election of Middleton-in-Teesdale School Board was resolved without contest by three candidates withdrawing,⁶³ but in 1891, there arose another controversy, this time over whether the proposed new Board school which was going to double the educational rate was necessary. The School Board claimed that the existing Lead Company School was old, drafty, and had bad audibility, and should not be merely extended, but a new school built. Several ratepayers tried to avoid the necessity of erecting a new Board school by raising

⁺ see above, p. 60

subscriptions for a voluntary one, but they were poorly supported, and, after a fiercely contested election, in which a large poll was recorded, the supporters of the old Board handsomely triumphed.⁶⁴

In Wolviston and Norton, likewise, religious and party loyalties did not seem to have much effect on the elections and debates within the School Boards. Wolviston was the quietest and most apathetic of all the School Boards of the area. In 1880, for example, no quorum turned up to the meetings of January, March, April, May, June, August, October and November, and all the issues were settled harmoniously. The majority of its elections were determined without a contest. The first School Board, elected without a contest, had a majority of Undenominationalist members, but chose a Denominationalist chairman; three years later, again without a contest, it changed to a majority of Denominationalists. Religion, here, was clearly irrelevant.⁶⁵

In the case of Norton, there had been a strong fight by the Denominationalists to prevent a School Board from being established,⁺ and the first election was keenly fought along party lines: both sides were well regimented, many cabs were used, and nearly every ratepayer voted.⁶⁶ The Church originally put forward six candidates for the five places on the School Board, but there was so much opposition to the Church candidates, especially to the vicar, that three withdrew in order to better secure the return of the others, and in this way achieved a majority for the Denominationalists:⁶⁷

Elected: James Harwood (earthenware manufacturer)	Church	649	votes
William Manners (gentleman)	Church	515	"
William Barrett (ironmaster)	Quaker	495	"
Rev. J. Ridley (priest)	Church	426	"
Alfred Brady (bank manager)	Quaker	386	"

Not elected: William Fothergill (varnish manufacturer) Wesleyan 385 votes

But despite the keen contest and the majority for the Church party (by a single vote), the actual debates within the School Board, and its

⁺ see above, p. 13

later elections, were not partisan in character. Unanimously, the Denominationalist Board elected its chairman: William Barrett, a Quaker.⁶⁵ The only disputed decision of the first Board recorded in the minutes, that of fixing the terms of the schoolmaster's engagement, cut across party lines (Barrett, Harwood and Manners versus Brady and Ridley).⁶⁷ The first triennial report of the Board mentioned that the prejudice of some ratepayers against the work of the School Board was then rapidly dying out; however, in the election for another Board in the same year, which was keenly fought, with cabs engaged by partisans from Stockton and more interest shown than at any Parliamentary election, three of the old Board (Brady, Manners and Ridley) were not returned, and control of the Board went over to the Unsectarians (a Wesleyan, a Quaker and a Methodist Free Churchman).⁷⁰ But in 1878 without a contest, the composition of the Board changed to one completely of Churchmen - the fact that the Unsectarians were prepared to surrender all the places on the Board without a fight showed how little sectarian feeling existed in Norton. And in 1880, when one of the Anglican members' places fell vacant, the remaining Church members elected a Wesleyan to replace him. The only controversial question proved to be in 1898, when there was a struggle for several months over whether or not to let the Board school for political meetings. Originally, the Board had decided not to do this, but after several reversed decisions, the school was finally let to meetings of the Liberals, Conservatives, and the Labour Representative Committee.⁷¹

Middleton St. George probably provided the fiercest fight on Tees-side between the School Board and the Denominationalist parties. Yet once this had been settled, the School Board followed the pattern of the smaller Boards, in showing little sectarian bitterness.

The fight arose over the question of the National School. The School Board had been established due to the financial difficulties of running the National School, but when the Board was first elected in October 1884, of the nine candidates who stood, a Liberal Nonconformist majority was returned:⁷²

those elected:	J. W. Teasdale (tailor)	Liberal Nonconformist	132	votes
	W. Robinson (inkeeper)	Liberal Nonconformist	95	"
	J. W. Wooler (gentleman)	Conservative Churchman	91	"
	C. Blakett (farmer)	Liberal Nonconformist	85	"
	W. Horseman (farmer)	Conservative Churchman	76	"

The majority were at once keen to take over the National School and run it as a Board school, but the Denominationalists were as equally insistent on retaining it as a Voluntary school. The trustees of the school included J. W. Wooler, who sat on the School Board (the others being Rev. J. Groves, and Messrs. Elliot and Cocks). Only one trustee (H. A. W. Cocks) was willing to hand the school over to the School Board, now that it had a majority of Unsectarians on it. In December, the Voluntary school managers announced that they had raised £50 by subscription to cover the £25 deficiency, and thus they could now keep the school solvent and give efficient instruction, and declared that under no circumstances would they transfer the school to the School Board which, they said, was now unnecessary, as the National School could provide more school places than were needed in the district.⁷³

From the very first meeting of the School Board (to which the trustees of the Voluntary school refused permission to hold a meeting in the school because "the schools were conveyed upon certain trusts inconsistent with the purpose for which the Board had been called together"), there was bitter conflict and the meetings were often unruly. The School Board party, led by Robinson and Teasdale, was keen to take over at once the National School, or, failing that, to erect a Board school to rival it. They appealed to the Education Department to help them; the latter replied that, although they had no powers to compel the managers to hand over the Voluntary school, they would refuse to give grants to the National School so long as it was maintained as a voluntary school, and declared that it was the duty of the School Board to supply the deficiency in the district through the failure of the National School to give efficient instruction.⁷⁴ The School Board party were reluctant to start building a new school because of the great expenditure of rate money that this would entail, and made efforts to

persuade the Voluntary school managers to co-operate. In March 1885, they invited the trustees to a meeting to discuss a handover, but this offer was rejected, and J. W. Wooler, who had shown his anger by boycotting most of the board meetings, wrote a strong letter to the Clerk to the Board:

"I must enter a protest to you as Clerk to the School Board against your being made the tool of Messrs. Robinson and Teasdale to convey instructions to the Education Department regarding these schools. It is well known that all the commotion, troubles and expense the parish has been put to is solely attributable to them and now that the people are beginning to see through them, they get a petition and ask my friends to sign it with the object if possible of throwing the onus of building new schools upon me. I protest against this ... The memorial got up recently by Messrs. Robinson and Teasdale is utterly valueless as indicating the feeling of the parishioners on the question at issue, as I know many of my friends signed it under a pure misapprehension of its real purpose." ⁷⁵

The trustees told the Education Department that they would be willing to transfer the school only if the membership of the School Board was changed - a suggestion that the School Board party called "monstrous". The Education Department told them that they had no power to do this, and then forced the issue by issuing a requisition in May under Section 18 of the Education Act of 1870, ordering the School Board to provide a school themselves on pain of default. In October, the School Board decided to buy land for a new school, but the Denominationalists now started tactics to delay any such action of the Board. When the meeting was held to decide upon a plot of land for the school, Dawson, secretary to the Voluntary school trustees, sabotaged the meeting by being present as a ratepayer, and refusing to withdraw. Tempers ran very high, and the School Board party refused to conduct any business until the room was cleared of strangers, and as Dawson would not leave, they adjourned the meeting, after resolving to ask for a policeman to keep out intruders in future meetings. However, when the next meeting was held, a large number of Voluntary school supporters turned up. The School Board party then summoned a policeman. The Minutes described what followed:

"Sargeant Hill was then called in and he refused to interfere unless a disturbance was caused, whereupon it was moved by Mr. Blackett and seconded by Mr. Teasdale and carried, that the Chief Constable be written to on the subject." They decided to continue the meeting, in spite of the intruders, and, adding insult to injury, proceeded to vote that land belonging to J. W. Wooler be compulsorily purchased for the new school after he had refused to sell it voluntarily, amid the futile protests of Wooler and Horseman.⁷⁶

In December, Mr. Swettenham, the local H.M.I., made an attempt to act as peacemaker. He arranged an informal meeting at the National School between the two sides. Each met in a different part of the building, and Mr. Swettenham repeatedly went from one part to the other conveying the terms that each party presented to the other, as they refused to speak to each other directly. The trustees first proposed to lease the school to the Board at a nominal rent of 5/- a year on condition that the trustees were appointed the school managers of the proposed Board school. The School Board party rejected the second part of this, and proposed that the school managers should consist of the School Board members and Rev. J. Groves (a Churchman). The trustees turned this down, and suggested the managers be Blackett, Wooler and Groves. The School Board party, rejecting this, proposed instead that the managers be the Board members, Groves and Mr. H. G. Burkett. When the trustees turned this last offer down, the negotiations finally came to an end.⁷⁷

In March 1886, the School Board party opened a temporary school, which the Education Department recognised on condition that a permanent one would be built soon afterwards. In July, they struck another blow to force the Voluntary party to give way, by voting to compulsorily purchase the land on which the National School was built for their new school, having dropped their proposal to build on Wooler's land, and when the Education Department authorised this, the Voluntary party suddenly gave way, and a compromise was reached: on condition that the compulsory purchase order was withdrawn, the trustees agreed to transfer their school after the next School Board election had been held.

In October, the School Board Party dealt their last blow, when they declared Wooler's place on the School Board vacant on the grounds that he had been absent for six months without excuse.⁷⁸

However, the victory really lay with the Voluntary party: they had successfully delayed action by the School Board party until it was too late for them to do anything, and at the election of 1887, which aroused great interest (177 out of the 198 ratepayers voted), the Church Party won control of the Board by three members to two. Wooler was elected chairman, to the opposition of the School Board party, and Horseman, vice-chairman. Wooler and Horseman then followed up this triumph by proposing that the master of the temporary school and the school warden be dismissed. But they did not get things all their own way: Kitching, the new Church member, arranged a compromise by amendments he put forward: the warden was retained, but at a reduced salary; the master was given a job as assistant at the National School, which the Board now took over, also at a reduced salary.⁷⁹

But after this, helped by the moderating influence of Kitching and the bankruptcy of Robinson, whom Wooler in particular disliked, which made him ineligible for a seat on the Board, the old bitter enmity died down and there was much more harmony among the Board members, except for a brief flare-up when Wooler asked for the Board to pay for new gates put in the school before it had been handed over, and also ^{for} some old chairs there.⁺ After Wooler died, his successor was unanimously elected, and there is no evidence of further controversies, or even divided votes on any matter of principle. The later elections were quiet, those of 1893, 1899 and 1902 not even being contested.⁸⁰

⁺ The Board refused to pay for the gates, and threatened legal action if Wooler attempted to remove them, and said that he could keep the old chairs. Wooler bitterly reproached them for such an ungentlemanly answer to such a small matter, after all he had done for them; he refused to attend any further Board meetings until his death in 1890.

Middlesbrough School Board throughout this period was hardly affected by any sectarian bitterness. As the "Northern Echo" wrote in 1873, commenting on its first three years' work: "Its members seem never to have been disturbed by the questions that converted Newcastle School Board into a Bear Garden and made that of Birmingham the chosen arena for the demon of discord". The paper's only complaint of the election of that year was that the candidates' election addresses were vague - which was probably intentional, so as not to stir up any controversy.⁸¹

In Middlesbrough there were, as to be expected, keen pressure groups which sometimes enlivened the elections. But, in general, there seemed to be a consensus of opinion among the Board members which allowed the Board to deal with the great educational needs of the area in a spirit of harmony and compromise; perhaps one of the reasons for this was the greatness of the educational problem in this rapidly-expanding town which allowed plenty of scope for the efforts both of the School Board and the Voluntary schools, and left little energy for sectarian bickering.

Middlesbrough was largely a Liberal town in local and national politics (the M.Ps being Bolckow, Liberal, 1868-78; Isaac Wilson, Liberal, 1878-92; and Havelock Wilson, Liberal-Labour, 1892-1900). But there was also a growing Conservative element (a Conservative, S. A. Sadler, won the 1900 election)⁸² and even when the Conservatives could only attract a few votes in a Parliamentary election, there was a keen group of them who wanted to win as many places on the School Board as possible. The Liberals, however, although they seldom won an absolute majority on the School Board, except for one occasion (1885), with the help of the Independents most of whom inclined towards Liberalism, managed to prevent the Denominationalists gaining a majority.

The first election of Middlesbrough School Board, held on 29th November, 1870, was probably its most keenly contested one. By 15th November, there was reported to be a glut of candidates: 24 for the 9 board places. An attempt was made by the Town Clerk, at the

instigation of the National Education League, to persuade the candidates to reach an agreement to avoid a contest. Although this was not successful, the number of candidates by polling day had been reduced to 16 (5 standing for the National Education League, 4 Churchmen, 4 Independents, 3 Wesleyan Methodists). The election, like the later ones, was not a clear cut contest between a School Board party and a Denominationalist party: two of the Church candidates had Liberal views similar to those of the National Education League, except for supporting Religious Instruction in rate-aided schools (Head and Wilson). Head said in his electoral address: "Despite my interest in St. Paul's Schools, I am not pledged to specially prefer the denominational system". In addition, Rev. A. Burns, the Roman Catholic priest, advised his congregation to vote for Elgee and Fallows who stood as Independents as there was no Catholic candidate. Fallows, it was generally agreed, attracted a large Roman Catholic vote at the election, despite the fact that his religious views were very different from those of the Catholic Church: he was a Unitarian. On the other hand, even the official National Education League members were not extreme and dogmatic in their policies. Edward Williams, for example, was a sincere member of the Church of England as well as a keen Liberal and President of the Middlesbrough branch of the National Education League. In his election address, he tried to strike a note of moderation and compromise:

"I should strive to avoid every unnecessary expense to the ratepayers by providing only such additional school accommodation as may be found needful after utilising in the best ways, the schools already existing ... The religious controversy can only be fairly met by a compromise between the extreme views, but whatever arrangement is adopted, the rights of conscience should be scrupulously respected."

Most of the candidates were agreed on some form of Religious Instruction in Board schools (either merely Bible reading, or unsectarian teaching as well), and were willing to compromise to achieve general agreement. All the candidates supported the drawing up of bye-laws to enforce compulsory education.

The election was quite keenly fought. At the beginning of the campaign, an unsuccessful attempt was made to unite the Wesleyans and the Church party, as at Leeds. Had this happened, at least one of the unsuccessful Wesleyans would probably have been elected, and another National Education League member excluded from the Board, and the Denominationalists would have won control of the Board. The Church party proved much more energetic in campaigning than the National Education League, who were less well organised and probably over-confident. As a result, the Church party did better, and the National Education League worse, than had been expected: only 2 of the 5 National Education League candidates, but all 4 Church candidates, were elected:

Elected:	E. Williams	National Education League	2267	votes
	W. R. I. Hopkins	Church	2237	"
	J. F. Elgee	Independent	2116	"
	W. Fallows	Independent	2088	votes
	J. Head	Church	2003	"
	T. Brentnall	Wesleyan	1976	"
	I. Eaden	National Education League and Working Class	1919	"
	I. Haigh	Church and Working Class	1892	"
	I. Wilson	Church	1874	"
Not	Laws	Methodist	1646	votes
Elected:	Hunter	Wesleyan	1465	"
	Gilkes	National Education League	1166	"
	Taylor	Independent	730	"
	Sanderson	National Education League	667	"
	Bell	National Education League	601	"
	Williamson	Independent	494	"

The election resulted in no absolute majority, with the Independents holding the balance. Once the election was over, the Board members showed themselves willing to tackle the educational problems quite harmoniously, and immediately revealed a spirit of co-operation by unanimously electing Isaac Wilson (Churchman) as chairman, and Edward Williams (National Education League) as vice-chairman, and this was repeated after each election until 1882. The general policy of the Board proved to be one of moderate Liberalism; for example, the members

approved the 1871 bye-laws which, among other things, provided for the payment of fees for any school to parents of poor children. Most decisions were unanimous, and when votes were divided, they usually cut across party lines. There were few signs of any clash over a major principle of policy.⁸⁴

The later elections of Middlesbrough School Board followed a similar pattern. In 1873, 16 candidates stood on polling day. Only 4 stood as Denominationalists (one Catholic and three Churchmen). The rest stood as Liberals (Unsectarians or Independents). But the Liberals were divided between those who wanted repeal of clause 25 of the 1870 Education Act (which authorised payment of fees to denominational schools by School Boards) and those who did not; (when this was voted upon, 4 Liberals voted to stop paying fees to Denominational schools, and 3 Liberals and 2 Undenominationalists, against. One of those who voted not to stop payment, Brentnall, a Wesleyan, was reported to have opposed clause 25 in the election). In the election, the Denominationalists suffered a setback: only one of the three Church candidates ^{was} ~~were~~ returned, along with a Roman Catholic.⁸⁵

No party won an absolute majority on the School Board in the elections of 1876 and 1879; after both, the Board consisted of 3 Liberals, 3 Independents, 2 Churchmen and 1 Roman Catholic. In the 1876 election, an attempt to avoid a contest was obstructed by the Church party which wanted three candidates (in addition to the Anglicans standing as Independents: Williams and Wilson). All the candidates, except the official ones of the pact, agreed to withdraw, except for Rev. J. K. Bealey who insisted on standing as a third Church candidate. His proposal that the 10 remaining names be put into a hat and 9 selected by lot, was rejected because it gave him a good chance to be chosen, and thus excluding some more worthy candidate. The poll result, however, confirmed the official agreement, the only change being that Rev. Smith, a Conservative Churchman, was unsuccessful, and Rev. Bealey was elected. In 1879, the attempt to avoid a contest was successful for the only time in the Middlesbrough School Board's history.⁸⁶

The Conservatives grew increasingly strong in Middlesbrough in the last years of the nineteenth century. This was reflected both in the Parliamentary elections and in those of the School Board. In 1885, the Denominationalists won a majority on the School Board (2 Catholics and 3 Churchmen). But this made no noticeable difference to the Board policy or the general harmony of its working. T. H. Bell, an Independent, was elected chairman, and John Gjers, a moderate Churchman, vice-chairman. These two were re-elected after the 1888 election, in which the Denominationalists lost their absolute majority (3 Churchmen, 2 Nonconformists, 3 Independents and 1 Roman Catholic). The later elections produced similar results: no absolute majority for either the Liberals or the Denominationalists, with the Independents holding the balance. The lack of party conflicts in the elections can be clearly seen by examining the party labels of the candidates. They represented a spectrum of shades of attitude, which clouded and softened any partisan conflict. In 1900, for example, the candidates represented the following political attitudes:⁸⁷

	No. of candidates standing	No. of candidates elected
Roman Catholic	3	3
Church of England	4	3
Independent Church	1	1
Independent Voluntary	1	1
Independent Progressive	1	1
Progressive Nonconformist	5	5
Independent Labour Party	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>
	<u>17</u>	<u>15</u>

As a result, there was little conflict in the elections or on the School Board. As one newspaper remarked on the 1894 election, there were no exciting differences and much apathy "so much so that at a meeting called by the Mayor, only a hundred persons attended and the contest can be fairly ascribed to the wirepulling and ambitions of one or two new aspirants."⁸⁸ The only major dispute occurred when Blumer, an Independent, launched a resolute attack on the high expenditure of the Board in 1887 and later years, supported in some of his proposals

by the two Catholic members and one Independent (Main). But his proposals were defeated by the Church as well as the Liberal members.⁺ And, although there was an outbreak of divided votes in the mid 1890's over salary increases and the erection of new schools, the voting cut across party lines; for example, in a division over whether or not to give a £5 increase in salary to a headmaster in 1897, 4 Nonconformists, 2 Churchmen, 1 Roman Catholic and 1 Independent voted for the increase, and 3 Independents, 2 Labour Party members, 1 Churchman and 1 Roman Catholic voted against it.⁸⁹

The members of Darlington School Board were more divided along party lines than those of Middlesbrough. There was not a high proportion of Independents to prevent a clear majority and hold a balance of power. However, despite the fact that the elections were usually fought along conventional party lines, the meetings of the Board were marked by a spirit of compromise and harmony on most occasions as has already been seen in connection with the Middlesbrough School Board. Darlington School Board members did not agree on policy to the extent that those of Middlesbrough School Board did, but the diplomacy and generosity of Dale and Pease prevented much potential friction - as when they agreed to pay the fees of poor children attending Voluntary schools, thus avoiding the expenditure of rate money on them. Summarising the history of the various School Boards of Darlington since 1871, the "Darlington and Stockton Times" said in 1894 that Darlington had escaped much of the bitterness which had afflicted many of the other School Boards: "The policy of the Boards has been conciliatory and consistent and we do not know of any Board where the work has been done more harmoniously, more economically, nor where there has been greater earnestness exhibited in providing for the educational requirements of the town."⁹⁰ The same point was made by the Chairman of the Board in his Address of 1904. He noted that the lack of party wrangling

⁺ see above, pp. 61-2

had been typified by the fact that when the Chairman and Vice-Chairman had been absent through illness during the previous winter and the Voluntary party had thus been temporarily in a minority, the Unsectarians had taken no advantage of the situation.

The elections of Darlington School Board were fought along party lines and often contested quite keenly, although many attempts were made to avoid contested elections. Darlington was largely a Liberal town during the 1870's and 1880's (its M.Ps. being E. Backhouse 1868-80 and T. Fry 1880-95, Liberal; A. Pease 1895-8, Liberal Unionist; and H. P. Pease, Unionist, after 1898); thus, as was to be expected, the Unsectarians won the School Board election of 1871. They held the Board until 1883. In that year, and every subsequent year until the Board was abolished, the Denominationalists controlled the Board by 6 members (4 Churchmen and 2 Roman Catholics) to 5. On two occasions, the Unsectarians did not even contest the elections, being resigned to a continuance of their minority.⁺

Although there were several debates and divided votes over points of principle on the School Boards of Darlington up to the Denominationalist triumph of 1883, the voting often cut across party lines, there being many different shades of attitude within each of the party groups. The keener members of the Unsectarian party were on many occasions outvoted by a combination of the Denominationalists and moderate Unsectarians, as, for example, in October 1871, when Parker (Quaker) and Morrell (Independent Unsectarian) proposed that the Board at once invite managers of Voluntary schools to transfer them to the School Board. In such a way were the extreme Unsectarians defeated when they attempted to prevent the fees of poor children attending Voluntary schools being paid by the Board in December 1871. On other occasions, the voting split both parties, as over the question as to whether or not to limit strictly the remission and payment of fees to poor children: Parker (Quaker) and Stephens (Church) proposed

⁺ see above, pp.26-34, for a detailed description of the elections.

this, but were defeated by a combination from both parties. Likewise, Parker (Quaker) and Hughes (Church) proposed in July 1872 that evening schools be not yet considered by the Board for reasons of economy, but they were defeated by 2 Churchmen and 3 Unsectarians. On certain questions, however, the voting was determined mainly by party grouping; for example, in 1877 when it was proposed that all the Board schools follow the London School Board's Syllabus of Religious Instruction: 3 Churchmen voting in favour and 5 Unsectarians against, while the Catholic abstained. Also, when Parker and Fry (Liberal Quakers) proposed in 1874 that a Committee be set up to arrange for prizes to be given in Board schools for attendance and proficiency, they were defeated by the Church and Catholic members.⁴¹

When the Denominationalists won a majority on the School Board in 1883, there immediately followed an outburst of partisan struggling: the Denominationalists elected their own men as chairman and vice-chairman (just outvoting their opponents by the nominated persons voting for themselves). In 1883 and 1884, they put forward a series of far-reaching proposals to reduce the expenditure of the Board, for example, by limiting Board school prizes to £5 in total value and discontinuing their public presentation; restricting the Board school staff to 40% above the Code minimum in number; and by introducing a revised salary scale for head-teachers. At one meeting alone, nine such proposals were made, and in every case, the voting was completely along party lines: the 6 Church and Catholic members defeating the 5 Unsectarians. But after the 1886 election had confirmed the Denominationalists in power, they became less controversial in their actions, and the Liberals more resigned to work in harmony with them. Thereafter, there was much more co-operation, fewer divided votes, and two of the elections were uncontested. Only in 1895 did the old party conflict once more flare up, and there were several divided votes along party groupings, the Church and Roman Catholic members supporting the principle of economy, especially over expenditure which would help Board schools to compete more easily with the Voluntary schools. One such contest was over the

School Board party's proposal for a new Board school at Bank Top; another, over the purchase of a piano for a Board school, and yet another over their proposal that the annual report of the Board be once more printed and distributed to the public.⁹²

Stockton School Board was also distinctly divided along party groupings. But, although the elections were often keenly fought along conventional party lines, the Board members in practice proved not to be greatly divided in policy, as was the case with Darlington School Board.

Stockton, like all the constituencies of the area under study, returned Liberal M.Ps. throughout most of the period (J. Dodds 1868-88; Sir Horace Davy 1888-92 and J. Samuel 1895-1900). But there was also a strong Conservative element there: in 1870, the Town Council was evenly split, both Conservatives and Liberals having 16 members, but with the Liberals holding the balance of power through the Mayor who was a Liberal. The general elections showed the increasing strength of the Conservatives: whereas in the election of 1868 they had polled 26% of the total votes, in that of 1888, they polled 47%.⁹³ A Conservative M.P. was elected 1892-5 (Thomas Wrightson) and also in 1900 (Sir Robert Ropner).⁺

This even balance between the two parties stimulated keen elections. The various interests in the town (Churches, Temperance Society, etc.) put forward their candidates, and 17 of them stood initially for the 7 places of the first School Board, although all but 9 withdrew before polling day. The different interests tried to attract the maximum of support: Rev. A. Pettit, preaching at St. Thomas' a fortnight before the election, strongly denounced the secularising tendency of

⁺ For the M.Ps. of Middlesbrough and Darlington, see pp. M.Ps. for South Durham (and after 1885, Bishop Auckland and South East Durham) were: Sir J. W. Pease (Liberal) 1865-1903; F. E. B. Beaumont (Liberal) 1868-80; F. W. Lambton (Liberal) 1880-5; Sir Havelock Allan 1885-92 (Liberal); J. Richardson 1892-5 (Liberal); Sir Havelock Allan 1895-7 (Unionist); J. Richardson 1898-1900 (Liberal) and F. W. Lambton (Unionist), after 1900.

the modern educational system of the Elementary Education Act, while the Liberal press tried without success to persuade the Catholics not to ally with the Church Party. As in the case of the other first School Board elections of the area, it was the Denominationalists who proved to be the better organised. They put up the minimum number of candidates to secure a majority on the Board (3 Churchmen and 1 Catholic), and, despite a warning from the Liberal "Northern Echo" a few days before the election, the Unsectarians put forward one more candidate than was necessary to gain a majority and so unnecessarily split their votes (in any case, as it turned out, the 4 Denominationalist candidates polled 15 more votes than the 5 Unsectarian candidates, and thus even had the votes of the bottom Liberal been redistributed, the Liberals would probably have not gained a majority). But a more important factor in their victory than that of putting up fewer candidates, was that of being more united. In the words of a Liberal newspaper: "The Dissenters, being divided into many sects were naturally less capable of organisation than the Churchmen, while the Church and Catholics, knowing better how to 'hang together', have had very little difficulty in securing the return of the men they had put forward, and in many cases, with thumping majorities." ⁹⁴

The Nonconformists learned their lesson, and in 1873, put forward the minimum number of candidates to gain a majority (although 17 candidates originally stood, all but 8 withdrew before polling day). The result, after a closely fought contest wherein great energy was shown in trying to get supporters to the poll, re-established the composition of the first Board: 3 Churchmen, 1 Roman Catholic and 3 Nonconformists (a Quaker, a Wesleyan and a Presbyterian). The Working Men's Nonconformist candidate, who had had the backing of the Trade Unions, was the only unsuccessful candidate. ⁹⁵

However, although the first elections were keenly fought along religious party lines, there were no major differences in policy put forward, as was commented upon at the time. ⁹⁶ There was, for example, general agreement over such questions as Religious Instruction in Board

schools and the enforcement of compulsory attendance at school, while both parties claimed to stand for a policy of economy in rate expenditure. The few occurrences of the Board splitting along party lines, as over the payment of fees to denominational schools, tended to have only a temporary divisive effect on the board.

In view of this it is not surprising that enthusiasm to win an absolute majority on the School Board eventually died down. In 1876, the Denominationalists and Nonconformists won four seats each, and Thomas Nelson, an Independent (Unitarian in religion) held the balance. This was obviously considered satisfactory, for the next election was uncontested, the old Board being returned unopposed. This spirit of compromise was shown in the election of the Board's chairmen. After the 1870 election, in which the Denominationalists gained a majority on the Board, a Churchman (W. C. Newby) was unanimously elected chairman, and an Unsectarian (J. Dodshon) vice-chairman. In 1879, a Nonconformist (Sanderson) was elected chairman, and a Churchman (Trotter) vice-chairman, while, after the Denominationalists had once more won control in the School Board in 1882, they elected a Unitarian (Nelson) and a Wesleyan (Hind) as chairman and vice-chairman, which meant that if a Denominationalist member had retired or died, the Nonconformists would have gained control of the Board through the chairman's casting vote.⁴⁷

In 1885, the Nonconformists won a majority on the School Board, and immediately showed how little difference there was between the parties, by using their majority to initiate several reforms to achieve more economies. They lost their majority at the following election, in which the Church Party got 4 candidates returned, Catholics 2 and Nonconformists 5. Despite this, a Nonconformist was elected vice-chairman (Bone). When the pendulum again swung back in the 1891 election, and one of the two Labour candidates, sponsored by Stockton Trades Council, held the balance on the Board between the six Nonconformists and six Catholics and Churchmen, the former chairman (a Churchman) and vice-chairman (a Nonconformist) were re-elected. The

1894 election also gave an Independent the balance between the two parties. By this time, the elections were far less closely fought, and the "Darlington and Stockton Times" said that there was far less partisan bitterness in the elections, and few points of controversy. The only main area of conflict was over how economical the School Board should be, and voting over this often cut across party lines. For example, in 1892, Congregationalist Rev. G. S. Ordish opposed the Board's expenditure on a Higher Grade School, while Wesleyan C. Bone supported the expenditure; also, when it was proposed by two Unsectarians that the Board Accountant's remuneration be increased from £50 a year to £120 a year, three Unsectarians, two Churchmen and one Roman Catholic voted against it (two Churchmen and one Roman Catholic abstaining). The parties did not now try to win a majority on the Board by restricting the number of their candidates to the minimum necessary to do this: in the 1894 election, the following parties were represented at the poll: ⁹⁸

	No. of candidates standing	No. of candidates elected
Roman Catholic	2	2
Church	6	4
Independent	2	1
Unsectarian	9	6
Labour and Trades Council	<u>3</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>22</u>	<u>13</u>

The 1897 election, however, inaugurated a final period of partisan rule and conflict. The Denominationalists, who had gained control of the Board by 7 places to 6, elected two of their number as chairman and vice-chairman, and, by putting up only 7 candidates at the 1900 election, were able to repeat this. The debates on the School Board now became more coloured by party principles; the Denominationalist party tended to be more conservative about expanding Board school accommodation, and keeping down the rates, and helping the voluntary schools as much as possible (for example by allowing Voluntary school pupil teachers, to be taught at the School Board

Pupil Teacher Centre). The Unsectarian Party became more united in opposing such proposals. Sometimes personal ill-feeling flared up between the two factions, as when the vice-chairman, a Churchman, was elected as the Board representative on the governing body of Stockton Grammar School by the chairman's (also a Churchman) casting vote. Rev. Ordish, a Nonconformist, made a scornful remark about this, and refused to withdraw it when called upon to do so by the chairman, at which the latter adjourned the meeting. Such friction, however, even in the more partisan 1890's, did not typify relationships on the School Board; other incidents revealed that the members were often prepared to act in a conciliatory manner. In 1901, for example, when 5 Unsectarians and Independents voted in favour of the Board supporting the Association of School Boards' petition concerning the Higher Elementary School Minute, and 5 Church and Catholic members voted against this, the Chairman, (a Churchman), who had voted against it, gave his casting vote for the motion. Other questions still cut across party lines, such as a proposal in 1901 to economise on Higher Grade School expenditure by reducing the staff there, and refusing a salary increase to the headmaster: 2 Churchmen (including E. J. Vie, Headmaster of Stockton Grammar School, who obviously had a vested interest), 2 Roman Catholics and 1 Unsectarian voted for the reductions, and 3 Unsectarians, 1 Independent and 1 Churchman against. (The motion was lost by the casting vote of the chairman, a Churchman).⁹⁹

It can thus be seen, that in the case of the Tees-side School Boards, religious and party allegiances did not in general determine the character of the boards. At times, and in certain places, especially in the large towns, the elections were fought along party lines, but in perhaps most cases this did not mean that the candidates were strongly divided in policy, and, once elected, they usually managed to co-operate on most matters. Only a few isolated issues of basic principle aroused sectarian debates and voting. It also appears to be a fact that the larger a School Board was, and the older the town (and

so the more entrenched the churches were in education) the stronger was the partisan element. But in no case was it ever of overwhelming importance, and local circumstances varied the intensity of sectarian feeling at different times.

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CHAPTER IV MEMBERSHIP, ORGANISATION AND ADMINISTRATION

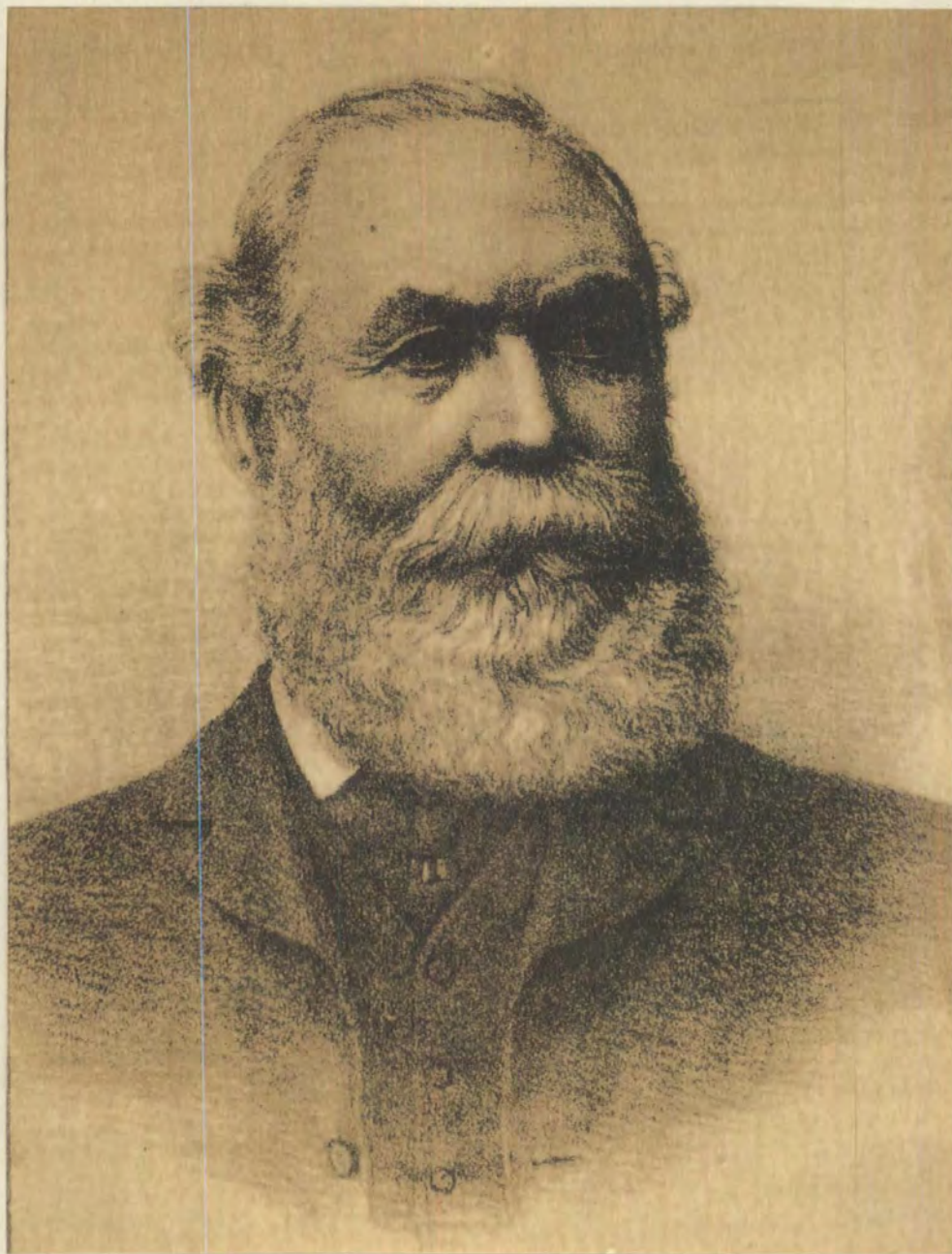
1. School Board Members

An examination of the people who stood for election to the School Boards indicates how important the provision of education was regarded in the School Board era. Mr. Bernay, H.M.I. for the Durham District, which included Teesdale Union, complained that in many areas, especially in the countryside where the choice of candidates was limited, the best men did not come forward for election. On Tees-side, however, particularly in the towns, this is not very noticeable, and some of the most important local residents appeared keen to serve on the Boards, and spent much time and energy in their duties. This can be seen most clearly in the early School Boards of Middlesbrough, which, in the 1870's and 1880's, was still dominated by wealthy and powerful ironmasters, mostly Liberals. Some of these were actually the first or second generation of men who had founded the town. As a result, the most common candidates for election in this period to the Middlesbrough School Board were ironmasters and clergymen (who had a natural, and often vested, interest in education).

One of the best examples of this, was the Middlesbrough School Board elected in 1876. In the election, the ten candidates consisted of five ironmasters, four clergymen, and one other person:²

elected:	Rev. R. Lacy	Priest	5986 votes	Roman Catholic
	Rev.W.H.Priter	Minister	5616 "	Unsectarian(Baptist)
	Edgar Gilkes	Ironmaster	5279 "	Unsectarian
	T. H. Bell	Ironmaster	5157 "	Independent
	Edward Williams	Ironmaster	4619 "	Unsectarian
	Rev.J.K.Bealey	Priest	4520 "	Church
	William Fallows	Gentleman	3730 "	Independent
	John Gjers	Ironmaster	3541 "	Church
	Isaac Wilson	Ironmaster	3403 "	Independent
not elected:	Rev.A.C.Smith	Priest	2060 votes	Church.

The lay members of this Board included some very rich and locally important men, and the Roman Catholic priest on the Board was later to be created the first Bishop of Middlesbrough. Most of the members were town councillors, and several had been Mayors of Middlesbrough



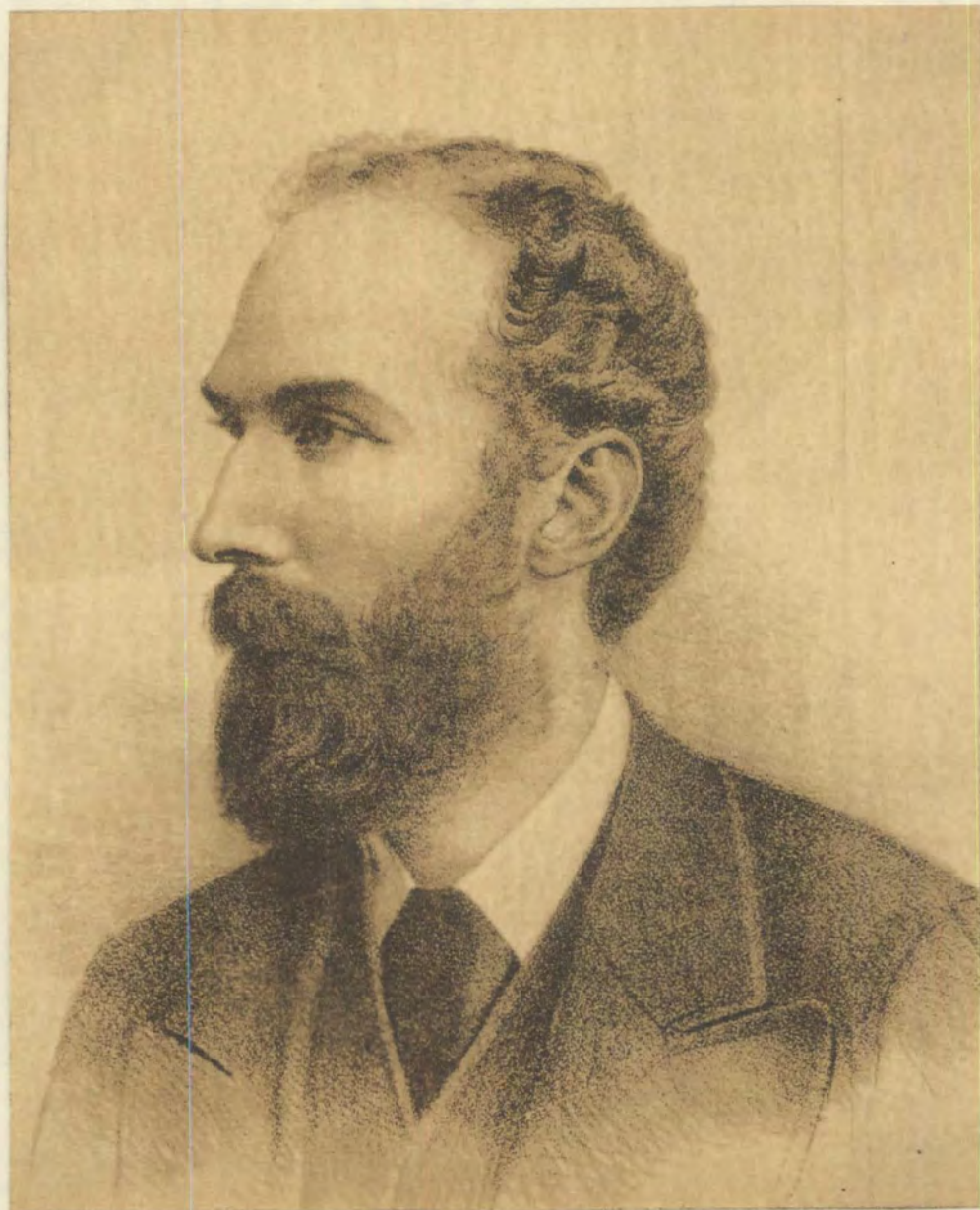
Isaac Wilson M.P.

Chairman of Middlesbrough School Board 1870-85.

(Lacy had been Mayor in 1870, Gilkes in 1863, Bell in 1874, Williams in 1873, Fallows in 1859 and Wilson in 1854; all of these, except Fallows, were town councillors or aldermen while they were serving on the Board.) Three ^{other} members of the 1870 and 1873 School Boards had also been Mayors: W. R. I. Hopkins, Ironmaster, 1866-7; Thomas Brentnall, Merchant, 1862; and T. Vaughan, Ironmaster, in 1871.

³Isaac Wilson (1822-99), Chairman of Middlesbrough School Board 1870-85, was one of Middlesbrough's most important citizens and had helped to shape the town. Born in Kendal, the son of a well known woollen manufacturer, he came to Middlesbrough in 1841 at the request of Joseph Pease, a relative, as a partner in a pottery factory. Three years later, he entered a partnership with Edgar Gilkes to set up a large engine works (Gilkes, Wilson & Co., later merged into Hopkins, Gilkes & Co. of which he was chairman). In 1853, he became partner of Gilkes, Wilson, Leatham & Co. (later Gilkes, Wilson, Pease & Co. or the Tees-side Ironworks) which erected a huge set of blast furnaces, second only to those of Bolckow, Vaughan & Co. He was also partner of other ironworks, and a director of the Stockton & Darlington Railway, and later the North Eastern Railway. Much of his time was occupied in public affairs. When Middlesbrough was governed by twelve Improvement Commissioners, he was one of these, and when the town was incorporated in 1853, he was elected town councillor and its second Mayor. He was also Chairman of the Tees Conservancy Commission and a J.P. for many years. When the M.P., Bolckow, died in 1878, he was considered to be his obvious successor, and sat as Middlesbrough's Liberal M.P. from 1878 to 1892.

The Vice-Chairman of Middlesbrough School Board from 1870-85 was Edward Williams (1826-86), another notable citizen. Like Wilson, he combined a strong loyalty to the Church of England with an allegiance to advanced Liberalism, and sat on the Board as an Unsectarian. Born in South Wales the son of a schoolmaster, reputed to be a collateral descendant of Oliver Cromwell, he trained in a Welsh iron firm before being personally picked by John Vaughan to succeed him as manager of



Sir Hugh Bell

Chairman of Middlesbrough School Board 1885-97.

Bolckow, Vaughan & Co. in 1865. After a successful period as manager, during which the firm became the largest works in Britain, perhaps in the world,⁴ he set up on his own by purchasing the Linthorpe Ironworks in 1879. He was President of the North of England Ironmasters Association in 1868, and was one of the founders, and President, of the Iron and Steel Institute. In public life, he was a J.P., town councillor 1868-74, alderman 1874-86, and Mayor 1873. He had a most forceful personality, which perhaps typified the ironmasters:

"He was of a commanding presence: square set, of an intellectual cast of countenance; a large dark Welsh eye, which fired with animation as he engaged in conversation; a man with his mind made up on most questions, and prepared to push his way in the world, and, so to speak, to 'paddle his own canoe'." ⁵

Another wellknown member of the 1876 Middlesbrough School Board, and who was to remain a member from 1875 to 1897 and to be Chairman 1885-97, was T. Hugh Bell (1844-1931). He was to have a celebrated future career, and to be honoured by having the Hugh Bell School named after him (previously Grange Road School), which he personally opened in 1900.⁶ Hugh Bell was the son of one of the three Bell Brothers whose company was founded in 1844 and who opened the Ironworks at Port Clarence in 1852. He received a scientific education in France and Germany before entering his father's works and eventually taking over the management of the Port Clarence works. After the latter had been taken over by Dorman & Long in 1899, he became Chairman of that Company. He was also associated with several other iron and steel works, railway companies and collieries, and was President of the Iron and Steel Institute 1907-10. As a prominent industrialist, he was much consulted by Governments, served on many Royal Commissions, was created a baronet in 1885 and was one of Asquith's proposed peers during the constitutional struggle of 1911. He had an equally distinguished public career locally: a town councillor for many years, he was Mayor of Middlesbrough three times, a J.P. for Middlesbrough, the North Riding and Co. Durham, Deputy Lieutenant and High Sheriff of Durham County and Lord Lieutenant for North Riding; he was also Chairman of

the Tees Conservancy Commission 1902-31. A Liberal in politics, he left to join the Unionists over Home Rule 1886-96, returning to the Liberal Party when Tariff Reform split the Unionists. In 1892, he unsuccessfully contested Middlesbrough as a Unionist, and later opposed Balfour in a City of London election. His wife, Lady Florence Bell was also well known, writing a social study of the area in 1907 "At the Works", and was created a D.B.E.

The other two ironmasters on the 1876 School Board, Gilkes and Gjers, were also prominent citizens of Middlesbrough. Gilkes was a member from 1876 to 1882; Gjers 1876-82 and 1885-94, serving the latter period as Vice-Chairman. Edgar Gilkes, a Quaker, and later son-in-law of Joseph Pease, came to Tees-side in 1839 as an engineer to the Stockton-Darlington Railway. In 1843, he became manager of the important Tees Engine Works at Middlesbrough which built locomotives and bridges, and soon became a partner of the firm with Isaac Wilson. In 1852, he established the Tees Ironworks, the second blast furnaces to be built on Tees-side. He was most active in municipal affairs, being one of the Improvement Commissioners before Middlesbrough was incorporated, and then a town councillor, alderman, Mayor and J.P. He was on the board of, or otherwise associated with nearly every institution and association of the town, and J. S. Jeans wrote in 1875 that for the last 30 years, every public movement initiated in Middlesbrough would have been found more or less to have had owed its inspiration to him.⁷ He can be truly classified as one of the founders of Middlesbrough. John Gjers, a Swedish engineer, came to Middlesbrough in 1854 as an engineer, and later manager, of the Ormesby Ironworks, and from 1862 to 1871, was manager of the Tees-side Ironworks, owned by W. R. I. Hopkins & Co. He was an engineer of great originality and distinction, patenting several important technical improvements and becoming consultant engineer for companies throughout Britain and Sweden. In 1870, he built his own ironworks in Middlesbrough (Gjers, Mills & Co.).



— W. F. —

A suggestion for the portrait.
Committee!

[Signature]

"Father of the Tees".

The citizens of Middlesbrough gave William Fallows (member of Middlesbrough School Board 1870-85) a life-sized portrait of himself to mark the Borough's jubilee in 1881. Sir Raylton Dixon, an iron shipbuilder, sketched this impression of Fallows in a letter offering £10 towards the portrait.

One other prominent member of the 1876 School Board was William Fallows (1797-1889). Along with Joseph Pease and Henry Bolckow, he was universally recognised as one of the principal pioneers of Middlesbrough, and was often called "Father of the Tees" or "Patriarch of Middlesbrough" - a title befitting his age as well as his life's work: he was 88 years old when his last election campaign for the School Board took place. Son of a Stockton schoolmaster, and apprenticed to an iron and timber merchant, he became shipping agent in 1829 to the Stockton Darlington Railway Company. When the railway was extended to Middlesbrough, he became superintendent of the Company's activities in the town, and was in charge of the dock which was built there; Joseph Pease regarded him as his 'right hand man'. He was a member of the Tees Conservancy Commission from its foundation in 1852, and ran a shipping company of his own. From the beginning of Middlesbrough, he was one of its most influential public figures: a J.P. and member of the Improvement Commissioners which ruled Middlesbrough until 1853, and then town councillor, Mayor in 1859 and Chairman of the Poor Law Guardians in 1875, he was associated with every public movement there, and in 1886 became the town's first honorary freeman. In 1881, during Middlesbrough's Jubilee celebrations, the town's inhabitants presented him with a life-sized portrait of himself. A keen Unitarian and Liberal, he was prominent in education before 1870, and was a member of the School Board from 1870 to 1885.

If the early School Boards in Middlesbrough sometimes resembled meetings of the directors of a large iron concern, the later Boards revealed a more accurate cross section of the middle class community. Asa Briggs has described how in the late 1870's the great ironmasters ceased to dominate the life and government of the town: as they grew wealthy, and especially as a new generation grew up to succeed the pioneers, they became 'respectable', changing from Nonconformist to Anglican in religion, moving out to live in the more pleasant rural areas, and lost interest in the town, leaving it to find new leaders among the less wealthy shopkeepers and professional men. The same

trend can be seen with regard to the School Boards. By 1885, Bell and Gjers were the only ironmasters on the Board, the others being three clergymen, a doctor, engineer, bookseller and grocer. The 1897 School Board consisted of four clergymen, three industrialists, three professional men, three shopkeepers and two artisans:

W. Blenkinsop	Iron Merchant	(Unsectarian)
W. Blumer	Engineer	(Independent)
A. Cooper	Managing Director of North East Steel Co.	(Church)
Rev. T. E. Lindsay	Anglican Priest	(Church)
Rev. W. J. McNaughton	Roman Catholic Priest	(Roman Catholic)
Rev. T. J. Cox	Methodist Minister	(Unsectarian)
Rev. R. Hind	Methodist Minister	(Unsectarian)
Dr. J. Ellerton	Doctor	(Church)
Dr. P. E. Pentary	Doctor	(Roman Catholic)
J. H. Taylor	Insurance Agent	(Unsectarian)
R. Archibald	Draper	(Independent)
A. Main	Stationer	(Independent)
G. Medcroft	Hatter	(Church)
G. Mosses	Joiner	(Labour)
J. Smith	Tailor	(Labour)

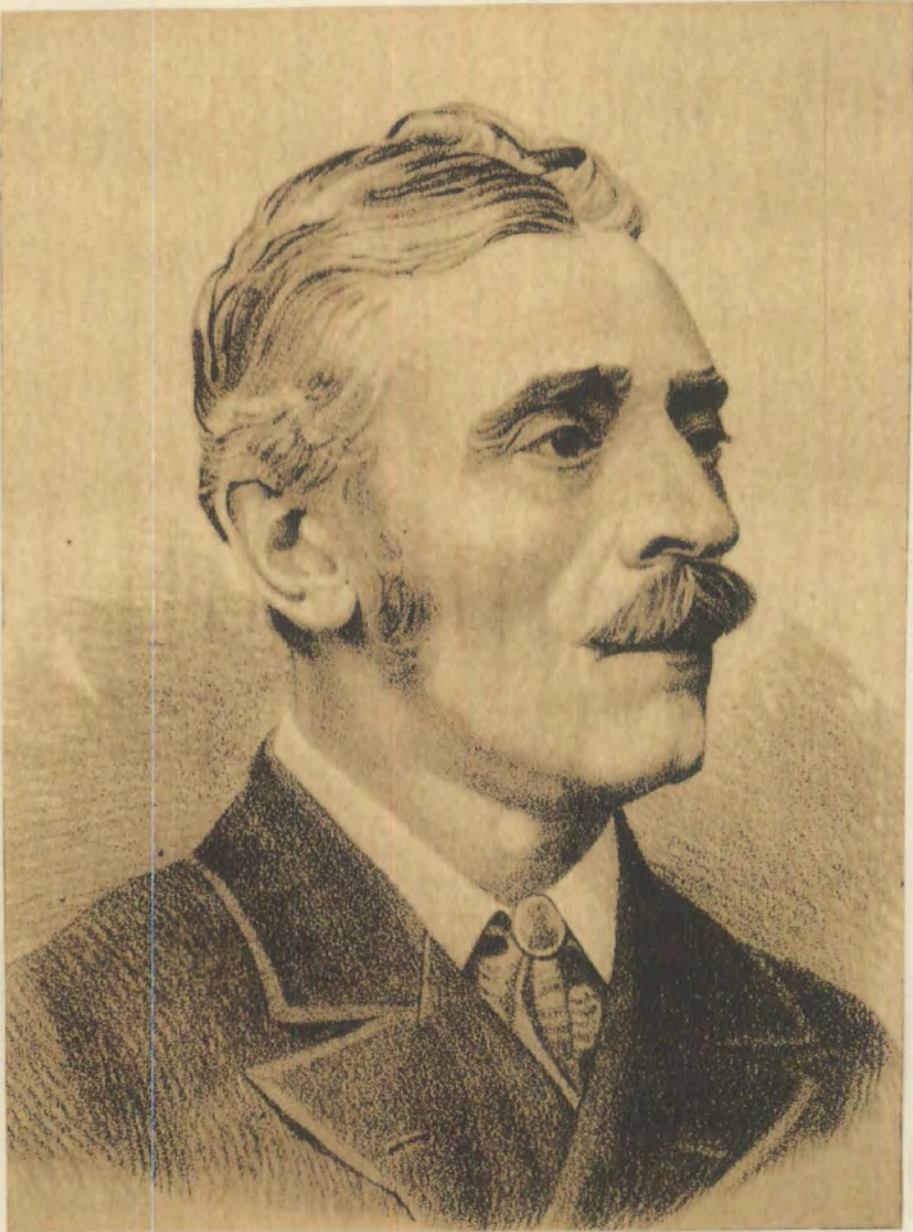
Darlington was an older town than Middlesbrough, and so could not be dominated by first generation pioneers, but its School Boards did attract the active interest of some notable persons. Three great Quaker families in particular spent much time and energy on school board work: the Peases, Dales and Frys.

The Pease family was the greatest family on Tees-side in the nineteenth century. Edward Pease (1767-1858) won national fame for promoting the Stockton-Darlington Railway, and one of his sons, Joseph Pease (1799-1872) was responsible for the creation of Middlesbrough as a town. The family controlled four large concerns in the late nineteenth century: Joseph Pease & Partners (coal), J. W. Pease & Co. (iron), J. & J. W. Pease (banking) and Henry Pease & Co. (manufacturing). They also had great political influence: Joseph, and two of his sons, J. W. Pease and Arthur Pease, and his brother Henry Pease, all became local M.Ps. and J. W. Pease was created a baronet in 1882. Later generations of the family continued their industrial, commercial and political activities into the twentieth century. They used much of

their great wealth in benefactions to Darlington, Middlesbrough and other places. Joseph, for example, gave Middlesbrough the Southend Schools, and provided most of the money for the Albert Hill, Bridge Street and Bank Top Schools in Darlington, and other schools in Cleveland, at Marske, Saltburn and Skinningrove, helping to maintain, as well as build them."

Henry Pease (1807-81), fifth son of Edward Pease, was Chairman of Darlington School Board from 1871 to 1874. He had a distinguished career, and was a Railway director and promoter, textile factory owner and colliery owner. He held many public offices, including that of Chairman to the Water and Gas Works and the Board of Health; he was Darlington's first Mayor, and had been Liberal M.P. for South Durham 1857-65. A prominent Quaker and pacifist, he was President of the Peace Society from 1872, and had been one of the Quaker deputation of three who had gone to meet the Tsar in Russia just before the outbreak of the Crimean War, and had unsuccessfully tried to persuade him not to enter it. His second wife, Mrs. Mary Pease, who wrote his biography, was the first lady School Board member in the area, sitting on Darlington School Board from 1883 to 1886. Another member of the family, Arthur Pease, son of Joseph and Liberal M.P. for Whitby 1880-5 and Liberal Unionist M.P. for Darlington 1895-8, also stood as a candidate for the first Darlington School Board, but, although he seemed almost certain to have been returned, he withdrew in a vain attempt to avoid a contested election.

The Chairman of Darlington School Board from 1874 to 1880 (and vice-chairman 1871-4) was David Dale (1829-1906). A grand nephew of David Dale of New Lanark, he was the son of an East India Company judge. Darlington became his home because, while he was an infant, his mother had been taken ill there while journeying to Scotland after his father's death, and had been looked after so well by the Darlington Society of Friends, that she had become a Quaker and settled in the town. Dale had begun work in the Stockton-Darlington Railway Company, and he later became a partner or director of several iron, coal and shipbuilding



Sir David Dale.

Chairman of Darlington School Board 1874-80.

concerns (for example, he was Chairman of Consett Iron Company). He was also a director of the North Eastern Railway (1881), President of the Iron and Steel Institute (1895), and served on several Royal Commissions. He became famous by pioneering the principle of arbitration in industrial disputes, being largely responsible for the first Board of Arbitration being set up in 1869 for the iron industry, composed of employers and trade unionists, to settle industrial disputes peacefully, and serving as its first President. Several honours were bestowed upon him, including that of High Sheriff of Durham and the rank of baronet (1895). A Liberal in politics, he never had the time to stand for Parliament.

The Frys were the third great Darlington Quaker family to show interest in School Board work. Theodore Fry (1836-1912), who married Sophia Pease, a niece of Henry and Joseph Pease, and was related to the chocolate firm Frys, was a member of Darlington School Board from 1874 to 1880. He was an important iron manufacturer, being partner of Iron Rolling Mills at Rise Carr, and was also a town councillor, Mayor (1877-8), member of the Board of Guardians and Liberal M.P. for Darlington 1880-95; he was created baronet in 1894. His son, John Pease Fry (1864-1957), also a rich and powerful industrialist and financier (director and later chairman of Bearpark Coal and Coke Company, and founder director and later chairman of the Durham and Yorkshire Building Society) and keen Quaker, served on the School Board from 1888-91; Miss Fry, his daughter, was Darlington's second lady member, and sat on the Board from 1891 to 1900.¹²

Another, but very different, important resident of Darlington who served on its School Board from 1874 to 1876, and was an unsuccessful candidate in its first election, was John Kane (1819-76), one of the leaders of the British working class movement in the nineteenth century. Son of a Northumberland attorney who had died when his son was still an infant, Kane had started work at the age of seven and became an iron roller on Tyneside. He tried unsuccessfully to form a union in 1842 and was a keen Chartist. In 1862, he helped to found the Amalgamated Malleable Ironworkers Association (later,

the Iron and Steel Workers of Great Britain) and became its leader until his death, as President (1862-7) and General Secretary (1867-76). He advocated independent labour representation in Parliament, unsuccessfully contesting the 1874 election against Bolckow in Middlesbrough, but, as a keen supporter of the Junta, he was a moderate with regard to union policy accepting 'capitalist economics', opposing strikes and lockouts, and co-operating with the employers by sitting on the Board of Arbitration. The Chairman of the Arbitration Board while Kane was sitting on it, was David Dale, who was also Chairman of Darlington School Board while Kane was a member, and supported Kane in his School Board election campaigns.¹³

The other School Boards, although not having so many wellknown persons serving on them, all tended to attract local men of substance and respectability. Stockton's first Board was composed of two priests, two professional men (a banker and a solicitor), two commercial men (a merchant and a saddler) and one industrialist (a shipbuilder). Its composition was not basically changed throughout the period: in the 1891 election, for example, the members elected were three clergymen, three professional persons, three commercial men, two industrialists and two artisans.¹⁴ Most of the Darlington School Boards were similarly composed. The Boards of the smaller school districts also were predominantly middle class: the 15 members elected to the Boards of Middleton-in-Teesdale between 1879 and 1903, for example, had the following occupations: 6 were farmers; 3 were land, wood or mine agents; 2 were leadmining managers; 2 were clergymen; one was a doctor and one an artisan.¹⁵

The occupations and professions of the School Board members to a large extent reflected the local economies. In purely agricultural areas, most were connected with farming: Wolviston's first School Board was composed of three farmers, one machinist and one gentleman; its last Board, of 1902, consisted of two farmers, a machinist, a butcher and the local vicar. Cowpen Bewley's School Board of 1879, whose district included the Port Clarence Ironworks, had as its members

three ironmasters and iron works managers, two priests, one farmer and one surveyor; Whitton's Board of 1886 consisted of an ironmaster, an engineer, a priest, a farmer and the local stationmaster. Whitton, however, probably because few middle class people would wish to reside in an industrial village, had a higher proportion of artisans on its Board than the other districts of North Tees-side: its 1895 School Board, for example, was composed of a platelayer, a signman and a stationmaster, together with a priest and an ironmaster. Norton School Board reflected the fact that Norton was a residential suburb of the industrial and commercial areas of North Tees-side: its first School Board (1872) was composed of an ironmaster, a pottery manufacturer, a bank manager, a gentleman and a priest, while its last Board (1902) consisted of two solicitors, a manufacturer, a factory manager and a doctor.^h

Although the franchise for the School Boards was more democratic than that for Parliament, and although W. E. Forster had said in Parliament that there were no restrictions as to qualifications for membership of them (they could be men or women, and need not even reside in the district for which they were standing) and that he hoped that working men would get onto them,¹⁷ the great majority of the members of the School Boards of the area came from the middle class. This was, perhaps, to be expected, as only people of a reasonable income could really have afforded to take the time off for meetings, especially if they were held in the mornings or afternoons. The middle classes tended to be more articulate, and in any case, the average working class voters were engrained with a natural deference to their 'betters' - as the electoral history of Parliament after the 1867 Reform Act has shown. Few working class candidates stood for election, and few were elected. From time to time, candidates stood as Working Men's candidates. Often they were officially sponsored by some party which thereby hoped to attract more working class votes: in Middlesbrough's first election, for example, a Church candidate, Isaac Haigh, and a National Education League candidate, Isaiah Eaden, both stood also as

Working Class candidates.¹⁸ But, although both of these were elected, it was soon discovered that working class candidates did not attract as many votes as originally expected: in Stockton's 1873 election, Bainbridge, nominated by the Stockton Trades Council, and standing as Working Men's and Nonconformist candidate, was the only candidate who was not returned. In Darlington's first election, John Kane, standing as an Independent Working Man, also was unsuccessful, coming last but one in the poll. Consequently, few working men stood for election to the School Boards until later in the period, when the town Boards had enlarged their membership, and, with the rise of the New Unions, the working classes became more politically conscious. In 1879, Middlesbrough's Trade Council was founded, and for long was a Lib-Lab stronghold, and in the 1890's, a local branch of the Independent Labour Party was active there; in 1892, a Lib-Lab candidate was elected to Parliament from Middlesbrough.¹⁹ As a result of this, during the last decade of the century, a couple of Working Class or Labour candidates were usually elected on to Middlesbrough and Stockton School Boards, while Darlington had J. Todd, Primitive Methodist and Working Man, on its Board from 1886 to 1897.⁺

The "Northern Echo", before the first School Board elections had been held in 1870, urged the electors to choose people who were keen on providing good education, and not merely to vote according to religion or politics. It was important for the members to be well-intentioned, but it was not necessary for them to be experts in education. It declared that it would be undesirable for the members of the School Boards to be mainly clergymen or retired schoolmasters, the sort of people considered most likely to put themselves forward for election.²⁰ As it turned out, the newspaper need not have been afraid that too many schoolteachers would sit on the School Boards. Very few were elected, and those who were, gave good service. J. S. Calvert, Principal of a Middlesbrough Academy, was elected to Middlesbrough

⁺ For details of the few lady members, see Chapter II, section 2.

School Board in 1873, but soon retired to become their Superintendent of Schools. No other schoolteacher was elected to that Board, and only one stood for election (in 1894). Stockton elected to its School Board one school mistress (Miss M. E. Findley 1891-4), and the headmaster of Stockton Grammar School, E. J. Vie, in 1900. No other schoolteachers stood there as candidates. Likewise, Darlington School Board had during its existence only one teacher as a member: W. A. Spafford, Principal of Darlington Training College, 1888-97. No other School Board in the area contained a member from the teaching profession.

Clergymen, however, did take a major part in School Board affairs, despite a prejudice in some quarters against them. (Edward Williams, for example, on one occasion declared he was against parsons on School Boards). Clergymen, of course, unlike teachers, could easily combine work on School Boards with their other duties, and they had as great an interest in education, many of them helping to run church schools. The Catholics, in particular, tended to choose priests as their representatives. In Middlesbrough, for example, five of the nine Roman Catholics sitting on the School Board 1870-1904, were priests. Four of Darlington's six Roman Catholic School Board members were priests, while Father Carlile, a Catholic, sat continuously on Stockton School Board from 1870 to 1900, accompanied at times by lay Catholic members. The other School Board districts, being small, had not sufficient Catholic electors to gain representation, except for the case of Rev. T. Bourke of Haverton Hill, who sat on Whitton School Board from 1877 to 1880, on Cowpen Bewley's School Board from 1873 to 1882, and also unsuccessfully contested Wolviston School Board in 1881.⁺ Most school boards contained at least one Anglican priest throughout their existence, except for Norton, whose Rector was personally

⁺ There were some other examples of the same person sitting on more than one School Board: Edgar Gilkes sat on Middlesbrough School Board 1876-82, and on Norton's 1884; G. Newby sat on Stockton School Board 1885-91 and Norton's 1899-1903; T. H. Bell sat on Middlesbrough School Board 1876-97 (Chairman 1885-97) and was Chairman of Cowpen Bewley School Board 1874-85.

unpopular, while the School Boards in the industrial districts also contained several Nonconformist ministers.

A patriarchal element in School Boards can be seen when examining the type of person who was elected as chairman. There was a tendency for School Boards to elect the most socially distinguished of their members, although there were exceptions. Middlesbrough School Board's first two Chairmen (Isaac Wilson 1870-85 and T. H. Bell 1885-97) and Vice-Chairmen (Edward Williams 1870-85 and John Gjers 1884-94) were all notable and wealthy ironmasters. Bell was succeeded as Chairman by Richard Archibald, who claimed to be a descendant of Rob Roy and owned a drapers business in Middlesbrough; by 1900, his occupation was described as "Gentleman". A town councillor since 1873, he had been Mayor in 1881, and was made a freeman of the borough in 1910.²² However, his vice-chairmen included a working class member, J. Smith, as well as a doctor; Smith, a J.P. and town councillor, and one of the local leaders of the Lib-Lab movement, committed suicide in 1906. Darlington School Board, similarly, at first chose some of its most distinguished citizens to be its Chairmen: Henry Pease was Chairman 1871-4, followed by David Dale 1874-80. Dale was Pease's Vice-Chairman, and had as his Vice-Chairman W. C. Parker, a Quaker "Gentleman", who succeeded him as Chairman 1880-3, with Theodore Fry as Vice-Chairman. But the Denominationalists, when they won control of the School Board, could not find such illustrious men as Chairmen: T. M. Barron, a solicitor, was Chairman 1883-94, with Rev. W. A. Rigby, as Vice-Chairman, 1883-1904. They were less lucky with their successor to Barron: J. T. Hall, J.P., a Chartered Accountant, was Chairman 1894-1900. But in July 1900, after embezzling thousands of pounds, he was arrested in New York, disguised as a priest, wearing a heavy moustache, and under an assumed name.^{+ 23}

The other School Boards often, although not always, showed a similar bias in their choice of chairman. Stockton School Board,

⁺ Another member of the Board, Rev. P. P. Wade, was imprisoned in 1882.²⁴

however, was quite representative, perhaps because it did not have any really distinguished people as Board members; its chairmen were a saddler, a gentleman, an accountant, an engineer, a minister and a priest. The Chairman of Cowpen Bewley School Board throughout its existence was T. H. Bell, the distinguished ironmaster. Wolviston School Board's Chairman 1875-87 was Captain Young, the local 'squire', although he was a Churchman and the majority party was Nonconformist. The meetings of the Board were held in his home, Wolviston Hall, and when his daughter Maud married after his death, the whole of the Board School was given a holiday.²⁵ He was succeeded by the local vicar. Whitton School Board's Chairman 1877-98 was Thomas Kirk, an ironmaster. Its Vice-Chairman 1874-5 was Rev. J. A. Parker, an Anglican priest. When Parker resigned, the person chosen to be his successor as Vice-Chairman was Rev. Thomas Varley, in spite of the fact that Varley had only become a member of the Board on that very day, which suggests that he had been chosen on grounds of social status. This was repeated when Varley retired from the School Board and Rev. Firth Newsome was not merely elected to take his place on the Board, but also to act as Vice-Chairman.²⁶

Social status, however, was not the only consideration in the choice of chairman, especially later in the School Board era, when the Boards had fewer distinguished persons serving on them. Length of previous experience as a member of a Board, personal qualities, and of course, the politics or religion of the members, also influenced the choice of chairmen. Norton's first School Board, elected in 1872, had William Barrett, an ironmaster, as Chairman, and William Manners, a "gentleman" as Vice-Chairman,²⁷ but between 1881 and 1899 the Chairman was a butcher, and the Vice-Chairman a wine merchant, although the other members included M. B. Dodds, solicitor son of the local M.P., a shipowner, and a doctor. The lower social status of the later chairmen and vice-chairmen of the larger town School Boards, compared to their earlier Boards, is also noticeable. The last Stockton Board's Chairman was an Anglican priest (Sharrock) and its Vice-Chairman a draughtsman (Pickworth), while Middlesbrough School Board's last Chairman was a draper, and Vice-Chairman, a tailor.

2. School Board Meetings

Under the 1870 Elementary Education Act (Section 31), the School Boards were to consist of between 5 and 15 members. The number was to be determined in the first instance by the Education Department, and afterwards by a resolution of the School Board, approved by the Education Department. All the School Boards of the smaller school districts of North Tees-side (Cowpen Bewley, Middleton-in-Teesdale, Middleton St. George, Norton, Whitton and Wolviston) consisted of five members. The only ones of these to increase their membership were Middleton St. George, when Low Dinsdale became a contributory district and elected two members from 1893, and Cowpen Bewley which increased its membership to seven after Billingham parish was united with it.

The three town Boards on Tees-side each had more members. Both Darlington and Middlesbrough started with 9, but later increased them: Middlesbrough in 1894 to 15, and Darlington in 1880 to 11. Stockton School Board started with 7 members, increasing to 9 in 1876, 11 in 1888, and 13 in 1891.

The main reason for increasing the membership of a School Board was an increase in the population of the district, or an increase in the duties of the Board's members. Stockton, for example, increased their Board's membership from 9 to 11 in 1888 because they had just set up a system of visiting committees of Board members to supervise the schools directly, instead of relying on the reports of the Inspector, whom they had dismissed on grounds of economy.²⁸ Another reason for increasing the membership was to make the Board more representative of the different sections of the population: the more members the Board had, the more interests were likely to be represented on it. It was for this reason that when Middlesbrough School Board were considering whether to increase their membership in 1891 to 13, they received letters from Middlesbrough Trades Council and the Town Council, asking for an increase in their membership.²⁹

The larger School Boards usually fixed their quorum at 5 members, and the smaller ones at 3, although a smaller quorum was sometimes fixed when the board sat solely to hear applications for remission of fees.³⁰ However, Darlington in 1873 reduced their quorum to three members. A time limit was often fixed after which the meeting was adjourned if no quorum had turned up: Darlington School Board's limit was 15 minutes.³¹

Due partly to the higher proportion of members which constituted a quorum (and also probably to the scattered distribution of the population and the less important nature of most of their meetings) the country School Boards lost many more meetings through the absence of a quorum than the larger town Boards - although the latter also at times had to adjourn their ordinary meetings as well as committee meetings through lack of a quorum.³² Wolviston School Board was particularly bad in this respect. Between 1879 and 1882, the following monthly meetings were adjourned through lack of quorum:

<u>1879</u>	<u>1880</u>	<u>1881</u>	<u>1882</u>
November	January	April	February
December	March	October	May
	April	December	July
	May		November
	June		
	August		
	October		
	November		

Whitton School Board had also quite a poor record of attendance: in 1877 alone, three of the monthly meetings were adjourned through lack of a quorum, and the meetings had to be arranged at later dates in the month.³³

Several Boards, especially those which regularly printed annual reports for distribution, kept a record of the attendances of their individual members. These showed considerable variations between the members. During Middlesbrough School Board's first triennial period, out of a possible attendance of 47 meetings; its members attended as follows:³⁴

T. Brentnall	46	attendances	
J. F. Elgee	45	"	
I. Wilson	43	"	(chairman)
W. Fallows	42	"	
E. Williams	36	"	(vice-chairman)
J. Head	31	"	
W. R. I. Hopkins	25	"	
I. Haigh	25	"	
T. Vaughan	10	"	(elected 1872 to fill a vacancy)

It may not be completely a coincidence that the two members with the worst record of attendance, Hopkins and Haigh, were the only two Conservative-Churchmen on the Board with a Liberal majority, while Head was also a Churchman. The attendances of the members of Norton's first School Board varied from 66 (Barrett, the Quaker Chairman) to 35 (Harwood, Churchman) and 36 (Ridley, Anglican priest).³⁵ However, although the attendances did tend to be a little worse in the later years of the period than the earlier years, as was perhaps to have been expected, no rigid generalisations can be made about this: attendance of members varied between town and country boards (country areas usually having worse attendances), and according as to whether there was strong partisan feeling over any particular issue at the time. Some individual members attended so infrequently that their places were declared vacant. This happened when a member had not been present at the meetings for six consecutive months, and had not given a reasonable excuse such as illness for his absence. Several instances of this occurred on all the School Boards.³⁶

The ordinary meetings of the School Boards were usually held monthly, although special ad hoc meetings were sometimes called for dealing with particular matters. However, Norton School Board did at first hold their meetings fortnightly, but after a year they changed this to monthly meetings, giving the school visitors authority to call special meetings whenever some special matter arose.³⁷ An attempt by two members of Middlesbrough School Board to institute fortnightly meetings was defeated in 1872.³⁸

All the School Boards held their meetings during the weekdays. The larger ones held them during the morning or afternoon: Darlington,

Stockton and Middlesbrough School Boards held theirs at 3.0 p.m. or 3.30 p.m. (Darlington later changing to 10.0 a.m.). But the smaller School Boards, which had less business to attend to, normally held their meetings in the evenings, usually at 7.0 p.m. Middleton St. George School Board changed to afternoon meetings in 1886, but within a few months, had returned to evening meetings. Meeting in the evening was clearly more convenient for those members who were in regular employment, especially if they belonged to the working class. Sometimes this caused some friction among the members. Whitton School Board, for example, originally fixed their meetings for 11.0 a.m. In January 1893, after an election had been held in which a working class candidate had been returned, the time of the meetings was changed to 7.0 p.m. This started a series of heated debates over the subject: Kirk, an ironmaster, and Newsome, an Anglican priest, supported morning meetings, while Duncan, a railway signalman, Pipe, a station-master, and Hopps, a farmer, insisted on holding the meetings during the evening. In September of that year, owing to the absence of Duncan, a resolution was passed fixing the meetings at 2.30 p.m. It was not until 1895 that Duncan, along with another working class member, White, a platelayer, was able to get this reversed, and meetings once again were held in the evening. The time was changed twice more during the next few years, to 10.30 a.m. and then back to 7.0 p.m. After this final resolution, Newsome kept away from the meetings, claiming that he had to attend to his parish duties in the evenings, and, after six consecutive months of absence, his place on the Board was declared vacant. In its reply to Newsome's protest to the Education Department over this, the School Board said that morning meetings had proved so inconvenient that frequently no quorum had been present. However, changing the time of the meetings to the evenings did not completely remedy this, for, during the last few years of the Board's life, there were several instances of its meetings being adjourned through lack of a quorum. ³⁹

The School Boards of the larger districts could not dispose of all their business in their one ordinary meeting each month. Rather than hold more frequent ordinary meetings, they delegated much of their work to be done in committees, sometimes of the whole Board. The smaller School Boards, however, had no real need for such committees, as their business was much less, although some, Norton and Whitton for example, set up school management committees to deal with routine matters arising from their Board schools, such as the letting of the schools and leave of absence of the teachers. Likewise, Middleton St. George divided their Board members into Inside and Outside Committees, to supervise the running of the school and the upkeep of the buildings, respectively. But important matters (appointment of staff, salary increases, remission of fees and cases of non-attendance, etc.) were usually reserved for meetings of the whole Board. Whitton School Board appointed all its members to be an Attendance Committee, meeting every two weeks. Special matters, which required more consideration than could be spared in an ordinary meeting, were usually dealt with by extra meetings of the Board or by ad hoc committees: for example, Norton School Board set up ad hoc committees at various times to consider reductions of teaching staff, to investigate a case of ill-treatment of a pupil by a pupil teacher, and to visit neighbouring schools to help them choose the best design for the proposed new Board school; it also set up special sub-committees to inquire into the consumption of gas and electricity in the school, and to interview new teachers.⁴⁰ The only committees that most of the smaller Boards felt it was necessary to appoint, were those to visit and inspect the Board schools regularly: one or two Board members were usually appointed to visit the schools, often on a rota system for a limited period of time, although Whitton School Board in 1895 appointed their Chairman permanently to visit the Infants School and their Vice-Chairman, the Mixed School. Most of the Boards also invited ladies from outside the Board to act as committees to supervise the Girls and Infants schools, and in particular, to inspect the girls' sewing and knitting.⁴¹

The School Boards of the industrial towns, however, with far more schools, staff, and pupils under their control, were forced to delegate much of the routine business to various committees, which grew in number as the town populations and the work of the Boards expanded. Although there were some variations, Middlesbrough School Board's system may be taken as typical of Stockton and Darlington as well. By 1885, the Board had the following committees, which met monthly on weekday afternoons:

- (a) Finance Committee of five members, which met half an hour before the ordinary Board meetings and which examined all bills and supervised the finances of the Board;
- (b) School Management Committee of the whole Board, which had charge over all Board schools, with powers to engage teachers and move them between schools, enforce the Code provisions, report on salaries, supervise buildings and equipment, and regularly inspect the schools of the Board;
- (c) General Committee of six members, which met monthly until 1887 and then every two weeks, and heard cases of remission of fees and bad attendance, only reporting to the Board cases of particular interest;
- (d) Industrial School Committee of the whole Board, which was in charge of the management of the Industrial School;
- (e) Ladies Committee which had charge of the management of the Girls' and Infants' schools, and advised on the appointment of staff.

This last committee had initially been set up in 1872, but at first the Board had had great difficulty in attracting sufficient volunteers to serve on it: in February 1872, each Board member had been asked to nominate one lady for the committee, but only three ladies could be found who were willing to serve. By December 1873, the number had grown to nine, and by 1877, to 26. In 1876, they were divided into sub-committees: one to visit each school once a week, and the general ladies committee of all the ladies to meet once every three months and to report to the School Board. The ladies did not always have their advice taken: in 1874, for example, they recommended a £10 increase in salary for a female teacher, but the board refused to grant it, even after a repeated request by the ladies committee. ⁴²

By 1900, other committees had been added: the General Committee had been renamed 'School Provision and Attendance Committee', a Building Committee and a Science and Art Committee had been set up, and a sub-committee for the selection of teachers. A regular system of school visiting had also been arranged: the Board members had been divided up into four groups with three or four members in each group, and each group had to visit a quarter of the schools every three months. In addition, several ad hoc sub-committees had been set up at various times, to consider such matters as the desirability of teaching gymnastics or of establishing a Deaf and Dumb School.⁴³

Stockton and Darlington had a similar structure of committees, except that, having no Industrial School of their own, they had no Industrial School Committee, while Stockton School Board established committees for the Higher Grade School (the whole Board), the Organised Science School (whole Board plus two representatives from Durham County Council), and also appointed six of the fifteen members of the Joint Technical Education Committee for Stockton.⁴⁴

The only aspect of the School Boards' administrative structure to cause real controversy was that of the arrangements for the management of Board schools. This in particular flared up in Darlington. In 1872, Darlington School Board established committees of managers for all the Board schools, each consisting of two Board members and three other persons. But after the Voluntary party had won control of the Board in 1883, they dismissed the outside assistance and set up a new system whereby the schools were completely managed by Board members. At first they arranged for two members to visit the nine Board schools every month, but this proved too much for them, so the Board divided itself into groups of two members, each group having to visit a different set of two or three schools by rota each month. The Voluntary party said that this was a better system than that of 1872, since a majority of the members of the managing committees were now no longer non-Board members and thus "irresponsible", and because it also meant that every Board member had now to visit and report on

every school several times a year and so would get to know all the schools and their teachers personally. On the other hand, the Unsectarian party, which still supported the system of 1872, claimed that the Voluntary party system did not work properly, schools being left sometimes for three or four months at a time without a visit, and, as there was no continuity of visitation, the members did not get to know any school very well. The usefulness of the outside assistance, especially of the ladies for the Girls' schools, had been lost with no corresponding gain. Stockton School Board started a similar system in 1886, as part of an economy drive by the Unsectarians who had just won control of the Board. They abolished the office of Inspector of Schools, and started a system of regular visitation of schools by 'sub-management and investigation committees' of two to four members for each school to replace the Inspector's previous duties of supervising the schools of the Board.⁴⁵

The three large town School Boards regularly issued printed reports for ratepayers to inform them of the Boards' activities and the way the educational rate had been spent. Both Stockton and Middlesbrough issued triennial reports for distribution. Darlington School Board published annual printed reports until 1882, and ordered that a copy be left in every house. In 1883, however, the Voluntary party won control of the Board, and replaced the annual reports by triennial ones, which also contained less information. They claimed that this was in order to reduce rate expenditure, and also so that the three year period as a whole could be studied by the electors before an election. The Unsectarians accused them of reducing the reports in order to avoid publishing embarrassing information which would have shown up their failure to keep to their pledges to reduce the board's expenditure; and that they had omitted comparative statistics with this end in view. In 1895, the Board distributed copies of the annual report to the Board members, but the Voluntary party defeated a resolution to have it printed and generally circulated. However, from 1897, annual reports were once more published to the ratepayers in Darlington.⁴⁶

The small village School Boards had little need to go to the expense of printing reports in order to publicise their activities: Wolviston School Board nailed up its balance sheet on the door of the church for inspection. Sometimes, however, the smaller Boards did print reports: Middleton St. George, for example, printed and sent to ratepayers annual and triennial reports on occasions.⁴⁷

The other way in which School Boards could get their activities publicised, was to allow the Press to attend their meetings, and to report on them. Most of the School Boards passed resolutions that the Press should be admitted to their meetings. However, Middleton-in-Teesdale did not do this: the "Teesdale Mercury" in 1894 accused this Board of being one of the few School Boards in the country whose meetings were not open to the Press and the public, and in the election of that year, one of the candidates stood partly on the platform that the meetings should be open so that the ratepayers could find out how their money was being spent. This candidate was elected, but when the question was brought up in a Board meeting, it was resolved that the subject be not decided upon until a reporter actually made application to attend a meeting.

Naturally, it was very seldom that a ratepayer wished to attend a School Board meeting. But in 1885, the Voluntary Party packed a Board meeting in Middleton St. George with their supporters to try to delay the majority Unsectarian party from purchasing land on which to build a Board school to rival the Church school; they refused to leave, insisting that all ratepayers had a right to be present. The Board summoned the police to remove them, but the latter refused to eject them unless they started to cause a disturbance.⁺ When the Voluntary party won the next election, they passed a resolution declaring that all ratepayers had the right to attend any Board meeting. It was also generally agreed that ratepayers had a right to

⁺ see above, pp. 78-9.

attend any Board meeting. It was also generally agreed that ratepayers had a right to examine the School Boards' records. In 1895, James Duncan, who had resigned from Whitton School Board in protest against it not keeping to a resolution to dismiss a teacher, asked to be allowed to inspect a copy of the Board's documents. Although he was obviously doing this to find ammunition for the coming election (he was re-elected the following month), the Board recognized that he had a legal right to do so.⁴⁸

3. School Board Officers

The size of the School Board administrative staff naturally differed greatly between the small country, and large town, Boards. The latter could afford full-time officials at quite high salaries, while the small country school Boards had to make do with part-time officials, or, where they wanted to keep the rates as low as possible, with honorary officials, who were sometimes themselves serving Board members.

The three officers whom nearly every Board appointed, whatever its size, were a Clerk, a Warden and a Treasurer. However, Wolviston School Board appointed no official for the first two and a half years of its life, its chairman and its schoolmaster performing all the clerical duties between them. Even after a Clerk was appointed to the Board, so that he had as little work to do as possible, and thus to keep his salary low, the chairman continued to write the correspondence and the schoolmaster continued to send out the notices of meetings to the members, issue the precepts, and do other similar jobs, and he was given from time to time gratuities for the extra work he was doing: 10/- in 1879 and £5 in 1880.⁴⁹

The officials of all the small School Boards were part-time, and were usually professional men who did the job partly out of interest: in many cases they accepted the job several months before their salary was decided upon. The Clerks were usually paid £15 or £20 a year, although Norton School Board's Clerk, originally paid £25 a year, had his salary increased to £40 a year later, and the Clerk of

Wolviston School Board was paid only £10 a year from 1877 to 1885, after which they appointed one of their members Clerk for no salary at all. Whitton School Board also appointed a Board member honorary Clerk for a few months, but that was due to a lack of suitable applicants for the job after their former Clerk had retired. The Treasurers of all the smaller Boards were honorary appointments, and often serving members, although Norton School Board's Treasurer (not a Board member) was on one occasion given a gratuity of £4 10s. Od. Each of the smaller Boards also engaged a Warden to enforce attendance, all of whom were part-time, and usually paid £5 or £10 a year, although Norton School Board paid as much as £30 a year. The only other official whom the smaller Boards engaged was a Clerk of Works whenever they were having a Board school built: Norton School Board appointed one for 33/- a week if part-time and 45/- a week if full-time; Middleton-in-Teesdale appointed one for £23 a year, but refused to pay him his salary after a year until they were satisfied that he was doing his work properly.⁵⁰

The three larger town School Boards had to build up a much larger administrative staff, and depended much more on full-time officials. Each of them appointed a part-time Clerk, paying him originally £100 a year, although Darlington School Board had increased his salary to £200 a year by 1900, and Middlesbrough School Board gave theirs £25 in 1873 to cover his travelling expenses over the first three years, in connection with his duties. The finances of all the School Boards were supervised by a Treasurer. Middlesbrough School Board paid theirs, a part-time appointment, £25 a year at first, but by 1880, he was receiving £68 as Treasurer to the Board, and £25 as Treasurer to the Industrial School. Their Superintendent combined his duties as Inspector of Schools with those of Accountant to the Board, and so shared in the financial work of the Treasurer. Stockton School Board gave their Treasurer a small salary until 1899, when, in return for the Board covering his expenses, he agreed to perform his duties for nothing. But they also employed from 1874 an

Accountant for about £50 a year. Darlington School Board similarly appointed both an honorary Treasurer and a Schools Treasurer; the latter was paid £5 a school until 1889, after which he received £65 a year.⁵¹

The three Boards also considered appointing a chief executive officer, the equivalent of the Director of Education in a modern borough. Middlesbrough appointed a Superintendent (or Inspector of Schools) in 1875 at £300 a year (increased to £350 in 1892 and a few years later, to £400). This official gave general supervision over the Board schools, reporting each month to the Board on attendance and expenditure. He visited all the schools nearly every month; and once a year, before the H.M.I.'s examinations, he examined the pupil teachers and monitors, and also the elementary school pupils in class and specific subjects. He collected any information that the Board required, travelling when necessary to other School Board districts: in 1886, for example, he went to Leeds, Halifax and Liverpool to visit the Industrial Schools in which children from Middlesbrough were residing. Once the Superintendent had been appointed, the Board's Clerk became merely a legal adviser. When Middlesbrough had appointed its Superintendent and Inspector of Schools, Stockton School Board asked if he could be a joint appointment, doing the same duties for the Stockton district also, but this was refused. In 1882, Stockton School Board set up a similar system by appointing Benjamin Hodgins as Inspector of Schools at a salary of £200 a year. A few months later, they also appointed him Clerk and Accountant for an extra £40 a year. But after the Unsectarians had won control of the Board in 1885, they carried out an economy drive, dismissed Hodgins, abolished the office of Inspector, and appointed a Clerk and an Accountant whose combined salaries amounted only to £120 a year. Stockton School Board never again reintroduced an Inspector of Schools. Darlington School Board did for a short time consider such an appointment: in October 1879, just before a School Board election, the Board resolved to appoint an Inspector or Superintendent of Schools, but left the final decision to

the new Board. Despite the fact that the Unsectarian Party was re-elected as the majority party, the new Board rejected the idea of appointing an Inspector, and instead decided to extend the duties of the Clerk and increase his salary.⁵²

The three town School Boards appointed two full-time Wardens each in the 1870's: Middlesbrough paying theirs £104 a year and £110 a year; Stockton paying slightly less, and Darlington slightly more. Darlington School Board appointed a third one in 1899 as Assistant Warden at a salary of £30 a year (later £52) to help in the clerical work of the Wardens' office. By 1890, Middlesbrough School Board had increased its Wardens to three and Stockton School Board to five, but two of Stockton's acted also as caretakers of schools, being paid £65 a year as attendance officer, and £1 ~~per~~ each ten scholars at the schools as caretakers - in the case of the caretaker of Bowesfield Lane Schools, this came to a total salary of £120 a year.⁵³ In addition, Stockton employed an Office Assistant (later called Assistant Clerk) from 1882, and the three town Boards employed office boys in the later years for a few shillings a week. Clerks of Works were engaged when Board Schools were being built, with salaries depending on the work being done: Middlesbrough for example paid 25/- a week for one school and 45/- a week for two.⁵⁴

Apart from the Superintendent, the School Boards' most important official was the Clerk to the Board. All the Clerks were part-time appointments, and in most cases were solicitors. Middlesbrough, Darlington and Stockton School Boards all appointed the Town Clerks as their Clerks for most of their lives (John Belk, F. R. Steavenson and H. G. Faber respectively). This ensured more harmonious relationships with their town councils. After the death of H. G. Faber, Town Clerk of Stockton, Stockton School Board appointed another solicitor, James Tweedy. Darlington in 1897, appointed Raymond Steavenson, solicitor son of the late Town Clerk, to succeed his father, and later authorised another member of the family firm, H. G. Steavenson, Town Clerk of Darlington, to sign Board cheques and notices in his absence, as

honorary Deputy Clerk to the Board.⁵⁵ Middlesbrough's John Belk remained Clerk until June 1901, after which the Superintendent was also appointed honorary Clerk.

The smaller School Boards, as they could only offer a small remuneration to their Clerks, found it more difficult to secure the services of a solicitor, although some managed to do so: W. J. Stewart, a solicitor, was Clerk to Middleton St. George School Board during its existence, while T. H. Ward, a Middlesbrough solicitor, acted as Clerk to Whitton School Board 1880-1902. James Robinson, Clerk to Stockton Poor Law Union, was Clerk to Norton School Board (1873-95) and Wolviston School Board (1876-85). After his death, his successor on Norton School Board was Sidney Savoy (1896-1904), an Assistant Overseer, and as the Board needed a legal adviser now, George Newby was appointed honorary solicitor to the Board. Some Boards economised by appointing one of their own members as honorary Clerk: Wolviston did this from 1885 until the end of the Board (the Clerks being: Bainbridge, a farmer, 1885-93; Butcher, an Anglican priest, 1893-1904; both of them were Chairmen of the Board). Whitton appointed Dr. Bonner, one of its members, to act as Clerk 1879-80. Some years later, T. F. Fawcett, Cashier at the Carlton Ironworks, resigned as Chairman and member of Whitton School Board, in order to be appointed Clerk, at £22 a year.⁵⁶

John Smailes Calvert (1836-1926), as Superintendent of Schools for Middlesbrough School Board, held the most influential educational post in the area. A Presbyterian and keen temperance worker, he was a native of Tees-side, and had been educated in Middlesbrough's only elementary school of the time. He had become a pupil teacher there, and, after a brief period teaching in Leicester, had taught in Middlesbrough until his appointment as Superintendent - in the later years as Principal of Middlesbrough Academy in Newport Road. He was elected to Middlesbrough School Board in 1873 as a Liberal, but resigned within two years to take up his position as Superintendent of Schools for the Board. Apparently, he did not always attempt to be strictly neutral with regard to the opposing factions on the Board

(as is the modern practice among local government officers), for in 1889 he incensed the Denominationalists by distributing propaganda leaflets of the National Education Association "offensive in tone and insulting to the supporters of Voluntary schools"; their motion censoring this, was defeated by 4 votes to 2. After the Board ended, he became Director of Education for Middlesbrough, and stayed there until his retirement in 1915. He took a great interest in the development of education in Middlesbrough, and published "Examination Notes" in 1904, outlining his views on teaching methods. Stockton's Inspector of Schools 1882-6 was also a former schoolmaster: B. Hodgins, who was appointed from a list of 83 applicants, had previously taught at St. Paul's School in Preston, Lancashire.⁵⁷

The three town Boards appointed bank managers as their Treasurers. In 1871 Darlington School Board appointed the manager of the National Provincial Bank in the town as Treasurer to the Board. When he ceased to be manager in 1889, he resigned as Treasurer, and was succeeded in that position by the next manager of the bank. Stockton School Board's Treasurer for most of its life was James Stothart, manager of J. Backhouse & Co., Bankers. Middlesbrough School Board likewise appointed bankers as treasurer, and when one of their Treasurers left his position in the bank, the Board asked him to resign as Treasurer, and changed the Board's bank to the National Provincial Bank, in which their next Treasurer worked. The Boards also chose for their Accountants and Schools Treasurers, men whose profession was in finance: for example, both R. J. Laidler, Darlington's Schools Treasurer throughout its existence, and Thomas Bradley, Accountant to Stockton School Board 1886-96, were professional accountants. The smaller School Boards, although they sometimes appointed bankers as Treasurers, (for example, James Dinsdale of Darlington District Bank was Treasurer of Norton School Board 1878-87), mostly appointed their own members to that post, and gave them no salary. Norton School Board's first two Treasurers were Board members (Alfred Brady, a bank manager, 1873-5 and James Knowles, a butcher, 1875-8), while Wolviston School Board

also appointed a member as their Treasurer: Anthony Dobson, a farmer. Likewise, Whitton School Board's three Treasurers were Board members: J. N. D. Worton (1877-8), Manager of Carlton Ironworks; J. D. Pipe (1878-93), stationmaster; and Thomas Kirk (1893-1904), an ironmaster.^{+ 56}

Certain problems faced the School Boards which had to rely on officials who were professional men acting part-time for the Boards, despite the fact that some of them accepted the appointment more for interest than for remuneration - Middlesbrough School Board's Clerk on one occasion actually requested the Board not to increase his salary. One problem was that the officers sometimes lived some distance from the Board, When Whitton School Board's Treasurer left the district, the Board wrote reminding him of his promise to resign if he ever left the district. The same School Board also felt obliged to dismiss their Clerk, J. Coxon, when he moved to Stockton and refused to resign voluntarily. In some cases the part-time official performed his duties less conscientiously than he should. Whitton School Board's first Clerk failed to attend the Board meetings of May and June of 1875, and the Chairman of the Board was instructed to write to him expressing their surprise at this laxity. Some months later it was discovered that he had neglected to send details of building plans to the Education Department, and he was dismissed. The very fact that the Boards usually preferred their chief official to be a solicitor was not necessarily good. Mr. Oakley, the local H.M.I., reported on one occasion that this was a weakness in School Board administration: the Clerk, if a solicitor, usually regarded the business from a legal point of view, and was not apt to take any personal interest in the schools, with the result that there was often less personal relationships in the administration of Board schools than that of Voluntary schools. He said that this was perhaps too great a price to be paid

⁺ for details of the Wardens, see Chapter VII.

for efficiency in administration. Roberts, the Middlesbrough Beadle who had been dismissed in 1872⁺ made a similar point when he complained that the Clerk's favourite expression when he had tried to give reports had been "Cut it short! Cut it short!", and claimed that this "cutting it short"-had led to a mistake being made whereby the manager of the Britannia Ironworks had been wrongly accused of employing boys under age.⁵⁹

4. The Costs of Administration⁶⁰

One standard of efficiency for the administrative organisation of the School Boards - and the one which would have occurred immediately to the minds of the Board members and electors - was that of their cost. The most informative comparison of the relative administrative costs of the School Boards of the area, is perhaps that of the proportion of the administrative, to the total revenue, expenditure of each Board. To compare the administrative costs per head of the population or in terms of the 1d. rate, is misleading, as the Boards' work was chiefly concerned with the running of Board schools, and so those Boards with fewer schools to maintain or build would have appeared disproportionately efficient.

An analysis of the financial statistics of the school boards for 1880-1 reveals a definite trend in the costs of administration: the larger the School Board district, proportionately the more money was spent on administration.⁺⁺ The three town School Boards spent an average of 12% of their revenue expenditure on administration; those in the three medium sized school districts, with a population of two or three thousand each, spent an average of 7%; and the two small village Boards spent 5% each. This was perhaps due less to any operation

⁺ See Chapter VII.

⁺⁺ See chart on p.136. The relatively low percentage of Middlesbrough School Board's administrative expenditure was due largely to the high debt interest and redemption, compared with Darlington and Stockton's, ~~the relatively low administrative expenditure of Middleton in Teesdale was due to the fact that it had no debt at all.~~

of Parkinson's Law, than to the fact that the members of the smaller Boards could do much of the work themselves, and had less need of official reports etc., as they knew the schools under their control more intimately.

By 1900-1, however, the proportion of the administrative costs to total revenue expenditure was much more even between the various School Boards; in respect of all of them it lay between 3% and 7%. This was due largely to the vastly increased debt of the town Boards which had had to build a large number of schools to provide for their increasing populations. The resulting large annual expenditure on interest and redemption inflated the total revenue expenditure without causing an equivalent increase in the amount of work for the administrative staff; it is noticeable that the largest percentage of administrative expenditure for the three town Boards belonged to the Board which had the least debt (interest and redemption payments 1900-1 for Darlington School Board was only £1949, but for Middlesbrough was £7529 and for Stockton £4145). Likewise, the largest percentage administrative expenditure among the smaller Boards was that of Middleton St. George, which had no debt to redeem or on which to pay interest. (Interest and redemption payments 1900-1 for Norton School Board was £486; for Middleton-in-Teesdale, £178; for Whitton, £78 and for Wolviston, £58).

Within the School Boards there were some changes in the administrative expenditure over the period. Darlington School Board and the smaller School Boards showed little real change in the pattern of their administrative expenditure, although most of them did increase their expenditure on administration slightly in the later years (in total, and not relative to total expenditure). But Stockton School Board showed a pronounced trend to increase its expenditure on administration, especially in the 1890's. Middlesbrough School Board's expenditure also grew steadily up to 1884, but then it fell until 1898, recovering after this to the level of the late 1870's and early 1880's. But this

was probably the product of an accountancy technicality rather than any real change in the administration.⁺

The effects of changes in party policies on the administration of the School Boards can sometimes be seen in the accounts, especially when a party was returned in an election with a determined policy to reduce the rates by more efficiency. But the effects tended to be only temporary. The Unsectarian party, which won control of Stockton School Board in 1885, passed a series of economy measures, including the dismissal of the Inspector of Schools, and by this achieved a reduction in the costs of administration from an average of £840 a year between 1883 and 1886, to one of £651 between 1886 and 1892. But after 1892, the administrative expenditure once more steadily grew: £690 in 1891-2, it had risen to £1010 by 1892-3 and £1258 by 1901-2. On the other hand, it was the Denominationalist party which won the 1883 election of Darlington School Board with a policy of reducing the rate expenditure. They did in fact manage to make some reduction in the Board's expenditure on administration (from an average of £683 a year 1878-83 to one of £658 a year 1883-8 and £613 a year 1888-92). But after 1892, although the Denominationalist party was still in control of the Board, the administrative costs once more rose steadily to a yearly average well above that of the 1870's and 1880's.

⁺ There was a sharp fall in the figure representing administrative salaries in the published accounts after 1884, until it was below that of the combined salaries of the Wardens and Superintendent; as there is no reference in the Minutes to any changes of salary, this suggests that a high proportion of the Superintendent's salary was re-allocated to 'Management of Schools'. Unfortunately, the cash books, which would have shown how his salary was apportioned, have been destroyed. It is probable that the Board did this in order to obtain a higher grant: in its 1882-5 Report, the School Board had complained that, owing to Article 114 of the Code, their schools were earning a higher grant than could be paid to them, and that the only way of avoiding the deductions, was to spend more on the management of the schools, which they were reluctant to do in the interests of the ratepayers.

COSTS OF ADMINISTRATION 1880-1 AND 1900-1

School Board	Population		Administrative Expenditure		Total Revenue Expenditure		Cost of admin. as % of total expenditure	
	1881	1901	1880-1	1900-1	1880-1	1900-1	1880-1	1900-1
Middlesbrough	55,530	100,850	£ 868	£ 1,092	£ 9,049	£ 38,448	10%	3%
Stockton	41,660	51,480	605	1,251	4,448	25,728	14%	5%
Darlington	33,430	44,510	743	984	5,651	16,437	13%	6%
Norton	3,200	4,530	81	77	931	2,312	9%	3%
Cowpen Bewley & Billingham	2,480	4,750	38	-	479	-	8%	-
Middleton-in-Teesdale	2,290	1,990	36	29	677	820	5%	4%
Middleton St. George	1,100	1,160	-	35	-	546	-	7%
Wolviston	740	730	13	12	271	310	5%	4%
Whitton	730	1,180	16 ⁺	41	337 ⁺	858	5% ⁺	5%

⁺ Whitton School Board's statistics are those of 1881-2, because the administrative expenditure for 1880-1 was only 3/2d., due mainly to the fact that the Clerk had been dismissed in 1879, and a Board member had been acting as honorary Clerk for nearly a year.

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CHAPTER V PROVISION OF EDUCATION

1. Elementary Schools

The Elementary Education Act of 1870 laid down that there should be provided in every school district sufficient accommodation in public elementary schools for all children resident there for whom efficient and suitable education was not otherwise provided. Where there was insufficient school accommodation, a School Board was to be elected to supply the deficiency of accommodation through the provision of Board Schools. The extent of any deficiency was to be determined by the Education Department, and if a School Board failed to supply sufficient accommodation, the Education Department as a last resort was authorised to declare the School Board in default and replace it by one nominated by itself. Under the Act, the School Boards could also supply additional accommodation from time to time as "in their opinion is necessary". In theory, this gave the Boards great discretionary power, enabling them to over-estimate any deficiency and thereby indirectly to compete with the Voluntary schools; however, in practice, this was impossible, for the sanction of the Education Department was necessary before a School Board was authorised to raise a loan for a new school, and the Department refused to sanction loans for unnecessary schools.

In estimating the educational needs of a district, the Education Department took one-sixth of the population as representing the number of children requiring school accommodation, and, of this, 5% was allowed as representing those who would be absent through unavoidable excuse. The extent of the accommodation of any public elementary school was calculated on a basis of floor space: in the 1870's, 8 square feet was laid down as necessary for each child, but this was later increased to 10 square feet.

Darlington was one of the few School Boards in the country which had been established in a town where there was a surplus of efficient public elementary school accommodation, and solely for the purpose of enforcing compulsory attendance. The school census of

June 1871 confirmed that, whereas there were only 6285 children aged 3 to 13 years in the town, and of these 898 were receiving 'superior education' or being educated at home, there was provision in the town's public elementary schools for 5946, and thus leaving a surplus of 559 school places. As the Voluntary schools continued to expand after the establishment of the School Board, the task of the Board was light for many years. There continued to be a surplus of school accommodation until 1877, when two Voluntary schools (St. Paul's Church School, Harrowgate Hill, and St. Patrick's Roman Catholic School, Brunswick St.) closed down because of financial difficulties. The resulting deficiency of school places was overcome a few months later by the School Board purchasing the two schools (Brunswick St. for £1050 and Harrowgate Hill School for £700) and reopening them. As a result, the School Board was not obliged to build any new schools until 1886 (Beaumont Central School) and 1896 (Corporation Road School); apart from these, deficiencies of accommodation, created by the increasing population, were supplied by the reopening of old schools which had been sold or transferred to the School Board, and by making extensions in the existing Board schools. Because of this, the Board was able to keep the cost of providing school places very low indeed. This was helped also by the generosity of local benefactors. For example, when Skinnergate School was handed over to the Board in 1872, two Board members, H. Pease and H. J. Grieveson, built covered playing sheds in each of the playgrounds at their own expense.²

Once the School Board had been established, and even though there was no deficiency for it to supply, it soon found itself responsible for the running of a number of schools, for several Voluntary schools were transferred to it, especially by the British and Foreign School Society. As early as September 1871, three of the most enthusiastic Unsectarian members proposed that the School Board circularise the town's Voluntary schools, declaring their intention to receive offers of transference of schools; however, the other Board members preferred to let the schools themselves take the

initiative in this matter, and the motion was defeated. By December of that year, however, three British Schools had already been offered to the Board. After the General Purposes Committee had examined the financial and structural condition of each school, the School Board accepted the two schools which had been offered free or for a nominal price, but rejected Bridge St. School which had been offered on a seven year lease at £10 a year. Two years later, this last school was accepted after the terms had been changed from a lease to an outright transfer. Some of the schools transferred required money to be spent on them for improvements, but some were in excellent condition, and even, as in the case of Bank Top School, were entirely maintained from grants earned and fees.³

By 1883, the increase in population of the town had led to some overcrowding in the schools (the 1878 Census showed a slight deficiency in accommodation). In that year, Bank Top School was compulsorily purchased by the North Eastern Railway Company for extensions to the station, while the H.M.I. decided not to give the Board's oldest school, Skinnergate School, built in 1818, a grant because of the school's bad condition. Rather than spend money on extensions and improvements, the School Board decided that it would be more economical to erect a new building, and close down Bridge St. School, in addition to Bank Top and Skinnergate Schools, because that school was also unsatisfactory in condition and location. In place of the three schools, they built Beaumont Central Schools, with accommodation for more scholars than the other schools together. While waiting for the Central Schools to open, temporary schools were provided by the renting of Jubilee School from Arthur Pease and also a lecture room in the Central Hall, both for about £1 a week. A few years later, the continued increase in population forced further enlargements of the Board schools and the provision of more temporary ones, until a new Board school in Corporation Road was opened in 1896. The opening of this school temporarily eased the pressure on the elementary schools, but by 1900, the increase of population had once

more overtaken the Board's supply of school places, and it was forced to erect new buildings for Rise Carr School to accommodate 650 scholars."

Darlington School Board Schools

<u>School</u>	<u>Origin</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Accommodation:</u>	
			<u>when</u> <u>acquired</u>	<u>in</u> <u>1902</u>
Rise Carr	transferred from British Society	1872	150	690
Skinnergate	" " " "	1872	356	(closed 1886)
Albert Rd.	" " " "	1873	573	994
Bridge St.	" " " "	1874	257	(closed 1886 & sold)
Bank Top	" " " "	1875	460	(sold to N.E. Rail- way 1883)
Kendrew St.	" " " "	1875	497	552
Gurney Pease	given by Mrs. Pease	1878	215	394
Harrowgate				
Hill	purchased from Church of England	1878	344	577
Brunswick St.	" " Roman Catholic Church	1878	314	467
Beaumont St.				
Central	built by School Board	1886	980	980
Corporation				
Road	" " " "	1896	448	448

Middlesbrough School Board was faced by the greatest educational task on Tees-side. The town had sprung up very fast, and for many years, few Voluntary schools had been built. A British school had been established in 1838, but this had only provided for 280 scholars, and no further school was built until 1859, largely because of the poverty of the town. By the 1860's, however, a generation of rich ironmasters had grown up, and the Church of England had become interested in the town's education; several schools were opened between 1859 and 1870, largely financed by the ironmasters (St. John's, St. Paul's and St. Hilda's Church Schools, Southbank National School and the Wesleyan School). But these efforts had come very late, and the Voluntary Schools could only provide for a section of the population. From their census of 1871, the School Board calculated that there was a deficiency of 2520 places (over one-third of the required accommodation). The

Education Department, however, declared that they had under-estimated the deficiency, as they had only calculated for children between five and thirteen years, whereas they should have included children aged three and four years as well. Taking these into account, 8080 public elementary school places were required; as provision existed or schools being erected, for 5051 scholars, the deficiency to be supplied by the Board was now fixed at 3029.⁵

Middlesbrough School Board tackled their task with enthusiasm. They did not wait to hear the results of the census, but in February 1871, rented for £25 a year Stockton Street British Schools, which had been closed for some time, in order to repair and re-open them. The Schools were opened in November 1871, and the School Board claimed that these were the first Board schools to be opened in the country. The Board also unanimously decided to build 4 new schools for 700 scholars each, in the middle and west of the town where was the most need - a proposal which the "Middlesbrough Exchange" declared "fairly took one's breath away" (but even that Conservative newspaper admitted that bold measures were necessary). The Education Department, on the advice of the local H.M.I., suggested that the Board erect 3 schools for 1000 pupils each, instead of the 4 which the Board had proposed to build. The School Board, however, began the construction of the schools already decided upon (Fleetham St. for 800 scholars; Denmark St. for 1000; and Lower East St. for 600), but they did provide for future extensions by purchasing larger sites than was necessary for the original schools. Their first school, Fleetham St., was opened in August 1873, and would have been the first new Board school in the country, along with the first schools of London and Leeds, had not a joiners' strike delayed the opening by one month. A new school at Linthorpe, for 300, was also built in 1874.⁶

While the large new Board schools were in course of erection, the School Board opened several temporary schools, renting school rooms in Park St. from the Baptists, in Linthorpe from the Wesleyans, and in Milton Road from the Free Methodist Church; all for £15 or £20 a year.

On one occasion, they even rented a slaughterhouse for a temporary school room:⁷

Despite the efforts of the School Board to provide sufficient school places, and despite those of the voluntary bodies (the Roman Catholics built two schools in the 1870's and the Anglicans, one), the fast population increase in the town prevented the School Board from ever being able to rest assured that ample provision was available. Censuses of the wardens repeatedly showed that a deficiency still existed, while the coming of free education in 1891 led to such an increase in attendance, that the average attendance in Board schools far exceeded their accommodation for a time (in September 1891, accommodation was 6339 and average attendance 6566). As a result, the School Board had continually to make extensions to their schools during the 1880's and 1890's, open temporary schools, and also build 5 large new ones: Newport Road (for 1286 scholars), Grange Road (1228), Victoria Road (1265), Marton Road (1040) and Ayresome (1270). By 1900, the School Board had provided 10,912 places, and yet they had still failed to catch up with the needs of an ever-increasing population. In 1902, the overcrowding was so great in some schools, that the Board had to order that all children living outside the town should be excluded from the Board schools (except Hugh Bell), while in the same year, the Education Department was once more stressing the importance of prompt action by the Schools Board to relieve the deficiency in some areas.⁸

Middlesbrough Board Schools

<u>School</u>	<u>Origin</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Accommodation:</u>	
			<u>when opened</u>	<u>in 1902</u>
Stockton St.	transferred from British Soc.	1871	250	249
Fleetham St.	built by School Board	1873	800	1194
Denmark St.	" " " "	1874	1000	1227
Lower East St.	" " " "	1874	600	600
Linthorpe	" " " "	1874	300	392
Southend	transferred from British Soc.	1875	816	1440
Lower East St. Infants (pre- viously Feversham St.)	" " " "	1875	270	225

<u>School</u>	<u>Origin</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Accommodation:</u>	
			<u>when opened</u>	<u>in 1902</u>
Newport Road Hugh Bell (Grange Rd.)	built by School Board " " " "	1884	1286	1706
Victoria Road	" " " "	1892	1228	1539
Marton Road	" " " "	1893	1265	1265
Ayresome	" " " "	1898	1040	1040
		1902	1270	1270

Although Stockton was a much older town than Middlesbrough, the voluntary bodies there had also failed to provide sufficient school places by 1870. In 1871, the School Board calculated that there was a deficiency of 1240 places, even taking into account the extra accommodation then being contemplated. But in spite of the fact that Stockton was (with Gateshead) the first town in the country to receive the Education Department's full requisition for supplying a deficiency of public elementary school accommodation, the School Board proved slow to supply the required places, and preferred to keep down the cost of elementary education to the rates by giving the Voluntary schools encouragement to provide as many places as they could. It was typical of the Board that they decided to await hearing the intentions of the voluntary bodies before making any plans for a permanent Board school. They did, however, open a temporary school, and rented the Temperance Hall as a school room. In October 1871, they purchased a site in Mill Lane for a Board school to accommodate 1000 children, and when this was opened a year later, the Temperance Hall was vacated. A few months later, the Board purchased the Old Ragged Schools, Portrack Lane, from the Trustees which could no longer be continued because of financial difficulties, and kept it open as a temporary school until their second new school, Bailey Street School, was opened in 1879. They then made an unsuccessful attempt to sell the school by public auction.⁹

Stockton School Board throughout the period proved reluctant to provide more school places than were at any time absolutely necessary. This, along with the continued increase in population, meant that there was ever present some deficiency of school accommodation. Thus, despite the free gift of Regent St. School buildings, and the erection

of new Board schools at Bowesfield Lane, the overcrowding in some schools was so great by 1883, that the Board was forced to reopen the Portrack Lane Schools, after making improvements as permanent Board schools. Only in 1890, after new Board schools had been built in Tilery Road and Oxbridge Lane, and further extensions made to its other schools, did the Board satisfy the Education Department for a short time that no deficiency existed. However, the following year, the British Schools at Hume Street closed down, and this, combined with the increase of attendance which resulted from the establishment of free elementary education in 1891, created over-crowding once more. The School Board met this by leasing and reopening the Hume St. School. In 1894, the Trustees of the Blue Coat School declared that they could no longer support it, and, despite repeated efforts by the School Board to get them to change their minds, they closed down the school in March of that year. This caused more acute overcrowding in several schools, until the Board made extensions to its Mill Lane Schools. Apart from a new Infants school in Portrack, the only other school to be built by the School Board, was the Higher Grade School, in 1896. "

Stockton Board Elementary Schools

<u>School</u>	<u>Origin</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Accommodation:</u>	
			<u>when</u> <u>opened</u>	<u>in</u> <u>1902</u>
Mill Lane	built by School Board	1873	1000	1369
Portrack Lane (later Bath Lane)	purchased from Ragged School Trustees	1874	180	180
Bailey St.	built by School Board	1879	750	1125
Bowesfield Lane	" " " "	1881	773	1222
Regent St.	transferred from Trustees	1875	140	166
Tilery Rd.	built by School Board	1885	907	907
Oxbridge Lane	" " " "	1890	784	1112
Hume St.	transferred from British Soc.	1891	404	413
Higher Grade	built by School Board	1896	760	892
Portrack	" " " "	1902	200	200

None of the School Boards were keen to spend more money on the erection of Board schools than was necessary, for they realised how unpopular a high educational rate would have been. Because of this, none

of the Boards of the area over-estimated the educational deficiency in their districts, and all of them had at times to be egged on by the Education Department or local H.M.I. But the Education Department did realise how great a task it was to provide sufficient school places in towns which were expanding as fast as Middlesbrough, where, no sooner had one new school been built than it was overcrowded and a fresh one became necessary. Thus, although firm, the Education Department was sympathetic and did not expect the School Boards to do everything at once. It was also prepared to be flexible when special circumstances arose. For example, when overcrowding occurred in neighbouring schools after the closure of Stockton Blue Coat Schools, it allowed the School Board to calculate their school accommodation at 8 square feet per pupil instead of 10 square feet for a period of 6 months while preparations could be made to make up the deficiency. On the other hand, the local H.M.I. quite often had to threaten to withhold the grant for a school if overcrowding in it was not soon rectified. In Middlesbrough, for example, the H.M.I. in his 1886 report of Fleetham St. Girls' School described the bad effects of such a shortage of space on the standard of education given to the scholars:

"Reading, though fluent, is too loud to admit of really good modulation. This defect is unfortunately encouraged by the crowding together of so many classes into one room ... The boys' and girls' accommodation is at present insufficient for the average attendance (Article 96a). This should be at once remedied, otherwise the whole of next year's grant will be withheld."

At times the warnings of the H.M.I. were also accompanied by pleadings of the school managers and the Superintendent, which urged greater provision of accommodation to relieve the overcrowding."

Overcrowding was not surprising in the case of Middlesbrough, which had the greatest difficulty in keeping up with the fast increasing population. In the cases of Darlington and Stockton, however, it was to be more expected that the School Boards would have been able to supply sufficient school accommodation, in spite of the fact that their populations were also increasing steadily, because these towns, being

older, had greater voluntary resources, and their populations were increasing less fast than that of Middlesbrough. Darlington, indeed, had a surplus of school places during most of the 1870's, but by 1877, the population had caught up with the available accommodation, and there was a Denominationalist majority on the school Board from 1883, whose declared policy it was to encourage the expansion of the town's Voluntary schools to the utmost.⁺ From then onwards, the H.M.I. and school managers were constantly complaining of overcrowding and urging more schools to be built. The Denominationalist majority repeatedly deferred new extensions to their schools which were urged by the Unsectarian opposition. A few months after their triumph at the School Board election, the Denominationalist-controlled School Board was ordering that Standard II be taught in two Infant schools, rather than incur the cost of providing more senior school places; this was soon stopped by the Education Department. In 1892, when the School Board demanded an explanation for the poor H.M.I. reports on Harrowgate Hill and Rise Carr Schools, it was informed that, in the case of the former school, 160 scholars had been present when the H.M.I. had held his examination, although the school had accommodation for only 150, and 170 had actually been present when the School Committee had last visited it. Rise Carr School had also been overcrowded: four different classes had been squeezed into one large room, there were insufficient desks, and when the School Managers had visited it, several children had been on their knees, writing on forms and stools. Even in 1903, the H.M.I. was threatening to withhold the grant for Beaumont St. Central Schools on grounds of overcrowding.¹²

If Darlington School Board was laggard with respect to supplying a sufficient number of school places in the latter years of its existence, Stockton School Board was laggard throughout its life. The Board, controlled for most of its history by the Denominationalists, upheld a policy of economy and the maximum encouragement of voluntary efforts,

⁺ see above, p. 64

and, as a result, usually failed to keep pace with the educational requirements of the town. Economy was not for the most part a party issue on this School Board, for both parties tried to keep the educational rate as low as possible most of the time, although there were some occasions when the Unsectarian opposition did urge the Denominationalists to build more Board schools. When Bowsfield Lane Schools were opened in 1881, they were at once so overcrowded that the Education Department warned the Board that the Schools were in danger of losing their grant, and the Board was forced to make extensions to the schools very soon afterwards. On numerous other occasions the Education Department called the Board's attention to the fact that average attendance was exceeding accommodation in some of their schools, while sometimes also the ratepayers organised petitions to urge the School Board to do something to relieve the overcrowding in their districts - as, for example, in 1898, when the ratepayers of Portrack area presented a petition to the School Board on two occasions, in June and November, before the Board gave way and agreed to build a new Infant school there. (When the School Board announced its intention to build the school, other ratepayers counter-petitioned the Education Department against the erection of the new school, arguing that it was then a period of exceptionally high prices, and so would prove much more expensive than if the project were deferred for a time). Even after the erection of Portrack School, the demand for school places was so great that other schools in the town remained overcrowded, and in 1903-4, the H.M.I. complained that the average attendance at the Board schools in Tilery Road, Bowsfield Lane, and Bailey St., were all exceeding the accommodation there, and once more threatened to withhold the annual grants for these schools. It says much for the patience of the Education Department and Board of Education, that in fact the grant was not withheld in the case of any Stockton Board School.¹³

The H.M.I.'s continually pressed the school boards to build schools of the highest quality, and to make regular improvements in the schools they already possessed. One necessary improvement for many of the older school buildings was for partitions to be erected in large school rooms where more than one class was held at the same time. The

H.M.I. blamed the absence of such partitions in Albert Road Board School, Darlington, for the noisiness of that school in the inspection of 1889, and, as a result, a few years later the School Board was able to announce proudly that they had installed moveable glazed partition screens in several of their schools, which had greatly added to the discipline and teaching of the schools. Middlesbrough put up curtains in some of their schools for the same purpose, while Stockton School Board spent £320 during the 1880's on partitioning nine of their Departments. The H.M.I.'s were also careful to encourage adequate playground space to be provided in the elementary schools. But it took several attempts before the local H.M.I. could persuade Darlington School Board to provide adequate playground space at Kendrew St. School and to move the outside lavatories some distance from the school building. It was also due to the efforts of the H.M.I. that Middlesbrough School Board decided to screen round the playground of their school in Marton Road. The H.M.I. had told them that "the utility of the admirable extent of playground is seriously diminished by the interruption of school discipline which the present publicity allows of, and by the offensive comments, particularly in the case of the Girls' Department during drill hours, to which both teachers and children are unavoidably subjected." As a last resort, the H.M.I. could always threaten to withhold the annual grant on account of inadequate facilities, if the School Boards refused to take notice of their advice on improvements. This was done in the case of Middlesbrough Board Infants School at Linthorpe, in 1884, in which the H.M.I. found no desks for the older children and no room for varied occupations.⁴

The School Boards which had many schools to erect and maintain, naturally took care to trim them down to the basic facilities in order to prevent them from being too great a burden on the rates. It was for reasons of economy that Middlesbrough School Board decided in 1874 to replace water closets by earth closets when in course of erecting Denmark St. School as they considered the water rate too high, while in 1901 they informed the Borough Surveyor that they did not require

electric lighting in their schools (although they did later install it in Ayresome School). The larger School Boards frequently published in their triennial reports the average cost per place of their new schools, in order to convince the ratepayers that they were providing them more cheaply than the majority of School Boards in the country. In 1875, for example, Middlesbrough School Board told the town council that the Board schools had only cost £9 1s. 0d. per place, compared to £15 7s. 3d. in London, £22 14s. 0d. in Bradford and £12 13s. 3d. in Newcastle.

The cost of erecting a school tended to increase, especially in the latter years of the century, when inflation once more set in, and also when the Code requirements for school buildings became more stringent. But the Codes did contain certain financial inducements to encourage School Boards to achieve a reasonable standard when erecting and fitting out a school: the H.M.I. awarded the merit grants partly according to the facilities available in a school, while the total grant which could be paid to the schools was limited to a level based on income from other sources, such as the rates. A School Board which was not given their full grant on account of this, such as Stockton School Board on occasions, was sometimes stimulated to avoid this happening in the future by spending more on improvements. Some of the Board schools, in fact, were very well built and well equipped: Middlesbrough School Board was proud of its Hugh Bell School, Stockton School Board of its Higher Grade School, while Darlington School Board claimed that its new Rise Carr School was as good as any in the North of England, with such modern principles in its layout as corridors running the whole length of the building which enabled headteachers to dismiss any class without the children having to pass through another room. ¹⁵

There is not much direct evidence by which to compare the relative merits of the Board school buildings and those of the Voluntary schools. But evidence supplied by the Cross Commission did suggest that the Voluntary schools were in general a little inferior to those provided by the School Boards. There were more small rooms in the

Voluntary schools than in the Board schools in the three towns of the area from which information was collected: only 2% of the classrooms in the Board schools of Middlesbrough were less than 14 feet wide, compared with 8% of the Voluntary classrooms; in Darlington, 8% of the Board classrooms were less than this width, and 30% of the Voluntary ones. This was to be expected, for not only did the Board schools have the benefit of rate money, but, on average, had more modern buildings than the Voluntary bodies. The higher percentage of small Board school rooms in Darlington, can be explained by the fact that a large proportion of their schools had been Voluntary schools before being transferred to the School Board.¹⁶

In 1885, Mr. Swettenham, the H.M.I. for South Durham and Middlesbrough, warned of the danger of the School Boards of small districts building too generously, as there was sometimes no certainty of the populations of the small villages remaining there for long, in the period of trade depressions. He called attention to one colliery village School Board which had built a large school which was at once rendered unnecessary by the closure of the pit. He declared that, but for his remonstrance against extravagance, a school would have been built in another poor area for children of ironworkers who had by then left the district, probably for good.¹⁷

There was no need for the H.M.I. to have worried about this with respect to the School Boards of North Tees-side. Two of the Boards in this area (Cowpen Bewley and Wolviston) had been compulsorily set up by the Education Department, and they had no intention of being over-extravagant in their provision of school places. Cowpen Bewley School Board merely took over the existing British School at Port Clarence, ran it for a few years until Bell Brothers agreed to be responsible for it, and then dissolved itself.⁺ Wolviston School Board tried to persuade the trustees of the National School to transfer it to the Board, but, when too high a price was insisted upon, they decided to build one

⁺ see above, Chapter I, p.15



Wolviston Board School.



Whittton Board School.

of their own. The initial plans for the Board school in Wolviston were too small, and were only approved of by the Education Department after the proposed school had been enlarged. The Board economised on a playground by placing the school abutting the Village Green. The school was opened in 1877 with accommodation for 122. This was ample provision, as there were about 100 children of school age in the village, although several children from outside also attended the school, and no further extensions were necessary throughout the period. Partly in order to keep the school as full as possible and so earn the maximum annual grants, the School Board took measures to close the Private Adventure school, and also encouraged children under five years of age to attend. Threats by the H.M.I. to withhold the annual grant proved necessary before the school was satisfactorily equipped.¹⁸

In contrast to Wolviston School Board, that of Whitton was at first very enthusiastic to provide sufficient school accommodation. The Board was established in July 1874 at the request of the ratepayers, and at once it negotiated a room for a temporary school at the Carlton Ironworks (North of England Industrial Iron and Coal Company). Although only about 100 children required education at the time, the Board decided to provide for the future expansion of the Ironworks, and provide for 200, and then 300, scholars. Their enthusiasm was equalled by generous offers of help by the Chairman of the Board, Mr. Briggs, on behalf of the Carlton Ironworks: the Board was offered a gift of half an acre of land as the site of the school and payment of 50% of the loan redemption and interest instalments for the building. The Board also appealed to the villagers to offer the contractor who was to build the school, use of their horses and carts, which would lessen his costs and thus keep down the expense of the erection of the new school.¹⁹

But this enthusiasm soon died down. Within two years, the directors of Carlton Ironworks declared that their Articles of Association forbade the company to make a gift of land, or even to sell it at a nominal price, and so the School Board was forced to pay £50 for the site. After the building was complete, the Board suffered a worse blow:

the directors of the Company informed the Board that they had only intended to pay the amount by which half the redemption and interest payments exceeded the proportion of rates they paid which went on education, and, as this last exceeded half the loan payments, they would give nothing to the Board. The School Board took legal advice on this, but they were informed by their solicitor that they had a legal hold over only Mr. Briggs (who had by this time left the district) and not over the Company; they then decided to pursue this no further.²⁰

The Board school erected at Whitton had accommodation for only 162 children. By 1884, this was no longer adequate, and the H.M.I. told the Board that it was with great hesitation that he was awarding the Infants school with even a "Fair" merit grant that year. He strongly advocated a separate Infants' Department to be established under a certificated mistress. The Board, however, failed to follow this advice, arguing that the depression in the iron trade made it uncertain whether there would be as many people living in the village in the future. The following year, the average attendance of the Infants school was 65 (its accommodation was for 60), and when the Inspector visited it, 105 pupils were crowded into the room. As a result, the H.M.I. awarded it no merit grant, and sternly warned the Board that no grant at all would be given in future if the overcrowding was allowed to continue. This spurred on the Board to lease the Cassidi Memorial School as an Infants School. In 1894, further improvements were made in the schools after the H.M.I. had refused the annual grant until the lavatories had been improved: they were undrained, with no partitions and no doors.²¹

Throughout its life, Whitton School Board remained under the shadow of the Carlton Ironworks, the only large employer in the village. The Company provided coal and water for the Board School, cleaned it, and rented the Board the schoolmaster's house; many of the Board members were employees of the firm, including the three chairmen of the Board (Briggs 1874-7, Kirk 1877-98 and Fawcett 1898-1902); Thomas Kirk (Managing Director) was not only Chairman of the Board for 20 years, but

also Treasurer from 1898 to 1904; his son, Thomas Kirk junior, (Works Manager) succeeded him on the Board after his resignation; Worton (Manager) served as Board Treasurer 1877-8, and Fawcett (Cashier) as Clerk 1902-4.²²

Middleton St. George School Board had no need to build a school at all. After a fierce struggle which lasted three years, the trustees of the National school transferred it to the Board in 1887 at a nominal rent of 5/- a year. Once improvements had been carried out on this school by the Board, there was sufficient school accommodation for the rest of the period. Thus, little rate expenditure was required to provide for the educational needs of the district, as would have been incurred had the first School Board bowed to the hostility of the National school trustees and erected a school of their own. The School Board was forced, however, to make improvements in the school's facilities after the H.M.I. had refused to award a merit grant in 1888. Three Board members first visited Beaumont St. Board school in Darlington to see what a well furnished school was like. No additional accommodation was needed during the life of the Board, although in 1894, they were forced to exclude children under 5 years from attending the School in order to avoid overcrowding. They had previously encouraged children of 3 and 4 years to enter school, but obviously did not consider the educational advantages of early entry to school worth any expenditure of rate money on enlarging the school.²³

The School Board of Middleton-in-Teesdale also began with an old school which provided most of the necessary school accommodation for the district: that built by the Lead Company, which the Board leased for £50 a year from 1879. The school had been previously discontinued by the Company and this had necessitated the establishment of a School Board. They had, however, also to provide an Infants school. Uncertain as to the future of the lead trade, they decided to postpone the erection of a new building, and rented instead the ground floor of the Primitive Methodist Hall as a temporary school. In 1890, the School Board decided that a new school was necessary. The Education Department at the time was urging the Board to enlarge their school, while the Lead

Company was charging what the Board considered was too high a rent and refused to reduce it. They rejected merely altering the old school, as the building was old and not in very good condition - in 1883, several parents had withdrawn their children from the school because of the low temperature of the building, and this had necessitated the installation of a new heating system which had been very expensive. The School Board borrowed £2,300, sent two members to visit neighbouring schools for ideas on the best designs, and petitioned (unsuccessfully) the Duke of Cleveland for a donation towards the cost of the new school. In 1891, after the Education Department had insisted on certain alterations in the plans, the new school was opened and the Primitive Methodist Hall vacated.²⁴

The supporters of the old National school in Norton had put up a hard fight to prevent a School Board from being established, but had failed to provide sufficient funds with which to provide efficient instruction for enough children. In 1872 the School Board was set up, and, after a census, it decided that a school for 600 was necessary. It hired the National School and two others as temporary Board schools until a new one was opened in 1874. The Board took pains to provide the best possible building within their means: a committee of the Board was sent round to visit the neighbouring schools for the best design and 14 different sites were successively selected before a suitable one was secured. The school had accommodation for 622, and the cost was reasonable (under £8 per place). No further extensions were necessary until 1897. In fact, due to the private schools in the area, the average attendance of the Board school did not exceed 400 until 1891, which made the overhead expenditure per pupil rather high.²⁵

Although the larger School Boards were normally prepared to allow children living outside their district to attend their schools (the numbers in any case were small relative to the total number provided for in the towns), the smaller Boards were reluctant to incur the additional expense which this might have entailed, unless they



Norton.

Old National School (above).
Board School entrance (left).

could get reimbursed by the home parishes of the children. When Middleton St. George School Board found difficulty in persuading the parishes of Dinsdale and Morton Palms to pay the cost of their children attending the Board school, they asked the Education Department for these to be made contributory districts. This was done in the case of Low Dinsdale, but not in that of Morton Palms. On the other hand, when the Education Department proposed to unite Newbiggin parish with Middleton-in-Teesdale School Board, the latter fought this on the grounds that the maintenance of Newbiggin school would be expensive to the ratepayers of Middleton-in-Teesdale; the school being in such a bad condition and bearing such a large annual deficit, it would have entailed a much greater additional expense relative to the rateable value of the two parishes. They also argued that, as the schools were $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles apart, a separate School Board would be more convenient. As a result of the opposition, Newbiggin remained a separate school district, and, in the end, no School Board was considered necessary for it.

Most of the School Boards were prepared, for a reasonable charge, to allow the general public to make use of their school facilities, for concerts and meetings, etc. as well as for educational functions, so long as it did not interfere with the school routine. In 1896, Stockton School Board even agreed to a request from a Colonel Wilson of York for use of the Higher Grade School as a military hospital in the event of an invasion. Darlington School Board charged 10/- a day for use of the principal room of a Board school if the function was being held for profit, and 5/- for educational and benevolent purposes. Lower charges were made for the smaller classrooms. Stockton School Board imposed a similar scale of charges, but Middlesbrough School Board refused to allow use of their schools for any but educational purposes, although exceptions were occasionally made. In 1896, they relaxed this policy somewhat, allowing socials, etc. by special permission of the Board. In the villages, where less alternative accommodation was available for such functions, all the School Boards

were more generous in letting out rooms. Wolviston School Board allowed the free use of the schoolroom on most occasions, by local societies, churches and even parties. This was an exception to their general policy of economy, but perhaps there was less incentive to make charges in a small village where most people were personally known to the Board members. The other School Boards all made some charge, and Whitton School Board sharply discriminated between people of their village and outsiders: outsiders were charged 10/- for any function run for profit, but villagers only 1/-, and local non-profit making societies only 6d.²⁷

2. Secondary Education

In 1870, there was little provision of secondary education on Tees-side, and it was virtually impossible for working class children to obtain any. Even by 1902, the provision of secondary education was inadequate. What progress had occurred in this field had taken place in the industrial towns, and, with one exception, almost entirely by bodies other than the School Boards.

The smaller School Board districts in the area experienced no expansion in facilities for secondary education within this period, apart from the establishment of a few County Scholarships. The only secondary schools in North Tees-side outside the industrial towns were fee-paying grammar schools at Barnard Castle (North Eastern Counties School, founded 1864 by the application of a medieval endowment), Middleton-in-Teesdale, and the small Norton Grammar School. This last school, with about 20 pupils, had been run by Rev. E. Balshaw since 1859 on an endowment worth £42 a year which paid for the free education of 6 scholars. A few fee-paying private pupils also attended, but the school closed in 1895 because of Balshaw's ill health. A new scheme of 1898 provided for the proceeds of the endowment to be applied after Balshaw's death to scholarships for Norton boys.²⁸

Being a newly created town, Middlesbrough had no secondary schools before 1870 apart from the private academies of J. S. Calvert

(Middlesbrough Academy) and W. Grieve, B.A., LL.D.(Cleveland Academy). In that year, the leading Middlesbrough Industrialists founded Middlesbrough High School for Boys; a Girls' School was not added until 1874 for lack of funds. The school provided a secondary education for boys with fees of about £7 to £10 a year. The twelve trustees included four members of the Pease family and four members of the School Board (T. H. Bell, I. Wilson, Edward Williams and E. Gilkes). Originally in temporary premises, a new site and buildings for 250 pupils was provided by J. W. Pease and Partners in 1877 as a free gift. The ironmasters had intended that the school should provide a technical education but lack of funds for laboratories, and probably the inclinations of the parents, led to the provision of only a general education. An unsuccessful technical college movement in the town in 1882, however, stimulated the school to introduce the teaching of science in day and evening classes, and, in 1888, after enlarging the laboratories, it became the only Organised Science School of the town. Financial difficulties, caused partly by the erection of new laboratories and partly by the necessity of reducing the fees to within the £6 limit imposed by the Science and Art Department, restricted any further expansion of the School, and finally resulted in its being handed over to the control of the Town Council (the 1900 scheme provided for the Council to nominate 8 of the 15 governors).²⁹

In spite of this small provision of secondary education for a town the size of Middlesbrough, the School Board did practically nothing to augment these independent efforts. It did toy with the idea of establishing a Higher Grade School, but continually deferred any decision on the matter. In 1898, the Board appointed a committee to consider the provision of a Higher Grade or Organised Science School. The Committee recommended that higher teaching be done at Hugh Bell School (which had been turned into a VII Standard School in 1891, when all the other Board schools had surrendered their top scholars to it). However, the Board decided to make no provision along these lines until they had seen how the High School developed under its new scheme. As

late as 1902, the School Board was only providing an advanced elementary education for 92 of the town's 17,830 children, which, in the words of a Board sub-committee, was piteously small: Gateshead, with a similar population had 1342 pupils taking advanced courses in its two Higher Grade schools. The sub-committee, which had been appointed to look into the working of Hugh Bell School, recommended that the senior departments of this school be turned into an Organised Science School, so that Middlesbrough should no longer lag behind other large industrial towns in this respect. But again, the School Board deferred any decision on this, leaving this matter to the new Borough Education Committee.¹⁰

As a medieval town, and a thriving commercial and industrial centre in the nineteenth century, Darlington had more secondary education facilities in the 1870's than Middlesbrough. Queen Elizabeth Grammar School, a medieval school refounded in 1563, was reorganised under a scheme of 1874 (which set up a governing body of 4 members from the town council, 4 from the School Board, the M.P. and 3 co-opted members) and it was rebuilt in 1878, largely by public subscription. It provided a secondary education for about 150 boys, at fees ranging from £6 6s. Od. to £14 a year, and in 1894 became an Organised Science School. In 1885 a High School for Girls was also established by subscribers.

Darlington School Board, like that of Middlesbrough, was content to allow independent efforts to provide for the secondary education of the town. It welcomed the reorganisation of the Grammar School, declaring that no time should be lost in placing the higher education of the town on a thoroughly efficient basis, but it did little to supplement the facilities supplied by voluntary subscriptions. True, it considered extending Beaumont St. senior school into a Higher Grade school in 1895, and again in 1900, conferring with the headteachers of the Grammar School and Girls' High School over the matter, but the Board deferred any decision - in the latter case, making the excuse that too much doubt then existed on the subject after the Board of



Board Schools.

Hugh Bell, Middlesbrough (above).

Higher Grade, Stockton (left).

Education's Minute of 6th April, 1900. (A sub-committee of Middlesbrough School Board stated in 1902 that despite this uncertainty, 29 Higher Grade Schools had been started during the previous year).³¹

The School Board of Stockton was the only one of the three industrial towns to set up a Higher Grade school and Organised Science school. But even they were late in this field. The first Higher Grade school had probably been established as early as 1877 (in Manchester), and by the late 1880's, there were several Higher Grade and Organised Science schools throughout the country. Stockton School Board had toyed with the idea since 1879. They realised that there was great need for one: the only secondary schools in the town were a High School for Boys and one for Girls, each providing high standard work (the Boys' High School becoming an Organised Science School in 1895) but at very high fees. Further independent provision of secondary education came very late in the period: Stockton Grammar School was opened in 1900 out of the Blue Coat School endowment, while two years later, Queen Victoria High School for Girls was founded. In 1890-2 Holy Trinity Church Schools for Boys and Girls became Higher Grade Schools.³²

As a result of this rather inadequate provision of secondary education for the poorer children, it was reported in the mid-1890's that many parents with limited means had been forced to send their children to Middlesbrough for a secondary education. Because of this, the School Board eventually decided to make some provision for this in Stockton. As early as 1882, the Chairman of the School Board stressed in its Triennial Report the desirability of a Higher Grade school in the town for parents who wished to keep their children at school beyond the Standards, and who were willing to pay up to 9d. a week. He declared that such schools had been set up in other towns, and in his opinion could be almost financially self-supporting. But there was opposition to the idea, although it did not prove to be a party issue, both Unsectarian and Denominationalist parties being divided over the question. In particular, many of the poorer ratepayers felt that the school would mean higher rates for them but be of benefit mainly to the

middle classes. Mr. A. Smith, Labour candidate at the 1891 and 1894 School Board elections, protested that it would be a great burden in the ratepayers, and he was backed by Mr. W. Clarke, a Catholic member of the Board, who declared that if secondary education was to be provided, it should be out of central government funds and not local rates. A letter from "Justice" in the "Daily Gazette" on 17th November, 1892, complained that "it is an attempt to benefit the classes at the expense of the masses which I maintain is both immoral and unjust. By all means let our friends who desire it have a Higher Grade school, but let them be honest and pay for their luxuries." He claimed that 75% of the people supported him over this. After the scheme for a Higher Grade school had been published by the Board in the same month, a meeting of ratepayers passed a resolution which demanded the suspension of the Higher Grade School scheme, and made exaggerated claims as to its cost. In March of the following year, a second meeting censured the Board for the contempt with which they accused the Board of treating their earlier resolution.³³

In addition to this organised opposition, the School Board was reluctant to provide more elementary school places than were absolutely necessary, and so they delayed the project until overcrowding in the town's schools had made a new Board School imperative, in any case. It was thus not until January 1896 that the Higher Grade School was opened. At the opening ceremony, at which all the town and School Board members were present, accompanied by a brass band, the Chairman of the School Board declared that now the means had been provided for taking children, no matter how poor, from elementary school to university entrance. He maintained that the future of Stockton depended on this, to supply good citizens and teachers, and that he "should feel much surprise if, out of that school, against which so many of the poor people had exhibited antagonism, there did not come a ray of hope into their dark homes, and that some of their sons and daughters did not shine like bright stars."³⁴

Reports of the H.M.I. and the Organised Science School examiner remarked that the school was well staffed, well equipped and had a well balanced timetable, and although the hours (9.0 a.m. - noon, 2.0 p.m. - 5 p.m.) were longer than usual, this did not harm the pupils. The School was divided into two departments: an elementary section with accommodation for 760 scholars in Standards IV-VII, and an Organised Science school, financed largely out of grants from the Science and Art Department and the County Council⁺ which provided a three-year course in science, art and literature to enable scholars to obtain "a practical acquaintance with such branches of literary and scientific knowledge as bear directly on the occupations of life; also such hand and eye training and workshop practice as would engender habits of manual industry, increase dexterity and develop taste". The lower department constituted a preparatory course for the Organised Science school; to enable children who had passed through the junior schools to make more rapid progress than those coming directly from schools where the curriculum had no special relation to higher education. Mr. J. J. Prest, B.Sc., of Blyth, was appointed Headmaster, and proved a most able and enthusiastic man for the job.³⁵

The Organised Science school commenced at Standard VII, but children passing Standard VI were allowed to attend. Fees were charged, but there were 10 free places a year for promising children from public elementary schools. Children from outside the town were admitted, and, although most came from Stockton itself, several did come every year from places within a radius of about twelve miles. In 1902, for example, the homes of the scholars were:³⁶

	<u>Higher Grade School</u>	<u>Organised Science School</u>
from Stockton	483 scholars	120 scholars
" Thornaby	40 "	14 "
" Norton	22 "	10 "
" Eaglescliffe and Yarm	17 "	4 "
" other places (including Billingham Wolviston and Sedgfield)	14 "	8 "
Total:	<u>576</u>	<u>156</u>

⁺ Income for 1896-7 consisted of £423 from the Science and Art Department, £306 from the County Council, £183 from fees and sale of books and £36 from the rates.

In 1902, an entrance examination was instituted to ensure that only those children who were intellectually able to profit by higher education were admitted. Headteachers of the elementary schools were instructed to send lists of at least 20% of their best pupils in Standards IV-VI, and Professor Wright of Newcastle was appointed to examine them. In the first annual examination, 250 were admitted and only 19 rejected, but the following year, the examiner only passed 191 of the 384 applicants, and the Board declared that a few of the failures should be admitted to fill the vacant places. At each examination, more boys than girls both applied and were admitted. The H.M.I. reported that the entrance examinations had improved the standard of the school, as unsuitable pupils were no longer admitted.³⁷

It was intended that the lower middle class children would be attracted to the Higher Grade school, the poorer classes still being unable to afford to keep their children away from employment at school leaving age, and the upper middle classes sending their children to the more expensive secondary schools. Although the bulk of pupils were drawn from this class, a few children of professional people also attended (doctors, accountants, schoolmasters, etc.) The Board analysed the occupations of the parents of scholars in 1901, and found that 39% were builders, engineers, draughtsmen, etc., 17% clerks, accountants and agents, 14% shopkeepers, 8% merchants and manufacturers, and 22% of miscellaneous occupations.³⁸

The greatest problem which faced the Higher Grade school was that of retaining the pupils for a full two or three year course, especially at the Organised Science school. Large numbers of pupils left after staying only one or two terms, in order to enter employment. In 1897, it was reported that half the scholars had left before the end of the year (in the Organised Science school alone, 86 out of the 154 scholars had left). In the words of the Headmaster "An exodus of this kind renders the function of a Higher Grade school inoperative and calls for serious consideration". It also led to a severe loss of grant. In 1897, the Headmaster was told to write to the parents and employers

of children who had left the school that year to request their return on the day of the examination to try to reduce the loss of grant to a minimum. Efforts to prevent early leaving were also encouraged by the declaration of the Science and Art Department that these schools should provide a three or four year course, and that schools, 25% of whose pupils left before the end of the second year, would have their official recognition as Organised Schools of Science reviewed.³⁹

In order to encourage students to complete at least the year in which they had entered, the local H.M.I. suggested to the Board that the parents be asked to sign an agreement to keep their children there for the year, and with a £5 penalty for not doing so. This had been successfully tried at other schools. The Board agreed to this measure, and in addition, decided to remit the fees of students who had completed the third year. The Board also declared its intention to give preference to students who had completed three years in the Organised Science School when selecting pupil-teachers. At the Headmaster's suggestion, the Board also agreed to hold a conference with local employers to secure an extension of the age at which boys might begin their apprenticeships, in order to remove this source of loss of scholars; in fact the Board failed to carry this good idea out. In 1901, the School Board went further, as the Organised Science school was still losing many scholars (in 1900, there were 58 in the First Year, 29 in the Second and only 6 in the Third) and as several parents were showing reluctance to sign the guarantee: they decided to remit all the school fees of children attending the Organised Science school whose parents had signed the pledge. In order to augment the numbers attending the Higher Grade school, it directed all Board elementary schools to send their VII Standard pupils to the school. These measures did result in some success: fewer children began to leave the school in the middle of the year, although no noticeable change occurred until the abolition of fees in 1901. By 1904, 241 scholars were attending the Organised Science school, compared with 95 in 1898.⁴⁰

Year after year, the examiners' reports on the Science school gave high commendations of the work done there, and the school earned relatively high grants. The most talented pupils were able to step from the school on to the start of promising careers. A few went to University (A. Elliot won a scholarship to Christ's College, Cambridge) or the Civil Service (in 1903 one pupil came 17th in the whole country in the Civil Service examinations). Most, however, entered less distinguished, although equally useful, employments. Of the scholars leaving in 1902, for example, 25% became fitters or other skilled workers, 18% clerks, 16% pupil teachers, 19% shop assistants etc., while 19% stayed at home and only 3% went on to full-time further education. ⁴¹

3. Scholarships

In addition to the provision of secondary schools, some districts also possessed scholarship schemes for enabling poor children to benefit from a secondary education.

The only scholarships available in most of the country areas were those instituted by Durham County Council after the Technical Instruction Acts. The County offered 380 scholarships which paid fees and fares of students attending central institutions or Grammar and secondary schools (130 day, and 250 evening scholarships), 60 "County Scholarships" of £5 a year, plus fees, and a few scholarships of higher value for attendance at University Colleges, etc. Examinations were held at nine centres, including Stockton and Darlington. Most of the three year scholarships for children attending secondary schools went to the southern half of the County. For example, in 1898, of the 22 County scholarships awarded, 1 went to a scholar to attend the Grammar School at Barnard Castle, 5 to that at Bishop Auckland, 6 to the two secondary schools in Darlington, and 6 to the two High Schools of Stockton; 1 went to a pupil of Middleton-in-Teesdale Grammar School and 3 to that of Hartlepool. ⁴²

After the closure of Middleton-in-Teesdale endowed free school in 1875, the endowment of £36 a year was applied to scholarships: 40 poor children were given free education, and 3 other children awarded £5 a year to attend school beyond the age of exemption. The scholarships were awarded to children attending the Board school. In 1897, Durham County Council pressed for the scholarships to be applied instead to scholars of the Grammar School, but, after the Charity Commissioners had sent A. F. Leach to investigate the matter, they only slightly modified the scheme, and allowed the scholarships to be held at either of the schools. In 1904, one of the scholarships was held by a boy from the town attending North Eastern Counties School at Barnard Castle. The only other rural educational charities in a School Board district in South Durham were those of Norton: the Ann Hogg endowment of 1796 made awards of 2/- to 7/- to 16 girls attending the Board school, while, under the Norton Grammar School scheme of 1898, £42 a year, plus the income from the sale of the school house, was to be spent on exhibitions of up to £15 a year for Norton boys attending public elementary schools, after the death of the former Headmaster, Rev. R. E. Balshaw.⁴³

Through the 1874 scheme for the Grammar School, Darlington provided for £50 a year to be spent on scholarships to the School of up to £10 each, half of which were reserved for scholars of the town's public elementary schools - in fact, the scholarships were successively won by pupils of the Board schools. The School Board instituted no scholarship schemes of its own. In Stockton, the main scholarship scheme was provided by the Old Ragged Schools endowment, after the closure and sale of the schools in 1874. By a scheme of 1889, the Stockton Exhibition Endowment had been created from this fund, which gave scholarships of £10 a year to poor children of the borough. The sole contribution made by the School Board towards secondary education scholarships was the offer of 10 free places at the Organised Science school each year for children residing in the town whose parents' incomes were under £160 a year. Two of the School Board members;

Brainbridge and Meggeson, also donated £15 each in 1897 to enable two Science and Art Scholarships to be awarded for the Science school for three years: under this scheme, the Science and Art Department supplemented donations of £5 a year by sums of £4 in the first year, £7 in the second year and £10 in the third year. ⁴⁴

During the 1870's, Middlesbrough School Board was the only one of the area which was prepared to provide scholarship schemes for secondary education. As Middlesbrough was a new town, no such schemes existed when the School Board was established. In 1876, the Board introduced a scheme whereby three pupils from the public elementary schools were offered scholarships of £16 a year for 3 years to attend Middlesbrough High School or another higher school. In 1878, the Richardson Trust, founded in 1847, with an income of £30 a year from rents and the interest on £450 of Consols, was handed over to the School Board by the Charity Commissioners for application on the education of poor Middlesbrough children. As a result, the School Board awarded two scholarships nearly every year, the High School and Board agreeing each year on the examination. In 1882, Edward Williams, Vice-Chairman of the Board, also contributed £48 to enable a third scholarship to be awarded that year. The scholarships were open to pupils of Voluntary as well as Board schools, and in fact, most of the scholarships up to 1890 were won by scholars of Voluntary schools, especially the Wesleyan school. In 1889, the Board expressed their disappointment that so few Board scholars were even applying for them, and instructed the headteachers to put forward their best pupils for them. After this, the Board schools won an increasing number of the scholarships, in particular Hugh Bell School. ⁴⁵

Middlesbrough School Board's scholarship scheme was warmly commended by the local H.M.I. who called special attention to it in his report which was published in the Education Department's Annual Report: "In this scheme we see a judicious and liberal attempt to form a connecting link between our elementary and higher schools and

so on to the universities, which has been the dream of some of the wisest men in our generation". This, however, represented the sum total of what the School Board was to do in this connection, and, in some years they awarded only one or even no scholarships because the examiner (often the local H.M.I.) judged none of the applicants worthy.⁴⁶

The expansion of secondary school scholarships in Middlesbrough was thus left to voluntary efforts. In 1888, a number of local subscribers, nearly all of whom were well-known ironmasters, donated sufficient funds to enable 15 Science and Art Scholarships to be offered annually to students attending the High School. With the Science and Art Department supplementary grant, these scholarships were worth £9, £12 and £15 a year. The High School charged £6 a year for fees, books, etc., and the balance was left for maintenance. From 1893, the Town Council contributed a further £2 a year to reduce the fees for Middlesbrough pupils holding the scholarships. The scholarship examination was open to all children in public elementary schools of South Durham or Cleveland whose parents earned no more than £200 a year, and who were of good conduct "free from the use of bad language, smoking and other improper habits". Up to 1892, a few scholarships each year were won by children from outside the town, but from that year, only Middlesbrough pupils won them. The Wesleyan school usually won most of the scholarships.⁴⁷

Middlesbrough thus provided only 18 secondary scholarships at the most each year for poor children to attend higher schools. However progressive the town's scholarship scheme had appeared in the 1870's and 1880's, by 1902 this was becoming recognised as very inadequate for a town the size of Middlesbrough. But more satisfactory provision of secondary education was left to be made by the new Education Committee under the 1902 Act.

4. Technical Education

The great interest in Britain in the expansion of technical education during the 1880's and 1890's was largely a result of economic change. It was during the 1870's that Britain lost the industrial and commercial lead which she had gained by her Industrial Revolution of the 18th century. Clear-sighted educationalists, such as Prest, Headmaster of Stockton Board Higher Grade School and Director of the Technical Institution, realised this and saw the necessity for much more technical ^{education} ~~Institution~~, if the country was to continue to be in the vanguard of industrial advance:

"England's primary position as a manufacturing nation has been in a large measure due to the abundance of coal, iron and raw materials, and to the manual skill and dexterity of the individual workmen. Cheaper and more speedy means of transit are, however, placing all countries more nearly on a level as regards natural resources; whereas tools and labour-saving machinery are rapidly rendering the manual skill and dexterity of the individual workmen of minor significance ... The experience of the last five years has proved that the abundance of raw material combined with manual dexterity count for little as compared with scientific knowledge and its ready application to the needs of the manufacturer."

Other countries such as Germany were far ahead in the provision of technical education and consequently forging ahead in industrial techniques. Evening classes had, in Prest's opinion, a key role in the technical education of British workers, but the main weakness was that students entered evening classes three to six years after leaving school, which meant that they had forgotten most of their elementary education, whereas in other countries, attendance at evening classes was obligatory after the end of compulsory day schooling. Mr. Blackiston, Chief H.M.I. for the North East, had echoed similar thoughts a few years earlier:

"If we are to maintain the high position won by our fathers' enterprise, energy and perseverance, our masses must receive such thorough and enlightened training as will fit them to hold their own against the world. Otherwise, our place among the nations will be taken by rivals less gifted by natural resources, but more alive to the advantages of education and self control." 45

It was with this in mind that Acts were passed in 1889 and 1890 to enable local authorities to spend rate money on technical instruction. The two County Councils within the area under study were those of Durham and Middlesbrough Borough. Both these used their powers under the Acts to promote technical education on Tees-side. In addition, the boroughs of Stockton and Darlington, as Urban Sanitary Authorities, were authorised under the Act of 1889 to spend up to 1d. rate on technical instruction. Both towns were keen to do this.⁺

Durham County Council, which set up its Technical Instruction Committee in 1891, proved moderately generous with its aid. It established a scholarship scheme to enable clever boys and girls to pass from elementary to secondary schools and on to higher education; it gave apparatus grants to secondary schools, mechanics institutes and local committees in the county, normally on a basis of 50% of approved expenditure; it sometimes helped to pay for the cost of science lectures and teachers; and it gave capitation grants for pupils from the County attending recognised secondary schools and technical institutions. (Schools outside the County which admitted Durham children such as Middlesbrough High School, were also eligible for capitation grants). Stockton School Board received from Durham County Council grants of £3043 to assist the building and equipping of the Higher Grade School with laboratories and apparatus, but in the case of Darlington Technical College, built in 1897, the County Council Education Committee preferred to give a large building grant in place of one for equipment. This College cost £14,000 to erect and furnish, towards which Durham County gave £3,000 (£1,700 was raised from voluntary subscriptions and a grant of £1,000 came from the Science and Art Department). The County Education Committee, however, rejected a request that they contribute £100 a year towards the Director's salary. The County Council also attempted to overcome the shortage of teachers of technical subjects

+ see Chapter X, Section 3, for more information about the technical authorities in the area.

by arranging Saturday classes for certificated teachers (for example, in drawing and woodwork in Stockton), and by paying for teachers to attend lectures at Durham College of Science, Newcastle.⁴⁹

The County Council, however, was by no means extravagant in its financial aid to technical instruction, and it did not spend as much as it could have spent. It also exercised a rigid control over the classes it aided, which irritated the local applicants. It delayed payment of grants for equipment and building to Stockton Higher Grade School and ~~Durham~~ ^{Darlington} Technical College until it was quite sure that the facilities were in its opinion good enough, while it refused aid to any class which did not conform to its strict definition of 'technical instruction': all elementary subjects were refused assistance, as were lectures on such marginal subjects as the "History of Gothic Architecture". Darlington was given no assistance towards the purchase of technical books in the public library, while the request of Stockton Local Committee for aid for students' visits to shipyards was also refused. Darlington Committee was also not allowed to count for attendance grants, students of large families who lived in small houses and who wanted to attend the Technical College for homework periods.

Throughout the period, Durham County Education Committee always laid emphasis on practical, as opposed to 'paper' courses, and gave higher capitation grants for the former. At times, they altered their regulations to stress practical classes. In 1899, a change in policy of the Committee to encourage practical and higher courses, and which entailed more stringent aid to evening schools, provoked a storm of protest, to which, however, the Committee refused to bow.⁵⁰

Middlesbrough Town Council proved even less generous than Durham County Council. Unlike Darlington and Stockton Technical Instruction Committees, Middlesbrough did not establish or support either a technical college or an evening institute. It was content merely to give moderate aid to the High School, which had held technical evening classes at low fees since 1885, providing a higher standard of instruction than the Board evening classes, and which had

proved quite popular (by 1890, it had 27 classes with 546 students). Apart from the High School, it gave virtually no aid. Applications for aid had come from various schools and classes providing evening instruction in technical and recreative subjects in 1891 and 1892, but, on various pretexts, the Council had deferred any decision on the matter until December 1892, when they finally made clear their policy: the Council rejected all applications for aid except in the case of Middlesbrough High School, and except for a grant of £10 a year to the School Board Scholarship Fund (the only aid for which the Board ever applied). This included rejection of aid for Science and Art classes at St. Paul's and St. John's Voluntary schools, University extension lectures on political economy and science and a class for fishermen asked for by the North Eastern Fishing Committee. By 1894, put off by the constant refusals, applications for assistance by the voluntary bodies had ceased.⁵¹

Even in the case of Middlesbrough High School, the Town Council proved not very generous, and only gave aid when it was absolutely necessary to the continuation of technical education in the school. Of the £5,205 received by the Council under the 1890 Act, between 1890 and 1895 only £1,486 was given to the High School, the remainder being left to general relief of the rates. By 1891, the High School was suffering a heavy annual deficit (in 1890, the deficit was £175 for the Organised Science school and £121 for the evening classes), and to help meet this, the Council granted it £250 a year from that year. Two years later, a further £60 a year was granted to enable the school to reduce its fees from £6 to £4 a year in the case of 30 Middlesbrough children who held Science and Art Scholarships. This had been forced upon the school by the Science and Art Department which had threatened to discontinue the Scholarships if the fees were not reduced to their holders; when the School had told the Department that it could not afford to do this, it had been told to apply to the County Borough, which had ample funds. However, the Council had refused to accede to the school's request for grants to

be given to scholars winning Oxford and Cambridge awards, which were not sufficient to support poor students going to the Universities. As a result of this rather stringent policy, Middlesbrough lagged behind most other industrial centres in its provision for technical education by the opening of the twentieth century.

5. Evening Classes

Evening Continuation Classes provided by the elementary schools were originally intended to provide an alternative to day school work and so were principally in elementary subjects. But the universal provision of elementary education after 1870, and the establishment of compulsory education under the Elementary Acts of 1870, 1876 and 1880, soon made evening instruction in the 3 R's largely unnecessary and caused a decline in the demand for such classes. In the 1890's, however, there was a big expansion in evening instruction, which was partly due to changes in the Education Department Code of 1890 which enabled the evening schools to concentrate on non-elementary subjects (on the advice of the Cross Commission) and partly to the activities of the Technical Instruction Authorities, under the Acts of 1889 and 1890; these produced a great expansion of Science and Art instruction by means of establishing technical institutions, classes and also scholarships which paid the fares and fees of students attending them.⁵³

On Tees-side, evening classes got off to a slow start. The School Boards were reluctant to provide them and the students showed much apathy when classes were put on for them. The local H.M.I's continually expressed their disappointment in their reports with the lack of enthusiasm on the part of the students. In 1877 H.M.I. Oakley complained that little progress had been made in the area with regard to evening education. Although he had received about 50 applications for examination during the previous year, only about 30 classes had survived to take his examination. Furthermore, many of these evening schools had started with 50 or 70 students, but by January only about one third of that number had been attending. He did, however, appreciate the difficulties involved, and was sympathetic to their

problems: "It is no small credit to the factory girl or pit lad after a hard day's work voluntarily to go to school; it is no small labour to the master to teach these ignorant and undisciplined pupils after teaching six hours in his day school". Even when the classes were revived later on in the century they could not be considered completely satisfactory from an educational point of view. One local H.M.I. commented that:

"Girls will go to them to learn Cookery, and a large class of what may be socially called young ladies will meet together to learn Dressmaking ... Large classes of boys, too, come to learn Shorthand and Book-keeping, but subjects that require thought and demand mental effort are not favourites; and, indeed, I am told by the teachers, that anything like real study drives the evening scholars away."

One teacher had told the local H.M.I. that "his pupils liked to be fed with knowledge as children are with spoonfuls of food, and refused to eat it if any trouble was involved in the process".⁵⁴

None of the School Boards of the area showed any enthusiasm for evening classes until the larger Boards started to take a real interest in them during the 1890's. The Boards of the smaller districts, such as those of Wolviston, Norton and Whitton, merely gave permission to their schoolmaster to hold an evening class of his own on the school premises: they were not prepared to take responsibility for them and left the matter completely to the teacher's initiative. Middleton St. George School Board agreed to provide a night school three nights a week with a weekly fee of 6d., in 1890. How successful this proved is described in a letter to the Board from the master:

"I opened the night school as requested on Monday, 17th November, but no-one came. This, I thought, was due to the Hirings at Darlington. On the following Monday 5 attended and said that more had promised for the following night. Only one more turned up that week. On Monday, 1st December, only three were present, and as no satisfactory reason could be given, I 'put up the shutters'. If it is your wish, I will try once more."

But the Board was so discouraged by this, that they not only discontinued evening classes for that year, but also rejected requests to

open classes on later occasions. The School Board of Middleton-in-Teesdale, apart from a class in 1893 which taught Standard VII, Shorthand and Euclid, confined its activities in this connection to providing the free use of its classrooms for the local Science and Art Committee's classes.⁵⁵

The industrial towns provided more scope for successful evening classes, with their large populations and many industrial and commercial concerns which required a good supply of skilled workers. Yet the School Boards of these towns, with the possible exception of Stockton, did not make full use of their opportunities. Middlesbrough, for example, was slow in starting their evening classes. As early as 1874, two teachers had applied to the Board to open a night school, but their request was rejected. Four years later, the fact that there was some demand for evening education, was revealed by a letter sent to the School Board on behalf of 28 working men who were "advanced in years" and "desirous of improving themselves during the winter months in reading, writing and arithmetic." They were proposing to act as their own instructors in order to reduce the cost, and requested use of a Board school four evenings a week. This was granted, and it may have had the effect of stimulating the Board to act in this direction themselves, for the following year, the Board opened their first four night schools. Initially the fees were fixed at 6d. a week, but they were later reduced to 4d. with half returned to the students who had attended 75% of the classes. The Board did not intend to make these classes a burden on the rates, and laid down that they were to be self-supporting where possible. In 1885-8, it actually made a comfortable profit on them: the expenditure of £102 was more than covered by income of £76 from government grants and £49 from students' fees, resulting in a net surplus of £23.⁵⁶

The first Middlesbrough Board evening classes were only for men and boys and provided instruction largely in Standards V and VI, although Algebra, Mensuration, Geography, History, Grammar and Elementary Science were also offered. In 1889, the Board opened an

evening school for girls, providing instruction in the 3 R's and Cookery. The latter subject proved very popular. After the 1890 Code had allowed evening classes to concentrate on non-elementary subjects (a change for which the School Board had petitioned the Education Department in 1889), the range of subjects taught in the Board's evening schools broadened, and by 1901, they included French, German, Manual Instruction, Shorthand, Mechanics, Mensuration, Commercial Correspondence and Office Routine, and Drawing. Yet, in spite of this, the classes never managed to attract as many students as the School Board considered that a town the size of Middlesbrough should have produced. In 1890, the average attendance at these classes was only 89 (61 males and 28 females), and even by 1897, only 151 (although 360 had enrolled during that year). In 1902 it was calculated that only 9 people per thousand attended evening classes in Middlesbrough, compared with 25 in Leeds, 30 in Manchester and 45 in Bradford. This was a great disappointment to the School Board, and, in 1902, they set up a sub-committee to investigate the situation. In its report, the sub-committee stressed the importance of evening work:

1. work learned in day schools was quickly forgotten unless it was followed up in evening classes by school leavers;
2. the average attainment of children leaving elementary day schools provided a very inadequate equipment for the work of life;
3. there existed a special need for greater acquaintance of modern languages among youths engaged in commerce, and of the elements of physical science among young artisans prior to attending the more serious studies of the technical schools. Many students had testified how they had gained skills and so promotion through the evening classes;
4. a grave problem had already arisen in the larger towns from the misuse of their leisure by the growing youth of the humbler classes.⁵⁷

There were many reasons for the lack of enthusiasm for evening classes in Middlesbrough: fees were still charged (although they were returned for students making 75% attendance) and no prizes were given; local employers did not co-operate by modifying the shift system of work to enable their workers to attend regularly; the classes themselves were not attractive enough; there was a lack of co-ordination between

the School Board evening classes and the more advanced classes of the High School. To overcome this stagnation in evening school work, the School Board thoroughly reorganised their evening classes in 1902, along lines recommended by their sub-committee:

1. fees for elementary subjects were abolished and books, papers, pens, etc. to be provided free;
2. circulars were to be issued asking for friendly assistance with the evening school work, and sent to local foremen, works managers and trade councils;
3. headteachers were to arrange special lectures, entertainments, concerts and recreative science courses, in order to make the work of evening schools more attractive;
4. the courses provided were to receive much publicity: headteachers of all public elementary schools were to be asked to announce them; 200 posters and 500 handbills were to be issued, and members of the School Board were to visit day schools and address the older children on their advantages.

The School Board left it to their successors under the 1902 Education Act to reap the benefits of these measures. ⁵⁶

Apart from a small class at Skinnergate Board school for a few years in the 1870's, Darlington School Board did not start a system of evening continuation classes until 1893 - during this period, more in this connection was done by some of the Voluntary schools, such as St. Cuthbert's and St. John's National schools. During the early 1890's, the Board had been content to let the Darlington Technical Instruction Committee provide the town's evening classes, merely placing the Board schools at the disposal of the Committee for this purpose, free of charge. But in 1893, spurred on by the changes in the Code, and also by the Technical Instruction Committee which had asked the School Board to act as its Committee for the running of its evening classes, the Board opened evening schools in three centres. Before determining the programme of the classes, the Board asked the neighbouring Boards and the local H.M.I. for advice on what subjects were the most likely to prove successful. Fees were fixed at 2d. a week, but returnable for 100% attendance, and half the fees for 60%. (The amounts returned being placed at the students' credit in the Yorkshire Penny Bank as an incentive for them to start-saving). Classes were initially provided in

Geography, Geometry, Drawing, Shorthand, Elementary Mathematics, Domestic Economy, Needlework, Vocal Music and Cookery.⁵⁹

The evening courses at first proved a great success. During the first year, 443 students attended "to increase their store of useful and recreative knowledge", and the classes were completely self-supporting financially. As a result, in the following year, schools were opened in six centres and Mensuration, Dressmaking and Sick-nursing were added to the programme. In 1899, the classes were transferred to the Technical College, and the Director of the College was appointed by the School Board as Headmaster of the Continuation School. This not merely enabled the students to benefit from the good science facilities there, but also made more real the function of the Continuation classes to act as a link between the elementary schools and further education at the Technical College. However, after their initial success, enthusiasm began to lag. Many classes had to be closed down through lack of support, and by 1899, average attendance at them had dropped to 133, while rate expenditure on them had increased to £189 a year. Nevertheless, for those students who took advantage of them, they did serve a useful purpose, in particular, preparing them for the more advanced courses at the Technical College. It was for that reason that the School Board refused to discontinue the class in Mathematics when numbers attending it had fallen below the minimum level for a class, which the Board had previously fixed at 15; it was such a vital subject for those who wished to enter the College.⁶⁰

The development of evening education in Stockton followed a similar pattern. One or two evening classes in elementary subjects and drawing were held in Board and Voluntary schools of the town during the 1870's and 1880's, but these were due to the initiative of individual teachers and the School Board merely gave permission for the teacher to use the school premises. It was not until 1894, that a proper system of evening schools was inaugurated by the School Board. In that year, six schools were opened. But the attendance was so disappointing (they had an average attendance of 119) that the following year, only one evening school was opened by the Board.⁶¹

The Board evening schools never thereafter reached a satisfactory level of attendance, and by 1900, the School Board was reporting that they had practically ceased to exist. This, however, was not fatal for the evening education of the town, because the main reason for their failure was that the Technical Instruction Committee (a joint body of members representing both the Town Council and the School Board) was at the same time providing preparatory technical classes in connection with the Technical Institute at the Higher Grade School. This last body, under the progressive direction of Mr. Prest, Headmaster of the Higher Grade School, was providing a wide range of courses: in October, 1896, classes in 23 subjects⁺ were offered to the students; and enrolments were so great that some classes had had to be divided and additional teachers appointed. The most popular subjects were Mathematics, Geometry, Machine Construction, Free-Hand Drawing, Shorthand and Book-keeping.⁶²

But the same pattern in the development of evening school work that had been revealed in the other two Tees-side towns, soon began to assert itself in Stockton also: the classes shrank considerably after Christmas, and the average attendance showed a steady decline. In order to prevent this happening in the future, Prest suggested eight points of action to the Board, amongst which he urged that:

1. Instruction which had a direct connection with the industries of the town be arranged by organising classes in consultation with the managers, foremen and trade unions of the area;
2. Preliminary classes be established to prepare the students for the more advanced technical courses: at the time only about 30% of the students attending the advanced courses were in a condition to benefit from them;

⁺ Mathematics, Chemistry, Physics, Geometry (Plane and Solid), Mechanical Construction, Mechanical Engineering, Steam, Magnetism and Electricity, Building Construction, Manual Construction, Architecture, Physiography, Physiology, Art (Perspective, Light and Shade, Painting), Freehand Drawing, French, German, Shorthand, Book-keeping, Commercial Geography, Cookery, Dressmaking, Physical Exercise.

3. The new session be inaugurated by an educationalist of national fame.

These suggestions, however, merely resulted in some more subjects being added to those taken at the evening schools, such as Electrical Engineering, Naval Architecture and Carpentry and Joinery. There is no evidence that any consultations were made with local industry, and no famous person inaugurated the next session. As in the other districts of Tees-side, attendance at the classes was never considered satisfactory.⁶³

6. Special Schools

Residential industrial schools had been set up in the course of the nineteenth century with the purpose of preventing children who had come from unsatisfactory homes from developing into delinquents. Under the Industrial Schools Act of 1857, magistrates were empowered to send to these schools children who had committed some minor offence, and the Government gave a grant towards their maintenance, although parents who could afford to do so, were expected to contribute towards their maintenance. Once education had become compulsory, many children whose attendance had been unsatisfactory, were sent to these schools, or to truant or day industrial schools under the Education Act of 1876, and there developed a shortage of places in such schools which led some School Boards to consider establishing their own. In 1885, Stockton School Board complained that it was often difficult to find places in these schools for children who had been committed to them: industrial schools were under private management and there was no power to compel them to accept any child. Moreover, as these schools were often short of money, they were reluctant to admit children who would have stayed there for only a short time and leave before their labour had become profitable, and also to admit those who were weak or sickly. In 1884, it was reported to Darlington School Board that, as no accommodation had been found for three boys who had been convicted of stealing and ordered by the magistrates to be committed to industrial schools, they had been discharged and were running at large about the town.⁶⁴

All the larger School Boards regularly contributed towards the maintenance of children from their districts attending industrial schools, at a cost of 2/- to 5/- a week each. In 1903, for example, 34 boys and 5 girls from Stockton were being kept by the Board at industrial schools in Leeds, York, Newcastle, Durham and Monkseaton, while Darlington School Board spent an average of £92 a year between 1895 and 1900 on maintaining about 22 children at such schools. The larger School Boards regularly sent officials or members to inspect the schools where children from their districts were being maintained to ensure that they were well looked after.⁶⁵

Because of the difficulty of finding accommodation for children from their districts, attempts were made by the School Boards to establish industrial schools on Tees-side. In 1871 and 1877, Darlington School Board tried to secure the establishment of a joint industrial school for Tees-side, supported by all the School Boards of the area. But efforts to accomplish this failed: the cost involved was sufficiently great to deter the more cautious School Boards, whilst the smaller ones, such as those of Whitton and Norton, were not interested in the project since no children from their districts were then attending any of these schools.^{+ 66}

Although the Boards of Darlington, in 1881, and Stockton, in 1885, proclaimed the necessity for School Boards to set up their own truant schools for periods of short detention (which would have not only been less expensive than industrial schools, but would also have enabled detention of truant children to have been applied "at an earlier period of a downward career"), they never in fact provided any for their towns.⁶⁷

It was left to Middlesbrough School Board to be the only one on Tees-side to provide an industrial school. A fast growing industrial town with an unsettled immigrant population, Middlesbrough sent a greater proportion of children to industrial schools than any other town in the area: 48 children were attending them in 1873. As early as March of

+ see below, Chapter X, Section 4, for more details.

that year, the Board decided to set up an industrial school, and members of the Board visited schools in Leeds, Newcastle and Sunderland for ideas. A few months later, they purchased an old public house, the Royal George in Linthorpe, and, after a member of Sunderland School Board had visited the premises and confirmed that they were suitable, the Board adapted the building and opened the school in 1875, with accommodation for about 60 boys, so that they could be "rescued from vicious courses and trained to honest and useful pursuits". After examining the Sunderland Industrial school, the Board was optimistic that government grants and maintenance fees would cover most of the cost, and that the school would prove little burden on the rates. But this was not to be. The School turned out to be quite expensive to run. The cost varied with the number of boys actually in attendance: when 55 were in attendance during 1898-9, the net charge on the rates was £10 per head, but when only 39 attended, as in 1896-7, the cost was £24 per head. About half the income for the school had to come out of the rates; in 1898-9, for example, 52% of the income came from the rates, 38% from government grants, 8% from other School Boards for the maintenance of their children and 2% from the boys' own earnings.⁶⁸

In the Board's opinion, however, this was money well spent. The Triennial Report of 1882 declared that "the Board believe the ratepayers will agree in considering it well spent-when they think of the life of ignorance and crime from which these children have been rescued". The school was well staffed and well equipped. A general education was given in the Standards, Geography, Music, Object Lessons, Drawing and 'Development of Intelligence' as well as industrial training in gardening, shoemaking and tailoring - the staff included a tailor and a shoemaker. The boys did their own baking, washing and woodchopping, and the school had workshops, library, and a small museum of "interesting objects". For recreation, military drill was arranged every day by the 1890's, and a walk each Saturday; cricket and football matches were played with local schools, and a covered shed was provided for games in wet weather; three weeks camping was put on for the boys in summer, and magic lantern

shows on winter nights. A brass band was started during the early 1890's and proved very popular; it not only earned some money for the school, but also provided a useful skill for those boys intending to join the army. The H.M.I. reports on the school were consistently good. The first, by Major Iglis, set the tone for those in later years:

"I have this day inspected the school and have every reason to be satisfied with it. The arrangement of the premises is good, and every part of the school building is clean and in excellent order. The manners of the boys in the school are quiet and attentive. They look bright and cheerful and well cared for. They passed a very fair examination. They seem well and carefully taught." 69

Most of the boys at the school had been committed by magistrates for stealing, although some had been sent on account of neglect by their parents. Of the 43 committed to the school during 1880-2, for example, 24 were for reasons of petty theft, 8 for being unmanageable, 8 because of improper guardianship, 2 for being beyond parental control and 1 for larceny. Boys were sent there by School Boards as far away as Harrowgate and even London, although most came from Middlesbrough and other Tees-side towns. Discipline in the school was good, few punishments were necessary, and many of the boys did not drift back to their bad ways after leaving the school - at any rate, immediately: in 1880, the School Board reported that, of the boys who had left during the previous three years, 14 were doing well and only 2 had failed to show signs of improvement. The school, however, was only for Protestant boys, and so Middlesbrough also had to pay for the maintenance of girls and Roman Catholic boys who had been sent to other industrial schools. In 1882, for example, the Board was paying for 19 Roman Catholic boys and 23 girls attending schools in Leeds, Liverpool, Halifax and Sheffield. In 1902, they even voted £12 to assist the emigration to Canada of a Middlesbrough boy who had been attending an industrial school. 70

Little was done for children who were physically or mentally defective until the last years of the nineteenth century. After compulsory education had been established, such children were still kept at home, or sometimes in the bottom classes of an elementary school. A few

Blind and Deaf schools grew up during the 1880's, and, under the Elementary Education (Blind and Deaf Children) Act of 1893, School Boards were compelled to provide for the education of such children between 7 and 16 years, and the Poor Law Guardians transferred to the Boards any of these children under their care. No schools for blind children were in fact established in North Yorkshire or South Durham, as not a sufficient number of blind children lived there, but the School Boards did contribute towards the maintenance of blind children from their districts at residential schools in other parts of the country; for example, Darlington was paying for 3 children at York, 1 at Liverpool and 1 at Newcastle in 1895.⁷¹

There were more deaf than blind children in the area, and in 1894 a conference of representatives from the School Boards of Stockton, Thornaby, Darlington, West Hartlepool, Eston, Normanby and Middlesbrough was held to consider the question of their education. They agreed that small schools were better for these children than large institutions, and, as a result, Middlesbrough, Darlington and Stockton set up their own deaf schools during the mid-1890's, all of which received satisfactory reports from the H.M.I's. Middlesbrough School Board, in particular, took great trouble over their school, positioning it near the railway station so that deaf children from surrounding districts could easily and safely reach the school, and employing a teacher from Margate who taught by the latest lip-reading methods. None of the smaller School Boards in the area had sufficient numbers of deaf children to start a school of their own, and so, instead, they contributed towards the cost of sending their children to schools in the nearby towns. These smaller Boards usually tried to persuade the parents to themselves contribute as much as possible, and sometimes considerable haggling took place over this. In Middleton St. George, for example, a father of one deaf child asked the School Board to pay £10 a year and the fares of the child to attend Darlington Board Deaf School. The Board rejected this application, but they finally compromised: the Board paying the school fees of £8, and the father the fares. By 1902, there were still only three certified Deaf Schools on Tees-side, and these were each about half full:⁷²

		<u>accommodation</u>	<u>number attending</u>
Darlington	Board School	16	11
Stockton	" "	40	21
Middlesbrough	" "	20	11

In 1899, the Education (Defective and Epileptic Children) Act authorised School Boards to provide for mentally handicapped children, but did not make it obligatory for them to do so. The Boards of the three large towns of the area made enquiries to ascertain how many children in this condition lived in their districts, but only Darlington School Board decided that there was a sufficient number to make it worth while to set up a school for them. They rented a room in the Jubilee School, and opened a school for these children in 1903. It had accommodation for 25, and within a few months had 22 on the roll. After the H.M.I. had classified 4 of the pupils in their Deaf School as mentally defective, Stockton School Board considered establishing a Defective School, but they did not get round to providing one, before the School Board was finally dissolved.⁷³

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CHAPTER VI: EDUCATING THE CHILDREN

1. Curriculum

(a) Religious Instruction

Nearly all the School Board members of Tees-side would have agreed that religion was the most important part of a child's education. But there the agreement would have ended, for they were strongly divided as to whether it should be taught at school or merely in Church and at home; and if at school, whether it should be taught along denomination-
alist or non-sectarian lines. This division cut across both the Unsectarian and Denominationalist parties,⁺ and even split members of the same church; only the Catholics were united in holding that only schools run along denominationalist lines were at all satisfactory.

The Elementary Education Act of 1870 gave School Boards considerable discretionary powers, within certain limits, with regard to religion taught in their schools. They could choose whether or not to have religion taught or services held at all, and could devise their own religious syllabus. This conferred on them too much power in the eyes of some of the Boards: in 1876, Norton School Board sent Parliament a petition declaring that no education bill could be satisfactory for a Christian country which left School Boards with the power to exclude the reading of the Bible from their schools. However, if a Board school did hold religious services or lessons, it was illegal for them to teach religious catechisms or formularies distinctive of any particular denomination, and parents were given the right to withdraw their children from religious activities in the school; to make withdrawal easy, the timetable had to be arranged so that Religious Instruction was placed at the beginning or end of the day. The permissive nature of the Act in this respect resulted in wide variations in the practice of different School Boards throughout the country: from the Board schools of Manchester, which taught a brand of religion which was very Anglican

⁺ for details of the different views on this matter, see above, pp.48-50

in form, to those of other Boards which completely forbade religion in their schools.

Although several members of the Tees-side School Boards held views very different from each other, no Board in the area was in fact torn apart by controversy over this matter, and nearly all the members were prepared to permit a compromise to be reached which would prevent fierce sectarian passions from being aroused. Both Unsectarian and Denominationalist Boards in the area decided upon a very similar policy towards religion in their schools, and closely followed the lead taken by the London School Board by advocating simple instruction based on the Bible.² Darlington School Board, after studying the practice of other Boards, laid down in their regulations that:

"the Bible shall be read and there shall be given such explanations and instructions therefrom in the principles of morality and religion as are suited to the capacities of the children, provided always that ... the provisions of the Act, sections 7 and 14, be strictly observed, both in letter and spirit, and no attempt be made to attach children to any particular denomination."

Middlesbrough, Stockton, Middleton St. George, Whitton and Wolviston School Boards all had identical or similar provisions in their regulations or instructions to their schools.³ Darlington School Board also stated that it would make exceptions to this ruling on application by managers or ratepayers if sufficient cause be shown, and also that only the teachers were to give Religious Instruction in Board schools.

There was more variation between School Boards with respect to religious services, but the majority of the schools proved similar in practice. Darlington and Middlesbrough School Boards laid down that, in accordance with the general practice of the existing elementary schools, provision could be made in Board schools for offering a prayer and singing a hymn at the beginning or end of the day. But this was not compulsory, and was left to the discretion of the managers of each school, subject to a right of appeal to the Board by teachers, parents or ratepayers. Motions proposed by Church members to make religious services compulsory were defeated in both School Boards.⁴ Stockton,

DARLINGTON SCHOOL BOARD.



SYLLABUS OF RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION.

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ADOPTED BY THE BOARD, 21st DECEMBER, 1892.

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DARLINGTON SCHOOL BOARD.

Syllabus of Religious Instruction.

1.—The Bible shall be read daily, and there shall be given such explanations and instruction therefrom in the principles of morality and religion as are suited to the capacities of the children; Provided always:—

- (1). That in such explanations and instruction the provision of the Education Act of 1870, Sections 7 and 14, be strictly observed, both in letter and spirit, and no attempt be made to attach children to any particular denomination.
- (2). That, in regard to any particular School, the Board shall consider and determine upon the application by managers, parents, or ratepayers of the district, who may show special cause for the exemption of the School from the operation of this resolution in whole or in part.
- (3). That during the time of religious teaching or observances, any children withdrawn in accordance with Section 7 of the Education Act, 1870, shall receive separate instruction in secular subjects, where practicable in a separate room.

2.—Such religious teaching shall only be given by the Head Teachers, or Assistant Teachers of each School, at its opening in the morning. The Lord's Prayer and such Hymns as the Board may approve shall also be used.

3.—The Board shall at the commencement of each year determine the parts of Scripture which shall be taught in the Schools during the year, and an annual examination shall be held at such time, and in such manner, and by such persons as the Board may from time to time determine.

4.—The Board rely upon the Teachers giving these lessons always in a spirit of reverence, and with a conscientious sense of the deep responsibility which rests upon them in thus laying the groundwork upon which the moral and religious life of their scholars will, to a great extent, rest in the future.

5.—Standards V, VI, and VII may be grouped for the purposes of religious teaching, but in such case the syllabus must be submitted to the Board for approval.

Syllabus of Religious Instruction for Scholars.

INFANTS.

Simple Lessons on the Life of our Lord.
 Old Testament Characters, *e.g.*—The Patriarchs, Moses, David,
 Samuel, &c.
 The Lord's Prayer and a Hymn.

STANDARD I.

Same as Infants, with the Ten Commandments.

STANDARD II.

Memory Work:—
 Learn St. Matthew v., 1—12; and St. Matthew xxii., 35—40.
 The Life of Abraham.
 Simple Outline of the Life of Christ.

STANDARD III.

Memory Work:—
 Learn Psalm xxiii.
 The Life of Joseph.
 Fuller Outline of the Life of Christ, with an account of the
 following Parables:—
 The Two Debtors. The Merciless Servant.
 The Good Samaritan. The Lost Sheep.
 The Prodigal Son. The Pharisee and the Publican.

STANDARD IV.

Memory Work:—
 Learn St. John xiv., verses 15—31.
 The Life of Moses.
 The first part of the Life of Christ to the Third Passover, as
 gathered from the Gospels, viz.:—
 St. Matthew i. to xiv., 36 verse.
 St. Mark i. to vi., 56 verse.
 St. Luke i. to ix., verse 17.
 St. John i. to vii., verse 1.
 With an account of the following Parables:—
 The Sower. The Wheat and the Tares.
 The Mustard Seed. The Pearl of Great Price.
 Slight knowledge of the Geography of Palestine.

STANDARD V.

Memory Work:—
 Learn Psalm 108.
 The Lives of Samuel, Saul, and David.
 The Life of Christ, continued (2nd part) from Third Passover to
 end of Gospels.
 Acts of the Apostles, first two Chapters.

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STANDARD VI.

Memory Work:—

Learn Isaiah liii., and Ephes. iv., verses 25—32.

The Lives of Elijah and Daniel.

Recapitulation of the Life of Christ, together with an account of His discourses, as given in St. John, chapters iii., vi, 1—40, and x.; Acts of the Apostles to chapter viii.

STANDARDS VII AND UPWARDS.

Memory Work:—

Learn 1 Corinthians, xiii.

Recapitulation of the Lives of Abraham, Moses, Samuel, Saul, David and Daniel.

Recapitulation of the Life of Christ, as in Standard VI.

Acts of the Apostles, with especial reference to the Life and Missionary Journeys of St. Paul.

Prayers to be used at the Opening of School.

(One or more of the following Prayers to be said at the Opening of the School).

ALMIGHTY and most merciful Father, who hast safely brought us to the beginning of this day, keep us in the same by Thy mighty power; watch over us for good; preserve us in our going out and coming in, and may all our ways be pleasing in Thy sight.—Amen.

O MERCIFUL FATHER, forgive, we pray Thee, our past sins and negligences, and grant us the grace of the Holy Spirit to renew our hearts, that we may amend our lives according to Thy Holy Word.—Amen.

O GOD, the fountain of all wisdom, teach us to know Thee in the days of our youth; make us wise unto salvation; and enable us to do all our work as unto Thee.—Amen.

BLESS, O LORD, in mercy all our parents, brothers and sisters, teachers, schoolfellows, and friends; may we be kind to one another, and so live together in this life that in the world to come we may have life everlasting. We ask all in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.—Amen.

OUR FATHER, which art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil: For Thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever.—Amen.

The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost be with us all for evermore.—Amen.

DAPLINGTON

Middleton St. George, Norton, Whitton and Wolviston School Boards all declared that services should be held, most of them, consisting of the Lord's Prayer and a hymn; Whitton School Board said that Collects from the Book of Common Prayer should also be used, and Middleton St. George, the Apostle's Creed. Stockton and Norton Boards both specially selected the hymn book to be used (Norton's was "A Book of Sacred Song for School Board Schools" published by J. Kempton & Co., which was also later made obligatory on the Darlington Board schools).⁵ Middleton-in-Teesdale School Board made no special provisions, thus allowing the schools to decide for themselves. Only Cowpen Bewley School Board went out of line with the general practice of the Tees-side School Boards. It originally provided only for secular instruction, but by 1879, divided the pupils for the first 30 minutes of each day in the Girls' school into two groups; a Roman Catholic and a Protestant mistress each gave the pupils in one of the groups a short service and instruction in Christian doctrine and history.

Most of the School Boards allowed the schools to decide for themselves what Religious Instruction to give, but attempts were made in the larger Boards to secure uniformity among their schools. In 1883, a Church party motion to impose a uniform system on all Board schools was defeated by Middlesbrough School Board. But in Darlington, uniformity was established by the Denominationalist-controlled Board, by means of a Syllabus which it drew up in 1892.⁺ Stockton School Board, which was also under Denominationalist control for much of its life, originally laid down a scheme for Religious Instruction in its schools, but this had fallen into disuse by 1890, and so it then declared that the head teachers could choose their own syllabus, so long as it was approved of by the Board at the beginning of each year. The head teachers were also to carry out their own examinations, but Board members and parents were to be allowed to be present. Later, it allowed the Religious Tract Society to examine Board

⁺ see pp. 198-9

scholars and award prizes. Darlington School Board also permitted the Society to do this in its schools. Whitton School Board in 1895 also drew up a syllabus for religious instruction in its school.⁶

The critics of School Boards often accused their schools of being godless and of excluding true Religious Instruction. Sometimes, when in opposition, the Denominationalist party took up this cry as a weapon with which to win votes. But when in power, it made no basic change in the existing regulations, and did not attempt to upset the compromise already agreed upon. In Darlington, for example, the Denominationalists had attacked the Religious Instruction in Board schools as being godless, but, after winning control of the Board in 1883, they made no change in the system, or even discussed the question of religion in Board schools.⁷ Eventually, in 1892, they did establish a uniform religious syllabus for all Board schools, but this repeated most of the earlier regulations, and merely added a carefully worked out syllabus for the schools to follow. The School Boards in fact made little change in the religious observances and teaching of most of the schools they took over, and in 1882, the Chairman of Stockton School Board declared that the Religious Instruction given in the Board schools was similar to that given in most of the Voluntary schools of the town.⁸ In any case, he pointed out, as elementary education was given to all children in day schools, the Sunday schools could then completely concentrate on Religious Instruction, wasting no time on teaching the children to read, and so most children received more religious education than previously. There were 6,000 children in Stockton's Protestant Sunday schools alone. In fact, the only major weakness of religious education of the elementary schools under the 1870 Act, was that it had to take place at the beginning or end of the day, and this meant that scholars who were persistently late, missed religious periods sometimes for weeks on end.⁹

(b) Code subjects

According to the Elementary Education Act of 1870, a public elementary school was one whose fees did not exceed 9d. a week, which fulfilled the conditions laid down in the Education Department's Codes

for elementary schools in order to obtain an annual grant, and where elementary education was "the principal part of the education there given". However, nowhere was 'elementary education' legally defined. It was assumed that whenever a subject was included in the Elementary School Code, it thereby became an 'elementary' subject. But there was no legal limit to the type or standard of subject that might be included in the Code, and this gave great discretionary powers to the Education Department.

The Revised Code of 1862 set out a system of grants of which two-thirds in the case of scholars over six years were paid on the basis of examination in Reading, Writing and Arithmetic; these being graded in 6 standards (7, after 1882). Since only the 3 R's were eligible for grant, the curriculum of elementary schools was almost completely devoted to these subjects. However, in later years, the curriculum was broadened by the addition of grants for "specific subjects" (earned from 1867 by scholars in Standard IV or above) and "class subjects" (earned from 1875 when all pupils above Standard I took a subject). Initially, these were limited to a few subjects, such as Grammar, Geography and History, but later many more were added to the list, until a wide range existed, including many which could have hardly been considered as elementary in other than purely technical terms (such as Chemistry, Physics, Modern Languages and Shorthand). Further modifications to the Code were made in the 1870's and 1880's, and in 1890, under the benevolent guidance of Kekewich, Secretary to the Education Department, grants for examination in the Standards were abolished and those for attendance etc. increased, while Manual Instruction and Physical Training were allowed to count for attendance. In 1897, the last vestiges of "Payment by Results" were ended.

The 3 R's dominated the curriculum of all the Tees-side elementary Board schools; especially in the early years of compulsory attendance, when often even the older scholars were backward in these subjects: it was reported in 1874 that nearly 100 of the 180 girls aged 9 to 13 years admitted to Denmark St. school of Middlesbrough School Board were unable to read or write.¹⁰ By the 1880's, however, the larger Boards were

beginning to take full advantage of the new range of subjects eligible for grant. Middlesbrough School Board, for example, decided in 1882 that two class subjects should be taught in all their schools, and that it was up to the Superintendent to decide whether or not any specific subjects were to be taught in addition. The class subjects were to be English and Geography for boys, and English and Needlework for girls. A few years later, Geography replaced English for girls, and History was introduced as an optional subject to Geography in Boys' schools. Object lessons were also introduced to replace English in the lower Standards. In 1890, Algebra was started as a specific subject for the upper standards of Boys' schools. Drawing had been taught in all schools since the 1870's. Its standard was improved after a special certificated master was appointed in 1890 as Superintendent and Teacher of Drawing in Board Schools." After the Mundella Code of 1880 had introduced grants for Singing, Middlesbrough School Board made the subject compulsory for all their schools, and instructed their schools to teach singing by note (Tonic Sol-fa) rather than by ear, to earn the higher grant. Darlington and Stockton School Boards followed a similar policy with regard to subjects taught; Stockton School Board, when making Drawing and Singing by note compulsory for its schools, encouraged their teachers to attend classes they arranged for them in the town, in order to make themselves proficient in these subjects. On the advice of the H.M.I., Darlington School Board introduced French as a specific subject in two of their schools in 1898-9, employing a special teacher to give occasional lessons in it. Hugh Bell and Victoria Road Board schools in Middlesbrough, the Board Higher Grade School in Stockton, and three Board schools in Darlington, also added several science subjects for Science and Art Department grants, in the 1890's."

Several elementary schools in the area, as well as teaching the Standards and other subjects of the Education Department's Code, also taught for grants from the Science and Art Department. Up to the 1890's, this was almost completely confined to Drawing. As the Department required that instruction in this subject be given by specially qualified

teachers up to 1890 (after which Drawing became compulsory on all elementary schools receiving a grant), the subject was not taught in the majority of elementary schools in the area. But in Middlesbrough and Darlington during the 1870's and 1880's, Drawing was taught in most of the Board, and some of the Voluntary schools. Stockton School Board, however, provided very little instruction in this subject before it became compulsory; the first qualified Drawing instructor on their staff was Mr. Bage of Bowesfield School, who started Drawing classes in 1883; but he taught the subject outside normal school hours, receiving the grant for his pains. Later, other classes were provided in Stockton Board schools, after more teachers had become qualified to teach Art. The smaller School Boards also taught little Drawing during the 1870's and 1880's. Only two Boards put on classes in the subject: Norton (1871-7) and Cowpen Bewley (1878-81).¹³

During the 1890's, several elementary schools taught their older scholars science subjects for Science and Art Department grants. In 1898, for example, Middlesbrough School Board's Hugh Bell school was holding classes in Mathematics, Mechanics, Physiology, Physiography and Hygiene. Victoria Road school, the only other Board school in Middlesbrough to teach science subjects for the Science and Art Department, had classes in Geometry, Mathematics and Physiography. Similar Science and Art subjects were taken by scholars in the Higher Grade Board school, Stockton, and by Albert Road, Beaumont St. and Kendrew St. Board schools in Darlington. The only Voluntary elementary schools in these towns to teach science subjects to their day scholars under the Science and Art Department, were the Wesleyan schools in Darlington and Middlesbrough. Outside the industrial towns of North Tees-side, only grammar schools, such as those in Barnard Castle and Middleton-in-Teesdale, taught such subjects for Science and Art Department grants.¹⁴

Many members of the larger School Boards realised the importance of practical subjects, especially Domestic Science for girls, and the Boards, encouraged by changes in the Code, began to make provision for their teaching by the 1880's. In 1875, the Ladies Committee of

Middlesbrough School Board urged upon the Board that Domestic Economy be made a compulsory subject for all schools. They declared that it was important for all girls to have better instruction in a subject of more practical use to them for the rest of their lives than what they were able to pick up in their "often disorderly homes". They rejected the argument that the girls were not sufficiently advanced in their elementary work as an excuse for not permitting them to take this subject, and pointed out that extra subjects, such as Drawing, were in any case being taught at all Board schools. The School Board accepted their advice, and decided that Needlework should be taught as a class subject.¹⁵

Needlework had been a compulsory subject in elementary schools since 1862, but, not being eligible for grant until 1875, it had been largely neglected by the teachers. Even after its improved status as a class subject, some schools were put off teaching it for the examination because of the Code's insistence on what many considered to be too high standards. Middlesbrough School Board's Ladies Committee complained in 1877 that the syllabus for scholars up to the Fourth Standard was far too difficult for girls of the age for which it was set. They protested that such high standards were cruel both to teachers and pupils, and were impossible to achieve unless Needlework were the only subject taught. In 1881, after the new Code had made Sewing and Knitting compulsory on boys in Infant schools, the same Committee complained that "the effect of compulsory teaching of them would be injurious. What is taught would not be followed up in the Boys' schools, and would be too slight a knowledge to be useful in later life." In any case, the boys were prejudiced against the subject as not being men's work. The Boards usually freely provided the sewing materials that were necessary for the obligatory instruction, and tried to sell the finished work, the first choice going to the parents - but this was often difficult, despite the usefulness of the objects made. Girls were encouraged to bring work for mending at school in the periods, in order to keep the cost of the materials down, as well as to be useful to their homes - but only so long as it was "scrupulously clean!"¹⁶

During the years following the establishment of the National Training School of Cookery, London, in 1873, schools of Cookery spread to the larger provincial towns, including Darlington and Stockton. These aimed at teaching all classes of women the art of Cookery, and met with a limited success (it was reported in 1877 that the School in Stockton was failing to induce the wives of working men to attend its classes), and from 1875, a few elementary schools began to teach the subject. In that year, attendance at Cookery classes was recognised in the Code, but no grants were given for it until the 1882 Code awarded 4/- for each girl over 12 years attending 40 hours a year at a Cookery class. Until Cookery became eligible for grant, few School Boards were prepared to consider the subject, but after 1882, Cookery classes spread quite rapidly. Middlesbrough, Stockton and Darlington School Boards discussed establishing them in 1876 and 1877. Middlesbrough School Board, for example, sent for details from Cookery schools in Darlington, Stockton, Leeds, Newcastle and Hartlepool, but, having worked out the cost of establishing one for themselves at Middlesbrough, they abandoned the project. However, when a Cookery teacher set up a class in the town the following year for ladies and artisans' wives, the School Board made arrangements for her to give 20 lessons of $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours each to girls in the Upper Standards, for £15. This was repeated the following year, and proved very popular; the Superintendent reported that the girls liked the classes, took careful notes, and understood and remembered them well; the lessons were also supplemented by work in school. ¹⁷ Darlington School Board also considered and rejected the setting up of a Cookery school in the town. They did however send 60 girls from their schools for two hours instruction a week to the private school of Cookery in the town. These girls attended only lectures in the subject, but later the Board also sent 10 girls to the school for practical lessons. The classes lasted only from 1876 to 1879, when the school closed down due to the trade depression, causing a slackening in demand. In 1880, the School Board rejected the idea of establishing its own Cookery school, because of the expense involved, and four years later,

turned down another proposal to start a Cookery class, this time put forward by Mrs. Pease, their lady member. Stockton School Board also paid the fees of girls to attend Cookery classes for a time in the 1870's.¹⁸

By the early 1880's, none of the School Boards on Tees-side had set up their own Cookery school, and arrangements with private schools had ceased, in spite of the appreciation the Boards had of the utility of such lessons. However, a stimulus came from the Government in 1887 which rekindled their efforts; in that year, the Science and Art Department declared that no grant would be given for the instruction of girls in Drawing unless they were also taught Cookery. Darlington School Board was the first in the area to react to this. In 1888 they adapted their old school building in Skinnergate for use as a Cookery school and appointed a special teacher for it at £65 a year, and offered use of the school to the Voluntary schools of the town for a fee. They hoped the school would be self-supporting. The next year, Middlesbrough School Board established a Board Cookery school for their older girls, renting a room in the Temperance Hall for the purpose, and appointing a teacher at £70 a year. Stockton School Board did not follow their example until 1891, when they appointed a certificated teacher from Leeds at £70 a year, and fitted up the Friends' School room as a kitchen. The three Cookery schools proved most successful: the girls enjoyed the lessons, and the schools had no difficulty in selling the food. Middlesbrough appointed a second teacher in 1894 and opened an additional school in Hugh Bell school, while Darlington and Stockton School Boards also built new premises, to meet the increasing demand from Board and Voluntary school pupils.¹⁹

The teachers of Cookery always emphasised the necessity for cleanliness when giving practical lessons, and the squalor of some of the elementary school children they encountered led to a movement to add another subject to the curriculum of the girls: that of Laundry. In 1889, this was recognised by the Code and made eligible for a 2/- grant, but it never proved as popular as Cookery. Although Darlington School

Board seriously considered the establishment of Laundry classes in 1892 and 1893 - they even persuaded the H.M.I. Miss Harrison to discuss the question with them at Darlington - they could not decide whether it was worth the expense. It was left to Middlesbrough School Board to be the only Board of the area to teach the subject, which they did from 1900 in Hugh Bell school.²⁰

The growth of Manual Instruction and Physical Training in elementary schools proved slower than that of Cookery. Military Drill, which made no attempt to provide scientific Physical Training, but only to develop a sense of discipline and obedience in the boys, was recognised by the 1871 Code. But it did not spread very fast. In 1880, Mr. Bernay, H.M.I. for the Durham District which included Teesdale Union, expressed his regret that it was not frequently taught. He admitted that outside the towns it was difficult to arrange, but suggested that several schools in a rural area might combine to obtain the services of an army instructor. In 1876, Stockton School Board appointed a Sergeant Proctor to teach the subject, while Middlesbrough School Board made arrangements in 1874 with the Drill Sergeant to the Volunteers to teach it in three boys' schools, two hours a week in each school. However, two years later, the School Board told their masters to drill their own pupils, and in 1884, Stockton School Board also decided that Drill was best done by the teachers themselves, and ceased using the services of a Drill sergeant. In 1896, at the request of the Board schoolmasters, they put on an evening class to instruct the teachers in the principles of Physical Drill. Later, however, Stockton School Board appointed a Sergeant Tate to instruct Drill at the Higher Grade school; he must have been quite popular, for, after he had been called up and killed in the Boer War, the scholars and staff raised £29 for his widow and placed a tablet in the gym to his memory, while the Art master painted a portrait of him to hang up in the school. Darlington School Board also preferred their own teachers to take the subject, and by the 1890's was strongly encouraging Musical and Physical Drill in their schools. The Board appointed no special Drill instructor for the scholars, but, after the H.M.I. had

urged them to do so, and members of their Committee had attended Middlesbrough Industrial School to see a display of Drill, they appointed an instructor to hold a class in the subject for the Board's teachers. Darlington School Board also arranged for boys wishing to learn Swimming to do so in the Corporation Baths, paying the Corporation 1d. for each boy. They also hired a male instructor to give the lessons, and, after finding a female instructor with some difficulty, provided for girls to learn Swimming also a few years later (in 1900). Darlington Board schools organised teams to compete in local swimming competitions, and did quite well in them. Stockton School Board also arranged for their boys to learn Swimming in the town baths from 1901. Middlesbrough School Board made attempts as early as 1888 to arrange Swimming instruction for their boys in the Corporation Baths, but without success.

Manual Instruction was eligible for Science and Art grants from 1890, and the Education Department also then allowed it to count for school attendance, but not very much was done to develop this in elementary schools during the remaining years of the School Board period. Some schools did realise its importance: Stockton's Board Higher Grade school was well equipped with Woodwork and Metalwork rooms, and found out that these subjects had great educational value:

"Art and manual work merits recognition not only as an educational instrument but also for the intense interest with which these subjects are pursued by pupils after leaving school. It is not infrequent for scholars who have remained undistinguished in ordinary subjects to discover their ability in manual work and promising careers have in many cases been opened to them in consequence."

Darlington School Board also appreciated the value of such work. In 1894, Durham County Council offered the Board the services of their manual instructor, and the Board organised classes of boys to be taught for the Science and Art Department's grants in this subject. The Technical Instruction Committee allowed the School Board free use of Woodwork rooms, and four Board schools and one voluntary school sent classes of boys for two hours a week. Three years later, the

Board appointed its own instructor and ran a Woodwork centre along the same lines as the Cookery school. By 1900, 280 boys from Board and Voluntary schools were attending it.²¹

This multiplication of subjects taught in elementary schools which grew up especially during the last years of the School Board period, did not always meet with full approval. In 1895, Mr. Swettenham, the local H.M.I., protested against too many subjects being taught, which only resulted in "stripping every subject of all that really makes it educational, of all that necessitates thought and application of the mind to the work, leaving only the bare bones and the addition to the child's vocabulary of the new words necessary to each new subject." The Chairman of Darlington School Board made a similar point in 1904 when pleading for more old-fashioned learning in the 3 R's:

"Too many subjects are now being taught in ordinary school hours; the children have time to gain a taste for none, nor to learn thoroughly their elementary principles. The 3 R's, as they are now called sometimes in contempt, are neglected, whilst children are led from subject to subject until their minds are bedevilled."²³

The smaller School Boards, with less adequate resources at their disposal, and fewer pupils to educate, lagged behind those of the three industrial towns. They were usually reluctant to incur the additional expense of expanding the curriculum, and improvements were often due solely to compulsory changes in the Code. Wolviston School Board, for example, started the teaching of Drawing only after it had become compulsory in 1890; they did teach Geography as a class subject for a few years, but discarded it in 1883 because of the bad examination results. They also made great efforts to get all the materials needed for compulsory Needlework lessons from the girls themselves, and when some parents proved reluctant to send any, the Board told the mistress to visit the parents and persuade them to do so - they failed in this, however, and had to pay a few shillings a year for sewing materials. None of the smaller Boards established classes in Cookery, although Middleton-in-Teesdale did consider doing so in 1896; nor did any make any special arrangements for Drill. But not all were as reluctant to

provide wider courses as Wolviston: Cowpen Bewley and Norton School Boards provided Drawing classes for a few years in the 1870's and early 1880's, while Middleton-in-Teesdale Board School taught Shorthand and Algebra during the last years of the period.²⁴

2. Quality of Teaching

The most progressive teaching methods in the School Board period probably took place in the sphere of Infant education: "In no department of the school work has such improvement been made than in Infants schools," proclaimed Middlesbrough School Board in 1885. The new methods had done wonders in making the schools attractive to the children. The more enlightened School Boards realised the importance of education at this stage (although most conformed to the general practice of paying infant schoolmistresses on a lower salary scale than those in Girls' schools). In 1893, H.M.I. Swettenham argued against denigrating infant education:

"A first rate infants teacher is really a rarity, a union of such qualities as invention, originality, vivacity, good temper and untiring patience with the power of attracting and holding the attention of the little ones, being, as might be expected, only to be found now and then."

He added that the improvements in infants schools had not taken place any too soon, because the abolition of fees had largely increased the attendance of infants under five years of age.²⁵

Darlington School Board led the way in new infant methods on Tees-side. In 1879, they introduced the Phonic system of learning to read into Brunswick St. Infants school, having heard of the success of this method in Leeds and Wakefield. It proved so successful that they extended it to their Infant schools in Bridge St. in 1880, and Skinner-gate in 1882. H.M.I. Swettenham strongly encouraged their efforts, and praised Darlington School Board in his 1882 Report, published in the Committee of Council on Education's Annual Report. He urged the other teachers of his district to visit Brunswick St. school to see the merits of this method. The method appealed to the intelligence of the children from the very beginning and was far superior to the normal methods:

"To hear the children shout together 'see ay tee cat' or 'double you aitch i see aitch which' is not a very edifying experience, especially when the words are repeated over and over again as if pronouncing the letters really led the mind to the word 'cat' or 'which' ... I should think that no-one has ever ^{heard} the ordinary process of learning to read in an infant school without wondering whether the teacher and children were really intelligent members of the genus homo or not." ²⁶

In the 1880's, some revival of interest in Froebel's ideas took place. Local societies grew up throughout the country, and the National Froebel Union was founded in 1887. This resulted in some School Boards introducing kindergarten methods into their infant schools. Middlesbrough School Board started the kindergarten system in their infant schools in the early 1880's, and were very pleased with the success of the method:

"By this means the faculties of the children are being developed without strain and they are prepared for the work of the senior schools by the cultivation of their powers of observation, attention and manual dexterity. At the same time, it is found that no loss is sustained in the ordinary school subjects; indeed, that as a rule, children of 7 years of age are better prepared than ever before to begin the work of the Standards."

Darlington and Stockton School Boards also introduced kindergarten methods into their schools during the 1880's, paying the fees of pupil-teachers and infant teachers who attended classes in the kindergarten system. Even Wolviston School Board decided to begin kindergarten methods in their school during the 1890's. Other improved methods also took place in the 1880's, and were to a large extent stimulated by the Mundella Code. Varied occupations were introduced in many schools: those in Stockton Boards schools, for example, consisted of drawing, mat-weaving, simple embroidery, building with cubes, pea-work, stick-laying, recitation, embossing, paper-folding and wood-work. Musical Drill was adopted, and also improved methods of teaching Arithmetic as well as Reading. All these changes reduced the formality and stiffness of the lessons and made "what used to be dull drudgery more like a pleasure to both teachers and scholars." The keener School Boards only regretted that so many parents did not take full advantage of the

attractive and valuable infant schools by sending their children to school at the age of three or four years, and not only when education became compulsory for them at five.²⁷

Some of the more progressive School Board members also regretted that the new infant methods had no effect on the teaching methods of the lower Standards of the upper schools, where teaching had always been mechanical and dull, and they welcomed the introduction of a course of object lessons and varied occupations for Standards I-III, and Drill for all, in the Codes of the 1890's. "This will make the school work of children continuous on a proper basis from the age of 3 to 9 years," declared the 1894 Report of Middlesbrough School Board.

The local H.M.I's often complained to the schools of their dull and mechanical teaching methods, and continually tried to eradicate the bad methods by inspections and advice. In 1887, the Chief Inspector for the North East reported that the increasing number of inexperienced teachers who were wasting the children's time from ignorance of good methods, rendered it of the utmost importance that visits without notice be frequently paid in every district.

"At such visits, we notice the waste of time and bad methods which work harm, and we are able to give friendly hints that may stave off disaster on the day of examination. For lack of a word in season, many a well-meaning but ignorant teacher blunders on from year to year without ever finding out the causes of frequent failures. This is especially the case in out of the way villages."²⁸

Middlesbrough's Superintendent-also tried to raise standards by regularly visiting all the Board schools of the town, examining the scholars and pupil-teachers. A professional teacher himself, with quite progressive views on education, he was able to make pertinent comments on the methods he saw. He tried to change the old-fashioned mechanical teaching, that persisted among the poorer teachers, even after the Code had been somewhat liberalised. In particular, he disliked mere fact-cramming, and because of this, he held that Geography was not a good subject to teach in elementary schools:

"When it is well known, it only means that the memory is loaded with a large number of names, lengths of rivers, heights of mountains, areas, lists of productions etc. Generally, it is badly known, and then it means that all the above items are jumbled together in the greatest confusion. Something much better on which to train the memory might be found."

On the other hand, he did not believe in 'waffle' which was the main fault of much of the History teaching that he saw:

"The teachers have hazy notions about the facts and fill the deficiency by spinning out wordy descriptions; they should say as simply as possible what happened, where, when, by whom done, and with what result."

He closely inspected the work of the pupil-teachers, especially their lesson notes, which he believed was an important part of their training, but was seldom well done:

"Good notes should show accuracy and extent of knowledge - clear and logical arrangement of facts - apt illustration - and to some extent, skill in the art of teaching. It would be well worth the while of head teachers to give more attention to this subject than they seem to have done in the past." 29

The schools were encouraged to work hard by the annual examinations of the H.M.I.'s and, in the case of Middlesbrough, by those also of the Superintendent. This certainly had a great effect on the teachers, as their salary increases and very jobs often depended on satisfactory reports. The School Boards opposed the abolition of examinations for pupil-teachers, because they believed in the necessity of examinations as an incentive to hard work. Scholarship schemes also had a stimulating effect on the teachers and brighter pupils. In 1878, the local H.M.I. reported that Middlesbrough's scholarship scheme had had beneficial effects on teaching, counter-balancing the Government policy of giving grants mainly on the results of examination in the Standard subjects, which had resulted in the best children being largely neglected, and the teachers' efforts being concentrated on getting as many average pupils through the annual examination as possible and so secure the basic passes that were their bread and butter. The scholarships had stimulated both teachers and the brightest pupils to do their best. 30

The School Boards were united in opposing the use of punishment as an educational instrument. Most of them strictly limited the use of corporal punishment to the head teachers, and insisted that all cases be recorded in a special book, with details of the reason and extent of its infliction. Darlington School Board's Regulations also stated that the utmost caution had to be exercised when administering it, and a child had never to be struck on any part of the head with the hand or any instrument whatsoever. It added that it was the opinion of the Board that, with able management, very little corporal punishment should be required. Pupil-teachers, in particular, could not be trusted with the right to inflict corporal punishment. Stockton School Board insisted that assistant teachers were not even to have a stick or strap in their possession, and violations of this rule entailed instant dismissal. Middleton-in-Teesdale School Board urged their teachers to deal always leniently with pupils, although they did recognise the necessity of inflicting such punishment on some occasions in order to maintain order and discipline. Whitton School Board also recognised that it was sometimes necessary, and even justified their Master punishing children for misbehaving out of school hours, when a father complained of his doing this to the Board.³¹

Most of the School Boards encouraged their scholars by means of prizes for attendance and proficiency. Darlington School Board proved the most generous in this respect. Although proposals to start a prize scheme were defeated in 1874, two years later a scheme was established, which was quite generous. Scholars who had 100% attendance for the year, received a 5/- prize, while those with attendances of 85%-95% who had passed the Standards (except for the infants who sat no examination) received prizes according to a fixed scale:

<u>Attendance</u>	<u>Infants</u>	<u>Standards</u>					
		I	II	III	IV	V	VI
95%	9d.	1/-	1/-	1/6d.	2/-	2/6d.	3/-
90%	9d.	9d.	9d.	1/3d.	1/6d.	2/-	2/6d.
85%	6d.	6d.	6d.	6d.	9d.	9d.	9d.

Scholars passing special subjects also received 3d. per subject. When the total value of prizes in a Department was less than 2d. per head in average attendance, the managers were authorised to present further prizes up to that amount in total. However, pupils of bad conduct were to receive no prizes, as also were those whose fees were being remitted by the Board. Although this scheme was relatively expensive, the School Board declared that it was justified, for not only did it encourage better attendance and harder work, but also a higher grant was thereby earned and thus part of the expenditure was returned to the Board this way. In 1880, however, the School Board had second thoughts on the cost of the scheme, and revised it to reduce the expenditure: only boys with 100% attendance, and girls with 95% attendance and passing the Standards now became eligible for prizes, except for a few given for proficiency alone (the Headmaster of the Grammar School examining in general subjects for these, and a lady lecturer in the Training College at Darlington, in Needlework). This change reduced the cost considerably. In 1879-80 851 prizes had been awarded at a cost of £65; in 1880-1, only 403, at a total cost of £45. The Board school headmasters criticised the new scheme on the grounds that greater weight should have been placed on attendance, that boys should have received the same treatment as girls, and that the special proficiency prizes should be abolished for they entailed additional examination and the teachers held that repeated examinations were harmful. The School Board rejected all these criticisms, declaring that they had always regarded attendance prizes as temporary, being introduced only to inculcate a habit of attendance at a time when compulsory attendance had been novel; they also stated that there was more pressure on girls to stay at home than boys, to assist in the housework, and that one extra examination should have been no burden to the children. In 1883, after the Denominationalist party had won control of the Board, the prize scheme was reduced still further: the public distribution of prizes was abolished, and their total value restricted to £5 a year. Five years later, this stringency was somewhat relaxed by a new and more complicated scheme which put more emphasis on attendance, while about the same time, the Chairman of the School Board, and the town's M.P. also donated a few additional prizes.³²

The other School Boards of the area presented some prizes, but none was as systematic or as generous as Darlington - at any rate, until the last few years of their existence. Middleton-in-Teesdale started prizes whose total value was not to exceed £1, in 1894; Middleton St. George School Board restricted its prizes to a total value of £2; Whitton School Board, to £1. Wolviston School Board relied solely upon the generosity of its Chairman, Captain Young, for prizes for their scholars; after his death in 1885, no prizes were given until 1903. Even Middlesbrough School Board never instituted a proper prize scheme of its own (apart from some book prizes to its pupil-teachers). Its Ladies Committee suggested in 1875 that Board prizes be introduced, but, when the Board rejected this suggestion, they subscribed to a fund themselves for Needlework prizes. Middlesbrough School Board relied on private individuals to donate prizes to its scholars. In 1874, Edward Williams, Vice-chairman of the Board and Mayor of the town for that year, gave the Board £100 to provide a treat and prizes; in 1902, another benefactor left a similar amount for Board prizes.³³

Some of the more progressive School Boards also tried other ways of attracting their pupils to school work. Middlesbrough School Board established small libraries in several of their schools, and organised a system of marks whereby the most attentive and diligent pupils earned the privilege of borrowing the books. (This system was perhaps open to the criticism that it was the others who should have been most encouraged to read on their own). This was extended when the Town's Library Committee offered to supply books to the Board schools on condition that the teachers were responsible for their distribution. In 1900, Stockton School Board tried to arrange a similar system, but the Town Council refused to co-operate and lend their books to the schools.³⁴ Equipping the schools generously was another way of making education more attractive. Teachers frequently asked the Boards to provide them with pianos. At times, the Boards would pay for cheap harmoniums, but they were all reluctant to pay the full cost of a piano. In 1889, Middlesbrough School Board stated that those schools which would otherwise

suffer reduction of grant were to be provided with pianos; they did not freely offer pianos to all their junior schools until 1897. Even in the late 1890's, Stockton and Darlington School Boards were prepared to pay only half the cost of school pianos, expecting the teachers to make up the balance by concerts, etc. In the case of Stockton School Board, both Unsectarians and Denominationalists were united on this policy, but in Darlington, the Unsectarian opposition called for the whole cost to be borne by the Board. As was to be expected, the smaller School Boards were similarly reluctant to pay the cost of such expensive items of equipment.³⁵

In 1898, Sir George Kekewich, Secretary to the Education Department, opened Marton Road Board school in Middlesbrough, and, in his address, suggested that opportunities should be given to parents to see the work done by their children in school, in the hope that they would become more sympathetic to their work. Darlington School Board followed up this suggestion, and told their head teachers to throw open their schools one afternoon each month. The following year, the Headmaster of Stockton's Higher Grade school also asked the School Board for permission to do this, which was granted. The idea proved very successful: on the first occasion, 70 parents visited the Higher Grade School, and saw it working under normal conditions. The Headmaster also asked the Board for permission to take his scholars on educational journeys - at this time quite a novel suggestion. Permission was granted, and he organised annual trips round Tees-side and Cleveland villages; the children noted their observations on Local and Natural History; songs were sung, and the children thoroughly enjoyed themselves. In fact, the School Board were so impressed by the progressive ideas of Mr. Prest, the Headmaster, that in 1899 they voted him £4 4s. Od. and gave him leave to visit London and see the best schools in action there.³⁶

School treats were another means of making the pupils less hostile to school. In 1874, through the generosity of their Vice-Chairman who was also Mayor that year, 1250 Middlesbrough Board school children were given tea, a bun, and a spiced cake each in Albert Park, one Summer's day.

This was reported to have been a great success. Three years later, as a Christmas treat, 25 children from each school were taken to see an exhibition held at the Literary and Philosophical Society. Special holidays were held to commemorate special events in all the School Board districts: the Queen's Jubilee was celebrated by one week's holiday in most of the Board schools; the Coronation of Edward VII, by two days. Some Boards awarded a day's holiday to commemorate the Relief of Maffeking and peace in South Africa - on this last occasion, a Colonel Ropner provided tea and entertainments for all Stockton and Norton Board scholars. Local occasions were also celebrated: Whitton School Board provided a day's holiday on the wedding of their Vice-Chairman, and Norton half a day to celebrate one of its pupils winning a County Scholarship.³⁷

Most people of the period judged the success of a school in achieving a good standard of education by the size of the grant awarded. This criterion was natural in an age which had been conditioned by the Payment by Results policy of the State for many years.

Judged from this point of view, Middlesbrough School Board emerges from the published statistics as the most successful School Board on Tees-side. Not only did it earn higher grants per scholar in average attendance than the other Boards of the area, but its grants were also consistently well above the average for the whole country throughout the period. In 1880, for example, Middlesbrough School Board earned 16s. 8d. per scholar, while the national average in that year was 15s. 8d. for School Boards and 15s. 5d. for Voluntary schools. By 1899, Middlesbrough School Board was earning £1 2s. 3d. per scholar, compared with £1 1s. 1d. for all the School Boards in England and Wales. Middlesbrough School Board also compared very favourably in its grant-earning capacity with other large towns, including those which had a reputation for progressive education: for example, during the mid-1880's, it earned a higher grant than the School Boards of London, Leeds and Bradford. Its grant was big enough in some years to exceed the maximum laid down in the Code, and so the School Board received only a reduced amount. The

School Boards of Darlington and Stockton earned slightly lower grants than Middlesbrough, and they remained about average for the School Boards of England and Wales.³⁶

The results of the annual examination of the Standards, in terms of the proportion of passes obtained, confirm that in most years Middlesbrough Board schools achieved a standard well above the national average; those of Stockton and Darlington School Boards, although lower than Middlesbrough's, were usually slightly above those of the country as a whole. In 1881, for example, 88% of the scholars passed the examination in Middlesbrough Board schools, 86% in Darlington's, and 82% in those of England and Wales as a whole. The proportion of passes gradually increased throughout the period. By 1889, 94% passed in Middlesbrough Board schools, 93% in Stockton Boards schools, and 89% for the Board schools of the whole country. The results both for the Tees-side schools and for those of the whole country, reveal that a higher proportion of scholars consistently passed Reading than Writing, and a higher proportion passed Writing than Arithmetic. In 1880, for example, 92% of the Board scholars of Darlington passed Reading, 85% Writing, and 81% Arithmetic.

In 1882, a system of Merit grants was introduced, whereby schools could earn additional grants, based on the H.M.I.'s general estimate of the schools' standards. 3/- per pupil in average attendance was granted for an 'Excellent' award, 2/- for a 'Good' award, and 1/- for a 'Fair' award. An examination of these awards again reveal that the schools of Middlesbrough School Board were among the best in the country, and those of Stockton to have been about average. (By this time, Darlington School Board had ceased publishing detailed annual reports.) In 1885, for example, the 18 Departments of Middlesbrough Board schools earned 10 Excellent, and 8 Good awards, whereas the 11 departments of Stockton's board schools earned 3 Excellent, and 8 Good Awards.³⁷

³⁷Under 30% of the schools of England and Wales managed to earn Excellent grants. In 1890, this system was simplified by the award of only two classes of grants: the 'higher' and the 'lower'. In 1896, Middlesbrough Board school departments earned 25 higher, and 2 lower, grants; those of Stockton, 15 higher, and 8 lower grants.

The awards for Drawing in the schools reveal a similar pattern. In 1896, for example, 73% of Middlesbrough Board schools won Excellent awards, 63% of Stockton's, while the schools of no other School Board of the area won the highest award:

Drawing Examination Awards 1895-6 (number of school departments) ³⁷

<u>School Board</u>	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Fair</u>	<u>No award</u>
Middlesbrough	11	4	-	-
Stockton	5	3	-	-
Darlington	-	9	-	-
Middleton-in-Teesdale	-	-	1	-
Middleton St. George	-	1	-	-
Norton	-	1	-	-
Whitton	-	-	-	1
Wolviston	-	1	-	-

The smaller School Boards did slightly worse on average than the town Boards, although only Whitton School Board had consistently bad results. The H.M.I. reports for the school of this Board, repeatedly criticised both the equipment and standard of instruction, and the Board was forced to make certain improvements in equipment by threats to withhold the grant the following year. The lowest Merit grant ('Fair') was awarded to the school most years, while in 1885 no grant was given to the Infants department because of overcrowding. In the same year, the Board school only achieved a 76% pass in the Standards examination, which was well below the national average (although it did improve in later years).⁴⁰ The H.M.I. reports on the Board schools in the other smaller School Board districts were usually better than those for Whitton Board school but none could reach for any length of time the high standard of Middlesbrough Board schools. In 1890, for example, the only School Board in the smaller school districts of North Tees-side to earn an annual grant per scholar in average attendance greater than the national average, was that of Middleton-in-Teesdale, and the grant of this Board was well below that of Middlesbrough's:

Grants per head in average attendance : 1889-90⁴¹

<u>School Board</u>	<u>Average attendance</u>	<u>Total grants</u>			<u>Grant per head</u>	
		£	s.	d.	s.	d.
Norton	365	319	2	6	17	6
Middleton-in-Teesdale	311	285	12	1	18	8
Whitton	206	171	6	4	16	9
Middleton St. George	159	120	3	0	15	1
Wolviston	80	64	16	0	16	2
England & Wales (Board schools)					18	6
Middlesbrough					20	5 ⁺

The three smallest village School Boards showed the poorest results, although that of Wolviston did on occasions manage to secure the 'Excellent' Merit grant.⁴²

Within the School Board districts, the Voluntary schools on average did worse with respect to grants earned than the Board schools. After about 1880, this was general throughout the country as a whole. The Cross Commission returns for 1884-5 show to what extent this was so with regard to three towns on Tees-side:⁴³

Grant per head in average attendance 1884-5

	<u>Board schools</u>		<u>Voluntary schools</u>	
	s.	d.	s.	d.
Middlesbrough	17	6	17	5
Darlington	17	2	16	8
Barnard Castle	-	-	15	10

However, not all the Voluntary schools had worse results than the Board schools. The Wesleyan schools, in particular, always did well in examinations. This was especially true in Middlesbrough, where the Wesleyan school gained far more scholarships to the High School than any other school in the town. From 1888 to 1895, this school alone won 50% of the Science and Art Scholarships to the High School; 30% being won by five Board schools, 6% by other Voluntary schools, and the remainder by schools outside Middlesbrough.⁴⁴

⁺ The grant for Stockton School Board for this year was 18/4d.; for Darlington School Board, 18/5d.

3. Morals and Health

As well as giving the children a good basic education in the 3 R's, the School Boards were concerned with the moral aspects of their development. In addition to providing religious services and instruction in their schools, they were keen that the teachers encouraged the scholars' good manners and behaviour in general. In 1899, Middlesbrough School Board issued a circular to their teachers, impressing upon them the duty of guiding the children along the principles of decency, good behaviour and courtesy at all times, and drawing their attention to the objects and rules of the Children's National Guild of Courtesy. Several School Boards encouraged the habit of thrift in their scholars, by urging them to save. In 1880, Darlington School Board publicised, with encouraging results, the facilities offered at the Post Office Savings Bank for saving small sums of money, and in 1892, opened school transfer branches of the Yorkshire Penny Bank in all their schools. This was also done in the Board schools of Middlesbrough in the same year, while Stockton School Board had opened a Penny Savings Bank in one of their schools as early as 1881. Norton and Middleton-in-Teesdale School Boards also encouraged their children to save at the Post Office; the Clerk to Middleton-in-Teesdale School Board collected the deposits in the Board School each Monday, but Norton School Board left it to the teachers to do what they liked in this connection. The savings branches in the schools sometimes attracted considerable sums of money. Darlington Board schools, in particular, did well: they amassed a balance of nearly £900 by 1894, and a few years later, came fourth in the 35 school transfer branches of the Yorkshire Penny Bank in the amount raised.⁴⁵

The School Boards firmly considered that it was their duty to protect their children from the dangers of alcohol. The Band of Hope approached most of them for permission to give lectures on the subject in their schools, and also to award prizes for good essays by the scholars on the evils of drink. As a result, Mr. Joseph Addison toured the Board schools of Middlesbrough, Stockton, Darlington, Middleton-in-Teesdale, Middleton St. George and Whitton every two or three years between 1891 and 1903, delivering a lecture on "The Chemical Properties

and Physiological Effects of Alcohol". Only once was he refused permission by a School Board to do this: in 1891, by the Norton Board. By coincidence, one of the members of this Board at the time was a wine merchant (J. O. Stephenson); eight years later, after he had ceased to be a member, the School Board gave Addison permission to deliver his lecture.⁴⁶ On several occasions, Middlesbrough School Board opposed the applications to the magistrates by publicans for licences, whenever the proposed public houses were situated near a school; sometimes a special emergency meeting of the Board was called to do this, so strongly did the members feel about the matter. In 1897, the Board asked the town's magistrates to stop the sale of intoxicating liquor to children by all possible means, and prevent the distribution of sweets, toys and other inducements to children to fetch liquor from public houses. This must have had little effect, for the following year, they reiterated their request, and in addition, asked the Watch Committee to instruct the Chief Constable to report the name of any licence holder who disregarded it. Petitions to the Government to stop the sale of intoxicating liquor to children and on Sundays won support from many School Boards, including those of Middlesbrough, Norton, Whitton and Wolviston.⁴⁷

The School Boards also took measures on several occasions to protect the physical health of their scholars. Epidemics of measles or scarlet fever broke out in some years, and the schools were then often closed down on the advice of the Medical Officer of Health of the Sanitary authority - sometimes for a considerable period: a month or more, as in the case of the measles epidemic, which struck Darlington and Middleton St. George in 1898. The Boards were always willing to co-operate in this way, although on one occasion, Middlesbrough School Board did refuse to go as far as the Town Clerk suggested, and keep a register of all sick children and send it regularly to the M.O.H. But in 1898, on a resolution put forward by the two medical members of the Board, this School Board did invite the Sanitary Committee to send a couple of their medical men round all the Board schools, examining the pupils to see if they had been vaccinated, and sent letters to the

parents of those who had not. The Board's anxiety was due to a smallpox epidemic which had broken out. They even went as far as to refuse admittance to all scholars who had not received a smallpox vaccination. Middleton St. George school Board took a similar precaution during another epidemic, and refused to admit children from infected houses without a medical certificate to clear them. Cleanliness was also considered important. Wolviston School Board once warned the parents of one girl that unless they sent her to school in a state fit to mix with other children, they would complain to the Officer of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. On another occasion, the condition of their school was suspect: when an outbreak of 'itch' took place in Wolviston, the school was ordered to be thoroughly disinfected, and the books, slates and papers fumigated. The M.O.H. visited a meeting of the School Board after this had been done, and urged them to provide a basin, water, towel and soap at the school for the children to wash themselves. The Board did this shortly afterwards. ⁴⁸

During the School Board period, there were regular periods of depression, when the level of unemployment rose, and distress was widespread. The members of the Boards were well acquainted with such social conditions, and generously remitted school fees during the period of trade depression. Many children went hungry and ill-clad in these years, and distress funds to help them were established in the towns. The School Boards co-operated as much as they could in these matters. For example, when a charity organisation in Darlington gave free boots and stockings to 260 children, the School Board instructed their teachers to report any child who had been supplied with them and who came to the school barefoot, while the Society of Pawnbrokers agreed not to accept charity boots, which were specially marked. In 1884, Middlesbrough School Board asked its teachers to discover how many poor children were coming to school without breakfast and were suffering from lack of food. The teachers reported that, although many could not afford to pay their school fees, only half a dozen could be discovered who were actually coming hungry to school, and, after further investigations, it was discovered that these lacked food only occasionally. The depression

worsened during 1885 and 1886, and a Distress Relief Fund was set up. The School Wardens were instructed to assist this as much as possible, and free dinners were distributed at two Board schools, four days a week. Only the self-made octogenarian, William Fallows, protested against this on the School Board: he stoutly declared that he had no sympathy with the free dinner movement, for every able-bodied man who was out of work could always have gone to work on the Tees embankment, and earn sufficient to feed himself and his family. Stockton and Darlington School Boards co-operated in the distribution of free dinners in the same depression, and in similar movements during 1892 and 1902 (on the last occasion, 115,430 free meals, at a cost of £493, were given to elementary school children in Stockton alone, by means of voluntary donations.) On one occasion, the pupil-teachers of Stockton Board schools organised a social, and handed the proceeds over to the Children's Free Meals Fund. In 1896, the two Labour members of Middlesbrough School Board urged the Board to go further than merely co-operate with a voluntary charity, and proposed that the Board petition the Education Department to be given authority to provide free breakfasts for school children; but they were not backed up by the other Board members on this. In 1873, Darlington School Board considered establishing a special school for the neglected children of destitute parents, and investigated the number of children in the town who had been prevented from attending school for lack of suitable clothing etc. They discovered that there were 174 children who were thus unsuited to the existing elementary schools, but they decided not to establish a special school for them because further investigations revealed that most of the parents could really afford fees and clothing for their children "were it not for their improvident habits". Darlington School Board also threw open their school playgrounds for poor children to exercise themselves outside school hours, and thus keep them off the streets. Middlesbrough School Board was more reluctant to do this, when approached by the Town Clerk, but finally agreed, so long as the Council provided the necessary supervision, and were responsible for any damage done.

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49. Middlesbrough S.B. Minutes 3.11.84., 5.1.85., 1.2.86., 4.5.96., 4.2.89. & 3.7.93.; Darlington S.B. Minutes 27.1.87., 27.1.84., 16.12.92., 6.3.73., 31.3.73., 28.3.88. & 1873-4 Report; School Board Chronicle 17.1.85.; Stockton S.B. Reports 1882-5, 1900-4 & Minutes 13.11.02. & 19.2.03.

CHAPTER VII: ATTENDANCE

1. The Problem

One of the most keenly felt duties facing the new School Boards was that of compelling all children of school age to attend some form of efficient education. That it was desirable, was never seriously contested in the area, but how to achieve it, was found to present great difficulties. In the early years, report after report, both of wardens and School Boards, complained of too many children "neglected and running about in a wretched state".¹ In July 1872, Middlesbrough's Beadle declared that "people stop me in the street complaining of paying rates while the children run the streets insulting them as much as ever".²

The fundamental problem was to persuade the parents to send their children to school. Middlesbrough's Superintendent complained that people there regarded compulsory attendance as an irksome infliction rather than a privilege,³ while the region's Chief Inspector noted that "there is an innate dislike in the people of the North Eastern Division to do anything upon compulsion".⁴ But the main reason why parents refused to co-operate was less love of liberty than material self-interest: they resented paying fees and wanted their children to work at home or in paid employment. The Chief Inspector complained that in most cases it was the mothers who were the main offenders, and their daughters, as the more useful at home, the chief sufferers:

"The selfish mother does not repeat to her husband, on his return from work, the warnings given by the School Board visitor. She does not wish to forgo the delights of gossiping with her neighbours, as she would have to do under the penalty of blows from an angry husband, if she could not make drudges of her girls." ⁴

Certainly more than one Board found out that girls tended to be absent more often than boys. Darlington School Board recognised this tendency and so gave higher prizes for good attendance to girls than boys, and fixed 75% as the lowest average attendance for girls which was to be considered passable, compared to 80% for boys - if attendance fell below this in any school, the Clerk was instructed to write to the headmaster.⁵ But the boys were also often kept from school before the

age of exemption as the many prosecutions in all the areas testify: in the countryside helping on farms, especially at harvest time; in the towns selling newspapers or working in factories.⁶

There were, however, many parents whose laxity in sending their children to school was forced upon them by necessity: the poorest section, especially in the industrial areas, which in the nineteenth century were periodically hit by depressions, causing much unemployment. These people, it was realised, were severely pressed by compulsory education. True, all the School Boards were prepared to remit fees for poor children, but this did not compensate for the loss of the children's help at home, nor did this provide clothes for them to wear: "Some children want shoes, others trousers",⁷ reported the "Evening Gazette" in 1872. Bad weather was particularly severe on poor children who had not the clothes for cold or wet days. In many cases, in a period of poverty, the older children were needed at home to take care of the younger ones while the parents went to work, and sometimes to enable widows and aged persons to keep out of the workhouse.⁸ Their difficulties were appreciated by the magistrates and the School Boards, who were more lenient in such cases. Darlington School Board, indeed, thought that the half-time system might possibly be extended to such cases.⁹ As a result, School Boards relaxed their prosecutions, and allowed attendance to drop somewhat during a depression. In the 1875 depression in the iron trade, for example, average attendance at Darlington slumped to 68%.¹⁰

But this relaxing of the vigour of enforcing the laws in times of distress, although humane, was not completely beneficial. Middlesbrough's Superintendent complained that the policy of the Board to refrain from prosecuting parents in time of poverty and depression only encouraged others to be absent: many children used the plea of poverty to stay away from school, and in many of their cases it was not a reasonable excuse. "

The fee grant of 1891, which made for free education in nearly all Board schools and a large proportion of the Voluntary schools,

eased the problem of poverty. Every Board reported a dramatic jump in average attendance, and, although it was not later sustained at that level, the level it did settle at was definitely higher than the one previous to the Act. In Middlesbrough, for example, average attendance, which had never been above 81% before, now rose to 87%, and for a time the Board had a higher average attendance than accommodation in its schools.¹² Infant schools, where children below compulsory age were taught, in particular, had a great number of new applicants for admission. It was clear that school fees had stood in the way of good attendance. Middlesbrough's Superintendent mentioned the types of people specially affected by free education:

1. respectable working class parents who were poor through lack of work or sickness but who would not apply for remission;
2. indifferent parents who had not enough money on Monday mornings, and yet were not poor enough to claim remission;
3. children who did not turn up for some reason on Monday, and because of the fee, then kept away till the following Monday as a matter of course.

Also, no longer could children be refused admittance to a school because they had areas of unpaid fees, as some School Boards such as Middleton-in-Teesdale and Wolviston had ordered to be done.¹³

In addition to the attitude of the parents, the wardens had to combat the activities of employers, who were often prepared to take on children under the age of exemption. The School Boards had, however, no legal weapon with which to fight the employers, unless they came within the scope of the Factory and Workshops Acts. Stockton's warden, for example, reported to the Board in December 1873 that he had noticed an advertisement for 100 young girls aged 4 to 12 years to apply for work at the Alhambra for a stage show. Enquiries had shown that 30 girls were absent from school through this. To add insult to injury, one family, for whose five children the School Board were paying the school fees, had three children absent working at the Alhambra. But, as the Alhambra did not come under the Factory and Workshops Acts, all the Board could do was to punish the parents: much to their indignation, they could not touch the owners of the Alhambra.¹⁴ The Warden of

Darlington School Board in 1881 presented the Board with a list of seven children at St. Augustine's School, all working half time, who were under 13 years and had not passed the standard for partial exemption. On checking up, all were found to be legally employed under the factory Acts.¹⁵ Darlington and other School Boards in the area supported a memorial from Ipswich School Board to the Education Department asking for the inconsistency of the Education and the Factory Acts regarding this to be remedied.¹⁶

In the absence of a law to back them up, all the attendance officers could do was to make appeals to the employers to co-operate. There are repeated references in the Minutes of all the School Boards to boys being employed in brickyards, ironworks and other concerns in the towns, or harvesting and potato picking in the countryside.¹⁷ Middlesbrough discovered that one of the worst causes of bad attendance for boys was their selling newspapers. It asked the newspaper proprietors on more than one occasion to refuse supplying newspapers to any boys who could not produce a certificate of regular attendance for the previous week.¹⁸ Middleton-in-Teesdale Board had to request the Whim Quarry to stop employing boys under age.¹⁹ But, as Darlington School Board was told by its Wardens, the Wardens had great difficulty in persuading local employers not to take on children who had not earned exemption from compulsory attendance, and their appeals had little permanent effect.²⁰ Wolviston School Board found that several of their boys went "bush beating" on the Wynyard estate. They warned the parents in January 1885, and the following November sent the agent of the Marquis of Londonderry a list of boys who had recently been so employed. Despite the fact that the agent agreed to stop employing them, the Board was forced to complain to him again in 1889, and then to Lord Londonderry himself in 1895 and 1898.²¹

The parents who did not wish to send their children to school could find many opportunities through which to escape the rigour of the bye-laws. Mr. Swettenham, H.M.I. for the Darlington area, said that many parents had found out the exact number of times they could keep their children at home without running the risk of summons.²² Many used the

excuse that their children were sick: on several occasions the School Boards regarded reports of sickness with much scepticism. On one occasion, for example, Middlesbrough School Board ordered that a girl, who the mother claimed, had fits, to attend school, and told the teachers to watch and report on her,²³ while the attendance officer for Wolviston reported in June 1891 on an outbreak of sore heads which he believed to be fictitious. Several School Boards, such as Middleton St. George and Wolviston, instituted a system of doctors' certificates to ensure that sickness excuses were genuine.²⁴ Those who lived near the limit of the distance which would excuse them from compulsory attendance, sometimes claimed to be just outside the limit, and on one occasion the school warden of Middleton St. George was ordered to measure the distance, himself. Another mother at Middleton St. George kept her child at home on the grounds that he had been unjustly punished at school.²⁵ Some parents claimed that they did not need to send their children to school because they were being taught at home, and the Norton School Board ordered one such mother to send her daughter to the Girls' School to be examined by the mistress to make sure that she was in fact receiving a satisfactory education at home.²⁶ Darlington School Board declared that the proof that a child was receiving efficient instruction at home rested with the parent.²⁷ But in cases where a Board was confident that a child was receiving good instruction at home - for example where in Middlesbrough the mother was an ex-schoolmistress - they had no objection to the child not attending a school.²⁸

Other parents sent their children to schools outside the school district in which they lived in the hope that they would thereby escape detection of irregular attendance. To avoid this, Wolviston School Board wrote to the Guardians of Hartlepool Union in 1887 to see that three children from outside Wolviston school district attending Wolviston School attended more regularly. On another occasion, three children left the Wolviston Board school to go to Norton Board school. The Board believed this was to evade compulsion and so wrote to Norton asking for details of their attendance.²⁹

But the easiest way to avoid compulsion, and the one that infuriated the School Board members most, was by sending children to Private Adventure or Dames' schools. There were a large number of Private Adventure schools in the area. Some, as the Darlington Warden once admitted, gave fairly good teaching and had reasonable attendance.³⁰ But in the densely populated areas there were a large number of most unsatisfactory ones, with bad teaching and premises: Darlington, for example, had one run by a Mrs. Denham, a woman getting 10/- a week poor relief, who had a school for 18, and was not willing to keep a register or report on absentees.³¹ As the School Board of Middlesbrough, in which town a large number of such schools existed which failed to supply the Board with weekly returns of attendance, reported in 1875:

"These so-called schools have in fact been found to be places of refuge for children whose parents wish to evade the provisions of the Education Act."

It estimated that ^{30% to} 50% of the children said to be attending such schools, in fact did not.^{+ 33}

Middlesbrough's Warden in his report to the School Board well expressed the problem which these schools presented:³⁴

"These schools are principally conducted by females in rooms without ventilation or any pretensions of school furniture, part of the house in which the family reside, and in some instances, where cookery is carried on. In these places reading, writing and arithmetic are almost altogether ignored to give place to knitting and sewing, and regular attendance being no object so long as they pay their school pence. No registers are kept, and in consequence of this, it is impossible to get the attendances of children beyond a day or two. The proprietors allow their scholars to stay away for weeks at a time, and some they allow to go half time which consists in some cases of one hour either morning or afternoon. They do not care to mention this to your warden who would at once compel regular attendance. They know if they do that the children would be at once withdrawn to be sent to some other place of the same class and that would be a loss of so much per week or, as they term it, part of their living. It is no uncommon thing in passing these premises to see children going for the first time that day at 10.30 or 11 a.m. A certain

⁺ for more details of the nature and extent of private schools, see Chapter XI, Section 3.

class of parents are very glad of such places to send their children to, because they know that there is no check kept of their attendance. A week's absence is thought nothing of."

The 1891 Act which allowed public elementary schools to be free, caused many worthless Private Adventure schools to disappear. But some still survived, and appeared to be supported by payments from parents of children illegally employed.³⁵ So long as the fees were paid and the children marked on the register, they were able to defy the attendance officers and earn wages more than sufficient to cover the school charges and occasional fines. As the law stood, there was not much the attendance officers could do about this. They had no powers to certify private schools as efficient or otherwise. The only thing they could do was to prosecute the parents who sent their children there, in order to make them prove that the education given there was efficient.³⁶ Both Middlesbrough and Wolviston attempted this, but they seemed to achieve little: the Middlesbrough Warden said that in the few cases they had tried to prove to the J.Ps that the schools were the refuge for those trying to evade compulsory education, they had failed.³⁷ Various Boards in the area supported attempts to get the law on this changed: in 1875 Hull School Board sent a petition to the Education Department asking for compulsory inspection of Dame and Adventure schools; Norton and Middlesbrough signed the petition and got their local M.Ps to support it.³⁸ Middlesbrough said that all Private schools should be made to keep daily registers of attendance and no school be opened without a certificate of efficiency from the Education Department.³⁹

Apart from this, all the Boards could do, was to make appeals to the parents: if not to their goodwill towards the education of their children, at least to their material self interest. Middlesbrough's Superintendent said that by sending their children to an inefficient school and with irregular attendance, they were being forced to keep them there until they reached 14 years, while if they went to an efficient public elementary school, they might get total or partial exemption any time after 10 years by passing the Standards, or they might get an honour certificate for free schooling for up to three years.⁴⁰

The supporters of compulsory attendance had other problems to face besides the opposition of parents and employers. One was to persuade both School Boards and their teachers to be wholehearted in its enforcement. Some Board members had doubts on compelling attendance completely and at once, either because it would entail building extra accommodation (the 'economic party') or on grounds of religious liberty - the Nonconformists feared their children might be forced to attend Church schools if they were the only ones nearby.⁴¹ Middlesbrough was forced to delay raising standards of exemption in 1891 because of lack of school places.⁴² The teachers, also, had some qualms about complete enforcement: they were not keen to welcome the 'wastrels' or 'gutter children' into their classes. As H.M.I. Swettenham said: as well as giving great trouble to the wardens, they were "anything but welcome scholars to the teacher because they do no credit to the school, help to destroy the tone, cannot be got to pass, bring dirt, disease and rags, and drive away respectable children."⁴³ He fiercely protested against the view that they were not fit to associate with other children and so should be left to their own devices until there were schools specially built for them:⁴⁴ "The nation looks for the interest on money spent on its vast educational machinery in the attenuated records of the numerous police courts throughout the land and in the improved mental condition of these very waifs and strays". In 1883, Middlesbrough's Superintendent said that the new Code made it the direct money interest of schools to get rid of dull scholars and those who attended badly: the extent by which turning them out of school might reduce the average attendance was not equal to the reduction that took place in the grant if they were presented and failed.⁴⁵ H.M.I. Swettenham proposed that one way to reduce the risk of this happening was to build enough schools for there always to be some empty places in each, so that teachers could not exclude those they did not want on grounds of lack of room, and the attendance officers had no excuse for not going full out to get full attendance.⁴⁶

Sometimes the parents whose children did not attend school regularly were not completely to blame. They might have had a justifiable objection to sending their children to a school if it was not satisfactory for some reason. In 1883, the attendance at Middleton-in-Teesdale Mixed school fell as it was not warmed enough and parents objected to sending children there in cold weather, so the School Board had to order new heating to be installed.⁴⁷ In 1882 the Teesdale School Attendance Committee heard of a school at Spittal, a small place on the borders of Stainmore, which had half a dozen names on the books, but on several occasions only one pupil had turned up. Some of the scholars lived a couple of miles away and the parents grumbled at the bad condition of the school: a small room boxed off from a Wesleyan schoolroom; the schoolmaster and mistress had slept in the room which was totally unsuited to be used as a school, and so the parents had started to refuse to send their children there.⁴⁸ Even if the parents did want their children to attend school, the children were not always obedient. Some children constantly changed schools without the knowledge of their parents, so that they would get lost track of, and so able to avoid compulsion more easily.⁺ There were also truants who were beyond the control of their parents. The attendance committee of Darlington School Board advocated that, with the consent of the parents the police should be asked to inflict corporal punishment on such cases - but the full School Board refused to support officially this suggestion.⁴⁹

Another difficulty facing the School Boards was that of securing the punishment of the main offending parents. Prosecutions were expensive for the School Boards and so for the ratepayers. Darlington School Board spent over £7 on prosecutions 1878-9. The cost of each prosecution, after deducting a 5/- fine came to 7s. 6d., and the Board wrote to the Education Department asking for a way to reduce the costs. One way it suggested was that no charge be made for the prosecution in return for the fines going to the funds of the county; it later signed

⁺ see below, pp. 247-8

a similar petition from the Ipswich School Board to the Education Department.⁵⁰ However, as Middlesbrough School Board pointed out, in its report to the ratepayers, part of the costs of prosecution returned in the form of increased school fees and grants.⁵¹ Also, even when they did prosecute, the School Boards felt they could not rely on the magistrates to convict. The H.M.I. for the area noted in 1885 that there was a strong disinclination on the part of the magistrates to convict for the offence of non attendance at school.⁵² Stockton School Board sent a deputation to the magistrates concerning the number of cases they had dismissed,⁵³ while the Clerk of Darlington School Board was instructed to inform the J.Ps that no parent was summoned without every effort being tried to induce them to send their children to school, and that the parents often appeared several times before the Board before actually being prosecuted.⁵⁴

Even when the J.Ps did convict and fine, there was no guarantee that the fine would in actual fact be paid. Teesdale School Attendance Committee complained that in many cases the fines inflicted were not enforced, which made the prosecutions futile.⁵⁵ They said that it should be up to the magistrates to see that they were paid and the defendants should not leave the court until they had paid. Another complaint that they, and several other authorities made, was that the fines were too small to be of much use. This made it pay for parents to keep their children away and risk prosecution: the law should be made more effective and stronger in its penalties. Middlesbrough's Superintendent said that "Dread of the law is the only thing that will prevail with drunken dissolute parents to see that their children are educated."⁵⁶

Other factors added difficulties to securing good attendance. The approach of holidays caused attendance to fall away, and attendance was particularly bad on Friday afternoons.⁵⁷ Sunday school trips meant large gaps in attendance: Wolviston School Board decided to ask all churches to arrange their trips on the same day so that the school could then be closed,⁵⁸ while a conference of managers and teachers of all public elementary schools in Darlington, called by the Board, agreed, in order

to help attendance, to fix uniform holidays, and to ask for all Sunday school trips to be during day school holidays, Fridays or Saturdays.⁵⁹ Bad weather not merely caused more sickness, and made poor people reluctant to send their children to school because they did not possess the right clothing, but also sometimes made the roads too muddy in country areas for children to travel on to school.⁶⁰

It was also difficult for the wardens to get adequate information about attendance, especially from private schools. Middlesbrough's Beadle complained in 1872 that every month at least one school failed to give him the attendance returns.⁶¹ In general, Voluntary schools co-operated (it was in their interest to do so, in order to earn them greater income from fees and grants), although at first there was sometimes some resistance and requests by Voluntary and private schools for the Board to pay the teachers for the extra work involved in making out the returns; Mr. Huitson, a private school teacher, for example, asked Middlesbrough for £10 a year to do this.⁶² In each case the Boards refused, saying that the schools got their reward in the better attendance and revenue from fees etc. It was more difficult to get returns from the private schools, as many felt it was in their interest not to keep accurate records. Several Boards such as Darlington and Middlesbrough, petitioned the Education Department to change the law to make returns from private and Voluntary schools compulsory.⁶³ This was in fact done by Parliament in the case of Voluntary schools only, by the 1873 Elementary Education Act, Section 22.

The wardens sometimes also found it difficult to get the doctors to co-operate over the signing of medical certificates for children absent through sickness. In 1891 a doctor refused to write out certificates for Whitton's attendance officer on the grounds that he possessed no printed forms, and so the School Board ordered that forms be purchased and sent to the doctors.⁶⁴ In addition, the keeping of accurate registers in the industrial towns was made difficult by the mobility of labour: within two years, 1,000 children left Middlesbrough with their parents, and as the registers were often not kept up to date this exaggerated the lack of attendance. (Yet despite this, Middlesbrough's figures in

1877 showed an average attendance 10% above the national average: 73.4%).⁶⁵ It was also reported that the triennial elections of the School Boards disrupted the enforcement of attendance: before the election of a new Board the wardens were apt to relax their efforts, not feeling the need to be so energetic because of the lack of continuity of the Board.⁶⁶

2. Methods of enforcement

All the School Boards had a financial inducement to try to achieve good attendance of children at school: that of qualifying for the annual grants, especially after the Mundella Code, and they were very conscious of this.⁶⁷ However, to offset this inducement, were the costs of actually enforcing the attendance - the salary of the attendance officer and the costs of prosecution - and also the resentment of some of the local population over being forced to send their children to school. As a result the keenness of school attendance authorities in enforcing attendance varied in different districts of the area.

(a) Bye-laws

The requirements of the bye-laws did not vary much between the different attendance authorities in the area. Most of the bye-laws of the School Boards and school attendance committees issued in the 1870's and 1880's gave partial exemption to scholars 10 to 13 years⁺ when they passed Standard 4 and full exemption when they passed Standard 5. This included industrial towns such as Middlesbrough, small towns such as Norton and Middleton-in-Teesdale, and also parish unions such as Teesdale, Auckland, Stockton, Darlington and Middlesbrough Unions.⁶⁸ However, some differences can be discerned: some of the industrial districts were slightly more severe in their requirements, and some of the country areas, especially outside School Board districts, slightly less severe. Darlington School Board, for example, in 1874, made Standard 6 the minimum for total exemption, as did Whitton, Stockton and Middlesbrough School Boards in 1875, 1891 and 1895 respectively.⁶⁹ The latter three Boards also pushed partial exemption up to Standard 5 at the same time,

⁺ 11 years after the 1893 School Attendance Act; 12 after 1899.

except Middleton St. George which gave no provision for partial exemption at all. Among the country areas, however, Wolviston School Board had only Standard 3 for partial exemption,⁷⁰ and Barnard Castle School Attendance Committee Standard 3 for partial, and Standard 4 for total exemption. There is also no real distinction within the School Board areas between the bye-laws issued by Denominational majorities, and those by Liberal majorities. In respect of bye-laws issued, Tees-side is similar or slightly better than England and Wales as a whole: in 1880-1 in England and Wales 78% of the School Boards fixed Standard 5 for total exemption, while 38% fixed Standard 4 and 33% Standard 3 for partial exemption; and 74% of the Unions fixed Standard 4 for full exemption and 68% Standard 3 for partial exemption.⁷¹

Under the bye-laws, the distance limit for claiming exemption from compulsory education provisions, did not differ significantly between the various attendance authorities in the area. Most bye-laws made education compulsory within 3 miles from a school: rural districts like Teesdale Union, including Barnard Castle, and Wolviston School Board, as well as in industrial districts like Darlington. A few (Norton and Middleton St. George School Boards⁺ and Auckland Union) had 2 miles as the distance limit, while only two had a one mile requirement: both of these were town School Boards: Middlesbrough⁺⁺ with a Liberal majority and Stockton with a Denominationalist majority most of the period. But in towns obviously there was no need for a stringent distance requirement as most people lived within one mile of a school. Also, the other exemption conditions of both these town Boards were more stringent.

There were, however, some discernible differences in the promptness with which the attendance authorities issued the bye-laws and so enforced attendance. The School Boards tended to issue bye-laws very soon after being set up, whether their majorities were Denominationalist or Liberal. Darlington, whose School Board had been set up solely to enforce attendance, got their bye-laws accepted by the Education Department and came

⁺ Middleton St. George School Board changed to 3 miles in 1892.

⁺⁺ until 1895 when it was changed to 2 miles.

into force on the 3rd November, 1871, one of the Boards who were eighth in the country to do this (Liverpool School Board had been the first: their bye-laws had been issued on 29th June, 1871). Stockton's bye-laws were issued on the same day as Darlington's, and Middlesbrough's on the 21st February, 1872 (72nd in the country): All the other School Boards in the area issued their bye-laws within a year or two of being first elected except for Wolviston School Board, which issued theirs on 14th September, 1878, three and a half years after their first election.

The Unions, however, were not so keen on issuing bye-laws for compulsory school attendance as the School Boards: by March 1878, school attendance committees had been set up under the 1876 Act for Auckland, Darlington, Stockton, Middlesbrough and Teesdale Unions, but only Auckland had issued bye-laws (on 22nd February, 1878), and by March 1879, Darlington and Stockton Unions had still not issued any, while Teesdale had only issued them for Barnard Castle.⁷² This laxity reflected the situation in the country as a whole: when the 1880 Act was passed, compelling all attendance authorities to issue bye-laws, 50% of the unions had not issued bye-laws, and only 3% had covered all their parishes by bye-laws.⁷³

(b) Wardens

All the School Boards and unions in the area appointed school attendance officers, usually called wardens, although Middlesbrough at first called theirs a Beadle. The School Boards appointed their wardens within a few months of being elected, except for Wolviston School Board, which waited $2\frac{1}{4}$ years before appointing one. The larger towns appointed full-time officials, and later, as their populations increased, more than one: Middlesbrough, Stockton and Darlington appointed two each during the 1870's - Stockton later increased theirs to five, although two of these combined their attendance duties with those of caretakers of large schools; both Middlesbrough and Darlington later appointed a third warden. The smaller School Boards appointed only one attendance officer, usually part-time. The full-time wardens were usually paid quite high salaries:

Middlesbrough's first warden was paid £65 a year, but the Board soon increased this to £104 and £110; Stockton's was appointed at £80 a year, and Darlington's at £90. On the other hand, Norton, Wolviston and Middleton St. George School Boards paid their wardens £10 a year during the 1870's and 1880's;⁷⁴ Whitton's warden received £5 a year, and Middleton-in-Teesdale's £6 a year (until he became Clerk to the Board as well, at £20 a year).⁷⁴ The unions, which set up school attendance committees under the 1876 Act, usually appointed one attendance officer for the whole union: Auckland Union, for example, gave their attendance officer a salary of £80 a year.⁷⁵

The wardens were usually paid a fixed monthly or quarterly salary, but Wolviston School Board tried to introduce the principle of 'payment by results' to the salary of their warden: from 1886 to 1887 they paid a basic £10 a year, as previously, but giving a bonus of 2/6d. per child in average attendance over 90%, and an abatement of the same for every child under 90% (sick children counting as being present). However, although the warden managed exactly to earn his £10 the first year, the policy was then given up for a return to the steady £10 a year.⁷⁶ The 'payment by results' policy was an example of the more conservative 'economic' Boards' attitude. The same sort of policy can be seen when the Denominationalist party won Middleton St. George Board from the Unsectarians in the 1888 election: they immediately cut the warden's salary from £10 to £5 a year.⁷⁷

Many different sorts of men applied for the job of warden. In 1872, for example, 57 applied for the post of warden to Darlington School Board.⁷⁸ The wardens were appointed from among men of various occupations. On one occasion, Whitton School Board appointed an assistant schoolmaster as part-time warden, while one of Darlington's wardens, Thomas Todd, had been a pupil teacher and assistant master of one of the Board schools before his appointment.⁷⁹ Wolviston School Board once appointed a railway signalman as their warden.⁸⁰ Sometimes the union attendance officer was invited to do the job for a School Board also:

⁺ Norton's warden's salary rose to £18 in 1875 and £30 in 1890.

Whitton, for example, appointed as their warden the attendance officer for Stockton Union, in 1888.⁶¹ On the other hand, Darlington School Board's wardens also acted as relieving officers for Darlington Union's Board of Guardians. Edward Williams of Middlesbrough School Board declared that the wardens should be working class men so that they would be of like feelings and instincts to those with whom they had to deal.⁶² Following this principle, Middlesbrough Board appointed a Mr. Roberts, employed by a local firm, as their first warden. But they soon found that he could not cope well enough with the work, due to lack of education and experience of that type of work, and they dismissed him. They then upgraded the job, paying £104 a year instead of £65, and appointed a police sergeant as warden. Roberts refused to take this tamely, writing letters to the local press as well as to the Board. He protested that no one had accused his reports of showing lack of education, and that he was not alone in having no experience of a school warden's job in 1871, for no school wardens had existed before then!⁶³ He claimed that he was the victim of political prejudice, because he had dared to be seen in his time off to be carrying the bag of a visiting politician from the railway station.

The favourite sort of person for the job of warden was a policeman. Many School Boards, such as Middlesbrough, Norton, Stockton and Whitton, appointed policemen on some occasions as school wardens.⁶⁴ Middlesbrough, for example, appointed a Sergeant Sample as Beadle, safeguarding his superannuation by allowing him to retain his position in the police force, and, indeed, asking the Watch Committee to promote him to the rank of Inspector.⁶⁵ Most of the other wardens they appointed were also policemen.

But the use of policemen as school wardens was not universally welcomed. At Norton School Board, Mr. Longstaff, a member, opposed the continuance of having a policeman as warden, on the grounds that he had sufficient work as police sergeant if he did it properly, that it was against the spirit of the Act to have a policeman as warden, and that many people thought that a school warden in the uniform of a

policeman was an encroachment on the people's liberties. However, his motion to dismiss the warden on these grounds was not supported. Opposition also came from the police force itself. In 1883, the Superintendent of police told Whitton School Board that it was against the regulations for a police constable to also be employed as their school warden for a salary. On a later occasion, the Superintendent told another police constable whom Whitton had appointed as warden, that he could not appear in any action of the Board as their paid warden but that he would be allowed to give evidence on their behalf. As a result, the appointment was rescinded, but the constable asked to continue to act in the Board's interests as before and to receive a present of money in lieu of salary. He did continue as such for a year, and then was followed by another policeman. Another policeman, acting as their warden, was ordered to resign in 1903 by the Chief Constable. Such an arrangement, however, was displeasing to the District Auditor, who said that the school warden should be a properly appointed person, at a salary stated in the minutes.⁸⁶

The warden's job was an onerous one. Darlington School Board's two wardens visited 13,180 parents and 1553 schools in 1880.⁸⁷ They also acted as enquiry officers for the Board of Guardians (for which the School Board gave them an extra £7 a year because the Union refused to pay them for the extra work).⁸⁸ Their job also had its dangers: the resentment of parents sometimes broke out into violence; in 1873, Darlington School Board decided to prosecute an Isabella Hodgson for assaulting the warden as he was leaving the Board meeting one evening, while Stockton's warden was assaulted and his collar bone broken, when on his rounds in 1879.⁸⁹

The duties of the wardens were often carefully worked out, and they were closely watched to see that they did them diligently. Darlington, for example, was divided into two districts, each under a separate warden. Each warden was to visit every elementary school once a week, send notices to parents not sending their children to school, keep a register of all children under 13 years and which school they attended, certify the ages of children for the school books required

by the Education Department (if necessary by looking up parish records, family Bibles etc.), and, when not engaged on other duties, carry out a continuous census of children in the area.⁹⁰ They reported monthly to a sub-committee set up by the School Board to supervise each of them, and they had to keep a diary of all their activities. They also had to be daily available at their office from 12.0 to 1.0 p.m. The Senior Warden also acted as Clerk of Works and supervised the repairs and alterations of the Board schools.⁹⁰

In the smaller districts, the attendance officers were often helped in their work. In Wolviston the schoolmaster was personally expected to visit bad attenders on occasions,⁹¹ and at Whitton, the Chairman of the Board agreed to visit one woman who sent her child to school irregularly and dirty, himself, to persuade her to do better.⁹² This help by members or teachers of the School Boards in small parishes often had good results, as the Education Department noted in one of its reports.⁹³ However, one way of assisting the wardens got official disapproval: Durham County Council sent round a letter to the School Boards in 1902 warning them of the dangers of sending children to find the causes of absence, as happened in some areas, as it increased the danger of infection spreading.⁹⁴

(c) Regulations

The School Boards were conscious of the difficulties the wardens faced in carrying out their duties. They often made arrangements, inviting the co-operation of the Voluntary school managers, to try to prevent the children from escaping the wardens' reach. As early as January 1871, for example, Darlington School Board persuaded a meeting of the managers of all the public elementary schools to agree that the teachers should give the school wardens monthly returns of admissions and leavings, and quarterly returns of average attendance and numbers on the books; they also agreed on a plan to check the practice of

⁺ Darlington School Board had hoped to avoid the full census by getting the Registrar of Births and Deaths to provide the information, but found that too high a price was asked for this service.⁹⁵

children remaining only a few weeks at any one school, and changing repeatedly from one school to another, frequently without the knowledge of their parents.⁹⁶

This frequent changing of schools as well as making truancy easy, was also bad for education and discipline. In 1875, parents were asked by Darlington School Board to give a clear 14 days' notice, or their children were not to be received by a Board school, and the Voluntary schools were asked to do likewise. But this did not work out well, and after two months, the arrangement was ended, and, after further consultation with the Voluntary schools, all the schools agreed not to admit new scholars unless they were brought personally by their parents. At a further conference with the managers and head teachers of public elementary schools in the town, it was agreed to have uniform holidays, arrange Sunday School trips only on holidays and Fridays, and also no longer to refuse to admit children to their schools on account of non-payment of fees. The School Board had decided on this last policy three years previously (in 1874), and had asked the Voluntary schools to do the same and run the risk of losing the fees if the School Board, after considering such a case, decided against paying the fees on the grounds that the cases were undeserving. However, when the Denominationalists won the 1883 election, gaining a majority on Darlington School Board for the first time, they reversed this, and stated that no child should be admitted unless the school fees were up to date; attendance came second place to economy.⁹⁷

Other School Boards made the same sort of arrangements as Darlington. Middlesbrough instituted a clearance card system to keep track of the movements of the scholars, but even in spite of this, teachers were instructed not to refuse admission to scholars except on grounds of lack of accommodation.⁹⁸ Middleton St. George School Board, however, refused to admit children attending school irregularly: in December 1897, for example, three children were struck off the register for this.⁹⁹ Several, such as Middleton-in-Teesdale and Middleton St. George, insisted on a doctor's certificate to prove that a child had been legitimately ill, when absent,¹⁰⁰ and all kept close watch on the

reports of attendance in their schools; Darlington, for example, told their Clerk automatically to write to every head teacher whose school attendance fell below 68%.¹⁰¹

(d) Prosecutions

All the attendance authorities found it necessary to prosecute offending parents. But none of them liked doing this, and all of them gave the parents every opportunity to repent and reform before the prosecution. Stockton School Board said that in their case most parents were asked to attend the School Board Investigation Committee four or five times before prosecution was ordered, and several prosecutions were withdrawn on the parents promising not to offend again.¹⁰² Middlesbrough often took legal action against only the worst, rather than all offenders, as an example to the others.¹⁰³ Darlington School Board's arrangements were typical of the attendance authorities: the warden was authorised to issue a notice to parents whose children did not attend school to attend within five days; if the parents had any reason why their children should not attend school as ordered, they were instructed to appear before the School Board at its next meeting - no proceedings were taken until seven days after the notice had been served and after the next Board meeting, but they could be taken within four months of the notice.¹⁰⁴ Most large Boards appointed committees to hear reasons for non-attendance, like Middlesbrough's committee of five members, which met more regularly than the School Board: usually every two weeks, in the evenings.¹⁰⁵ This procedure was however too slow for Middlesbrough: they speeded it up by giving the warden authority to start prosecutions at his own discretion and with only the signature of the Chairman, and without waiting for the case to be decided by the committee.¹⁰⁶ In 1874, a typical year, Darlington School Board issued notices on 535 parents (for 978 children). 7 parents had left the district, 265 did not appear before the Board and so summons were ordered to be taken against them if their children did not attend school, and 263 appeared before the Board. Of those appearing before the Board, 23 were excused for having a sufficient reason for not sending their children, 73 had their children's fees

remitted or paid by the Board, and 167 were ordered to send their children to school at once. This resulted in 69 parents being prosecuted.¹⁰⁷ The Union school attendance committees reveal a similar story: in 1883-4 Teesdale School Attendance Committee heard 702 cases of which 76 resulted in prosecution, the rest being dealt with by warnings.¹⁰⁸

Of those prosecuted, most were fined, although the cases of some were dismissed, to the annoyance of the School Boards which only prosecuted those whom they considered to be particularly bad cases. Some children, however, were sent to Industrial Schools or received attendance orders. For the three years 1885-8, for example, the three biggest School Boards dealt with the following cases:¹⁰⁹

<u>School Board</u>	<u>No. of summonses before the Board</u>	<u>No. prosecuted</u>	<u>No. fined</u>	<u>No. sent to an Industrial School</u>	<u>Attendance Orders</u>	<u>Dismissed or Withdrawn</u>
Darlington	766	304	218	18	41	27
Middlesbrough	?	225	206	2	-	17
Stockton	1217	266	242	13	-	11

Some bad offenders were prosecuted more than once a year: for example a labourer was prosecuted by Middleton St. George School Board three times in 1888 and once in 1889.¹¹⁰ During periods of depression, the Boards relaxed prosecutions, and at the same time increased the number of fees remitted. This is clearly shown by the numbers of prosecutions and fees remitted by Middlesbrough School Board during the 1885-7 depression:

	<u>Fees remitted</u>	<u>Prosecutions</u> ¹⁰⁹
1883	441	334
1884	1141	115
1885	2311	48
1886	2839	40
1887	2606	137
1888	2141	105

In 1886, Middlesbrough School Board was remitting one-fifth of its fees. After education became free in 1891, there was a fall in numbers prosecuted, despite the Board's declared policy of thereafter being more strict in enforcing attendance. In 1893, prosecutions in Middlesbrough had fallen to 77, and in 1894 there were no prosecutions at all, although later in the 1890's prosecutions were once more in the 200's.

The attendance authorities, however, found it expensive to prosecute, and this they felt was unfair. The Clerk to Darlington School Board calculated that the cost of each case to the Board was:

cost of summons	2/6d.
cost of serving the summons	2/6d.
cost of conviction	<u>3/6d.</u>
	<u>8/6d.</u>

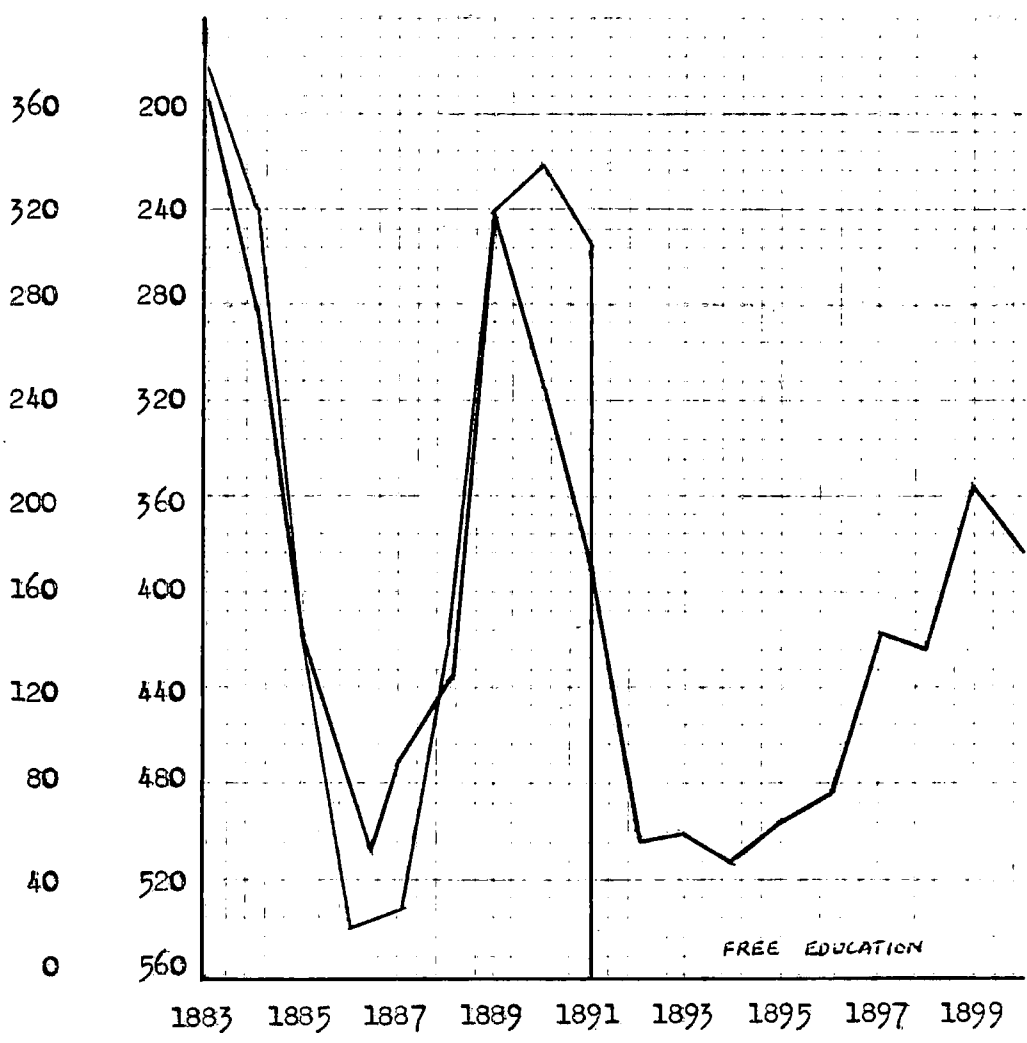
Thus, when a fine of 1/- was levied, the Board had to pay 7/6d.¹¹ Middleton St. George Board calculated their cost per case to be 12/8d.¹⁰ The expense could have been partly defrayed by the school wardens serving the summonses instead of the police, thus saving 2/6d. Darlington School Board made arrangements in 1875 with the Chief Constable and the magistrates for the wardens to deliver the summonses; but even this had its disadvantages: the wardens complained that they received considerable abuse from parents when serving them.¹² As an alternative way of reducing the costs, Auckland Attendance Committee memorialised the Education Department to change the law which made 5/- the maximum penalty for prosecutions, so that the ratepayers should not be forced to pay anything.¹³ Furthermore, the prosecutions were not always successful: of the 76 parents summonsed in 1883-4 by Teesdale School Attendance Committee, 10 were dismissed, 2 were withdrawn and only 64 fined (46 being fined 5/-; 12, 2/6d. and 6, 1/-).¹⁰⁸

Even when the fine was levied, it was still difficult to collect it. Darlington School Board reported in 1876 that 8 commitments to prison had been issued for default of payment of fines. The Board eventually tried to solve this difficulty by appointing a police sergeant to collect the fines and allowing him a 20% commission as a reward.¹⁴

(e) Rewards and Punishments

The School Boards did their best to encourage children to attend school. One inducement they made was to pay or remit the fees of poor children. Poverty certainly was one of the causes of non-attendance, especially in bad weather. The sympathetic attitude of the School Boards towards poverty is indicated by comparing the total numbers of

Number of:
Prosec- fees
utions. remitted.



PROSECUTIONS AND REMISSION OF FEES: Stockton 1883-1900.

Prosecutions: —
Fees remitted: - - -

prosecutions with the total fees remitted. Henigan has shown that in the case of Stockton, the greater the remission of fees, the less were the number of prosecutions 1882-1900 (see graph, p.252) - the Board relaxing prosecution in times of depression and poverty.^{"5} On the other hand, the majority of prosecutions were for children whose fees were being remitted, so payment of fees did not guarantee good attendance: of the 788 prosecutions by Stockton School Board 1882-5, 430 were at the time having their fees remitted, and also many were being paid by the Poor Law Guardians, or the children were being allowed to attend Voluntary schools free, especially at St. Mary's Roman Catholic school.^{"6} Thus about 90% of the prosecutions were for children paying no fees. This was to be expected, for both remission and prosecutions were largely for children of the same social class: the poorest section of the nation. The School Boards sometimes tried to help this class in other ways: Darlington School Board set up a committee in 1873 to enquire into the numbers of children who were prevented from attending school through lack of suitable clothing and how this problem could be tackled.^{"7}

The connection between school attendance and fees can be best illustrated by what happened after the 1891 fee grant had made attendance free at most schools. In Stockton, average attendance at once rose from 80% to 88%, fell slightly after a few months, but then settled down at a higher level than had existed before 1891.^{"8} The other School Boards were similarly affected by the Act.⁺

The Boards also tried to appeal to the good sense and material self interest of both parents and ratepayers. In 1891, after the fee grant had been accepted by them. Middleton St. George School Board published an appeal.^{"9} They declared that regular and punctual attendance was necessary not only to prevent the children from missing scripture lessons at the start of the day, but also to ensure that they did not adopt a lax attitude towards work. Lateness and absence caused them to learn less, and it also wasted the time of the teacher who had to make

⁺ see below, p. 257

enquiries, punish and spend much time helping them to catch up with the other scholars. It also led the children to acquire the habit of making thoughtless excuses. If this was allowed to happen, education would be retarded; the results of the annual examinations would be bad, and this, along with the low average attendance, would cause a lower grant to be earned, and so result in higher rates for the ratepayers. They calculated that had the fee grant been in operation during the seven months ending 30th June, 1891, when there was an average attendance of 146 on a nominal roll of 192, the fee grant would not have equalled the income from the school pence, and there would have been a loss of £9.

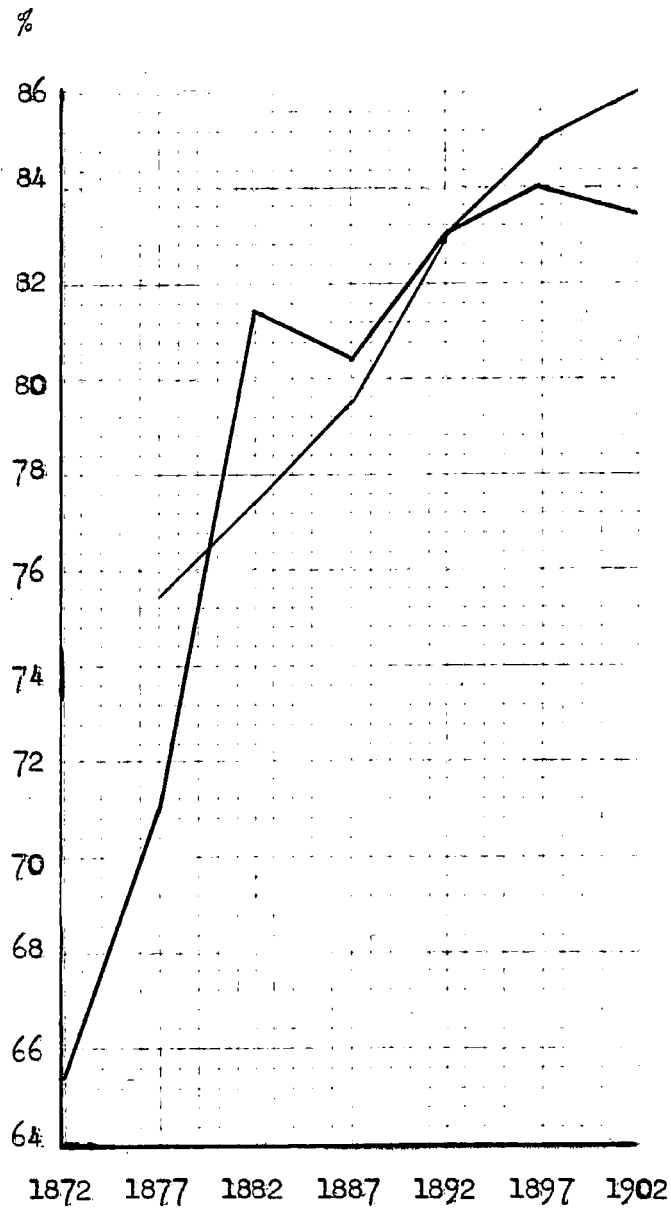
Such appeals appeared to have some effect, and Stockton School Board was able to report in 1885 that there was a change of attitude among some parents who were becoming to look on attendance at school as desirable rather than something to be deplored.¹³⁰ In the same Report, they declared it was their policy to make more appeal to the children by such things as better schoolrooms, free school materials, rewards for proficiency and more attractive methods of teaching, as the Mundella Code allowed for with its 'varied occupations' etc.

Most School Boards regularly spent money on prizes, not merely for proficiency, but also for good attendance. Sometimes the way was led by private generosity: the Mayor of Middlesbrough and School Board member, Edward Williams, gave £100 for prizes in 1874. Stockton gave each scholar making 100% attendance a book worth 2/6d. - in 1899, 148 such prizes were given, and in 1900, 107. Darlington School Board gave prizes worth 5/- to children passing the Standards and making 100% attendance, and lower prizes for those passing the Standards and making 95%, 90%, and 85% attendance. But they set a limit to their generosity, and when the headmasters in 1881 requested increases in the number and value of the attendance prizes, the School Board refused the request, and said that prizes had only been intended as a temporary stimulus for regular attendance until the 1870 Act had been properly implemented and a habit of regular attendance achieved, after which it was intended to reduce the value gradually. Middleton St. George School Board, although they gave prizes for regular attendance from 1893 with higher rewards

for those living far from their school, had also given certificates for good attendance since 1889, and from 1891 they gave in addition a half day's holiday every Friday afternoon when attendance that week had reached 90%. Whitton School Board gave remission of 1d. on fees when the children attended well.¹²¹

But the policies of the School Boards were not all carrot and no stick. They all regularly prosecuted parents for the irregular attendance of their children. There were calls from several Boards that the fines were too small to be effective, and should be increased, not merely to cover the costs of prosecution, but also to deter regular offenders. At first the School Boards were very lenient. Both Middlesbrough and Darlington Boards initially fixed their maximum fine at 2/6d. although the 1870 Education Act had allowed a maximum fine of 5/-. But within a few years, they had raised it to 5/- and Middlesbrough Board later asked for the maximum fine to be raised to 20/-.¹²² When the fines seemed to be having little effect, other means were tried: Middlesbrough School Board announced a change of policy in 1884, and warned 21 persons on one occasion that if they did not improve, they would be prosecuted under Section 11 of the 1876 Act in order to get their children sent to Industrial schools. The Board had previously reminded the magistrates that truant boys could be sent to Industrial schools, and has asked them to commit more there.¹²³ Stockton School Board, however, felt that committal to Industrial schools was often unjust and ineffective for such offences: the offenders were often children of widows who worked all day and had not the time to supervise their children, and the Board considered that these people should be helped rather than punished. If sent to Industrial schools, the children could no longer help at home. The Board therefore advocated the setting up of Day Truant schools where children could be put under short time discipline in detention, followed by release on licence, conditional on regular attendance at school. Many of these schools had been established in places throughout the country.¹²⁴ Darlington School Board agreed with this view, and supported a memorial of Brighton School Board to the Education Department asking for short periods of detention at Industrial schools to be arranged for truants.¹²⁵ But neither

Average Attendance.



INCREASE IN AVERAGE ATTENDANCE 1872-1902: Middlesbrough & Darlington.

Darlington: ———

Middlesbrough: ———

Stockton nor Darlington School Board ever set up a Truant School in their districts; instead, Darlington Board sent its truants to Truant schools in Sheffield and other towns.¹²⁶ Darlington School Board in addition urged even harsher punishments for children whose parents could not get them to attend school: they declared that magistrates should be authorised to order such children to be whipped.¹²⁷

3. Achievements

All the School Boards in the area reported a steady improvement in attendance throughout the period. Darlington, for example, had a rise in average attendance from 65% in 1872 (the figure of 70% for 1871 being misleading, as this was before compulsory attendance, and so only those who wanted some sort of education were on the school rolls)¹²⁸ to 78% in 1880, 80% in 1890 and 83% in 1900 (see the graph on p.256). The greatest jump in attendance for all the Boards, both in industrial and in rural areas, such as Wolviston, came as a result of free education after the 1891 Act. Darlington's highest average attendance before the Act had been 81.4%. In 1890, it had been 79.8%. But it rose to 83.1% in 1892, and was higher than this in every subsequent year. Up to 1891, Middlesbrough's average attendance had never been over 80% in any month, but in October and November 1891, it was 85%. Although this high figure was not sustained once the first impact of the act was over, the average attendance steadied itself at a level considerably above that of the 1870's and 1880's. Stockton saw a similar jump in average attendance: in September 1889 and 1890 it had been 81% in Board schools and 77% in Voluntary schools. In September 1891 it rose to 88% and 84% in the Board and Voluntary schools respectively, and by September 1892, it had settled down to 85% and 82%.

These statistics are even more satisfactory when it is realised that, even ignoring illness, average attendance could never be 100% of the number on the school rolls: children under five years were not compelled to attend school, and the registers of schools could never be completely accurate, especially in industrial areas such as Middlesbrough with a high mobility of labour, because children leaving the area were often not crossed off the register as immediately as newcomers' names

were added; this time lag had the effect of exaggerating lack of attendance.¹²⁹

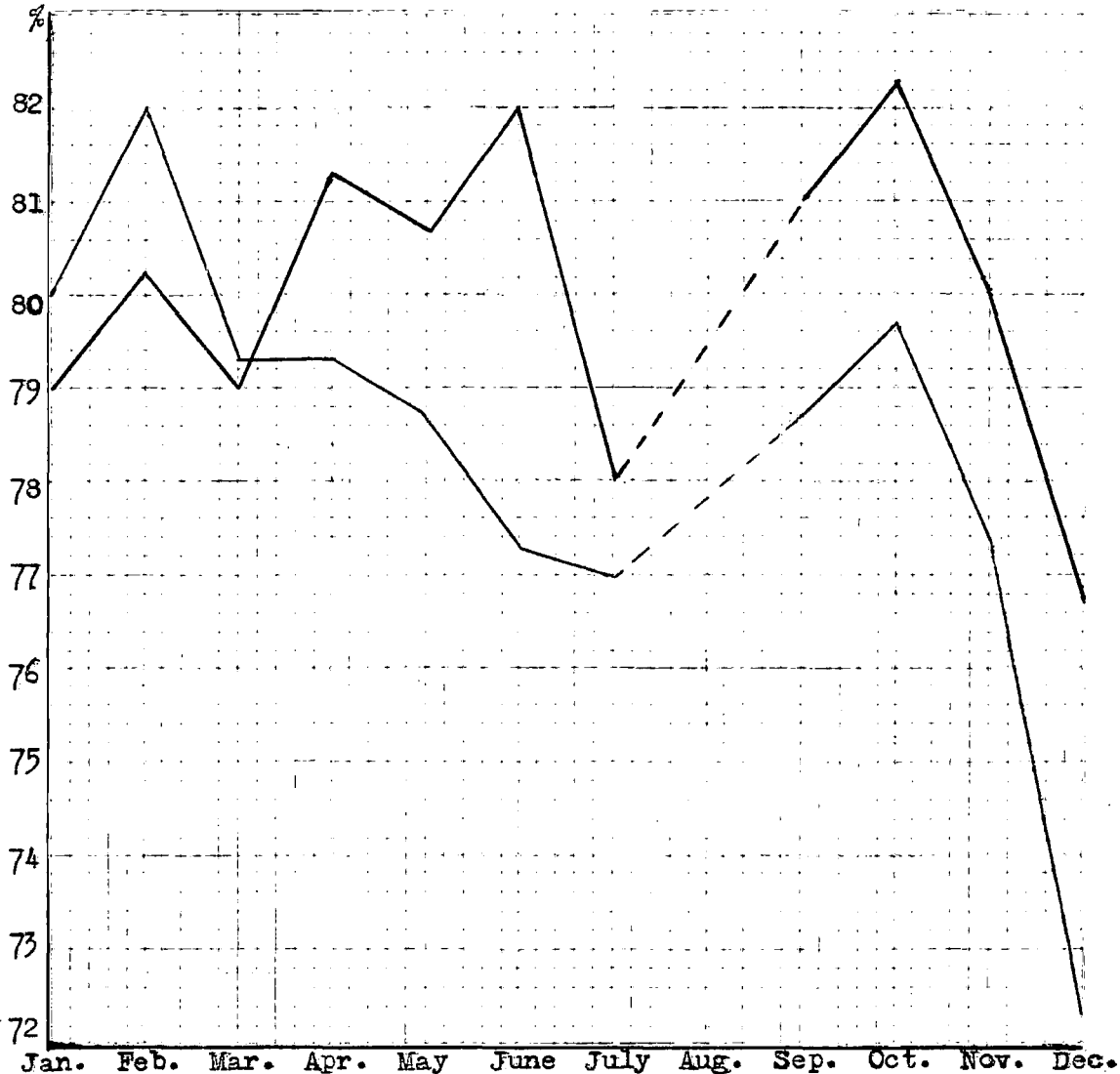
When compulsory attendance was first enforced, quite a high proportion of children were not attending any school. As a result of the efforts of the wardens, most children between 5 and 13 years were entered on the school books, and forced to attend. In Stockton, average attendance as a percentage of total population, rose between 1871 and 1881 from 5.6% to 12.6%.¹³⁰ At Darlington, which had a surplus of school accommodation in 1870, the percentage was higher: 14%.¹³² In 1879, when it was still 14%, the average for England and Wales as a whole was only 10%. By 1901, it was nearly 20%. The wardens tried to ensure that some children did not slip through their net, by regular census of all children in the districts. The 1883 census of children in Stockton showed the following attendances of children who were not exempt from compulsory education:¹³³

at public elementary schools		7,381	
at private schools		1,478	
at the High School		33	
attending no school	5-14 years	272	
(attending no school	3-5 years	<u>1,765</u>	- not compulsory)
	Total:	<u>10,929</u>	

Other census results revealed a similar situation: Darlington School Board's 1879 census, for example, showed that out of 10,495 children aged 3 to 13 years, only 228 children were not at school who were supposed to be attending under the bye-laws (in addition to 52 who were physically disabled and 29 taught at home).¹³⁴

The School Boards often expressed satisfaction at the activities of their wardens. In 1873, Middlesbrough School Board said that not nearly as many prosecutions for bad attendance were as necessary as would have been expected for such a large expanding industrial town, and in 1875 the Superintendent said that the wardens were not only filling the Board schools, but also helping to get better attendance at the Voluntary schools. In one case, the wardens had been otherwise employed and for a few weeks had not visited the absentees: as a result, the mistress of one Voluntary school had complained that the attendance at her school

Average
Attendance
1886-8



MONTHLY AVERAGE ATTENDANCE: Stockton 1886-8.

Board schools: ———
 Voluntary schools: ———

had fallen off by 40%.¹³⁵ What could be achieved by efficient wardens and teachers, was shown by the good attendance of some of the best schools. Mr. Swettenham, H.M.I. for the Tees-side area except for Teesdale, reported in 1882 that one of the best schools in the area was Darlington Bank Top School for Boys, which had over 93% average attendance for the year, and showed what could be done.¹³⁶

One factor affecting attendance, however, about which the wardens could not do much was the weather. Bad weather hit the poorest section of the community hardest: they were worst clothed, and least nourished and so the least able to resist illness. As was to be expected, attendance showed a pattern which varied seasonally; but the worst periods were not only in the winter when the weather was bad, but also in the summer (July and September) due to holidays (see the graph of Stockton's monthly attendance, p.259).

Within the School Board areas, attendance varied between Board schools and Voluntary schools. The Cross Commission Report compared the average attendance in Voluntary and Board schools for three of the area's school districts:¹³⁷

<u>School district</u>	<u>Board schools</u>	<u>Voluntary schools</u>
Barnard Castle	-	83%
Darlington	82%	78%
Middlesbrough	77%	79%

These figures would suggest that there was no general trend of the Voluntary schools being any better or worse than the Board schools in attendance. However, where statistics are available from which to compare them, Board schools in general came out better than the Voluntary schools, especially in the later years. In Middlesbrough, although the Board schools had a worse record of average attendance when the Cross Commission selected their statistics, average attendance by 1886 was 82% for Board schools compared to 79% for Voluntary, and in 1896, 84% for Board schools and 82% for Voluntary schools. In Darlington, Board schools usually had a lower average attendance than Voluntary schools up to 1876, but after this, Board schools showed themselves definitely superior (see graph p.261 for Darlington's schools, and p.259 for Stockton's).

Average Attendance.



AVERAGE ATTENDANCE 1879-1900: Darlington.

Board schools: ———
 Voluntary schools: ———
 All schools (Board & Voluntary): ———

In 1881, the H.M.I. for Tees-side area compared the success of the school-Boards with respect to attendance, showing them to vary considerably: (the national average for average attendance was 72.0%)¹³⁸

<u>School Boards</u>	<u>No. of children on school books as % of population</u>	<u>Average attendance</u>
Middlesbrough	18.7%	76.5%
Stockton	16.9%	73.5%
Darlington	18.5%	76.7%
Norton	12.6%	69.7%
Cowpen Bewley	14.8%	81.5%

From his statistics, the H.M.I. discovered that Cowpen Bewley was the best in the area for attendance; Stockton (and Thornaby) among the worst. This, however, was unfair to Stockton, as this particular year was exceptionally bad: Stockton's average attendance in 1878 was 76%, 1883, 77%, and 1884, 81%. Compared to the country as a whole, the attendance of all of Tees-side was quite good: for 1877-8, average attendance for the Darlington inspection area (Darlington, Stockton, Hartlepool, Auckland and Middlesbrough Poor Law Unions) was 71.2%, compared to that of England and Wales of 68.8%.¹³⁹

Attendance tended to be worse in the country area compared to urban areas; in June 1899, for example, Wolviston had an average attendance of only 71%, and in October 1901, 76%, while that of Whitton Board school 1881-2 was 71%.¹⁴⁰ The H.M.I. for the area (all Tees-side except for Teesdale Union) declared in 1881 that average attendance in his district as a whole was 13.5% of the population, but for the rural areas alone, was only 6.25%: "In other words, for every time a child attends school in the country districts, he would attend school two and one-sixth in the towns".¹⁴¹ Among the reasons for the attendance being words in the rural areas were:

1. country schools were further away from children's homes, and the roads much worse;
2. country children were employed in gathering potatoes, holding horses etc.;
3. country children could more easily defy the efforts of the school wardens;
4. in country areas the administration of the law was more lax; in some areas (the H.M.I. reported) so great was the consideration shown to parents by J.Ps that it was quite impossible to get a conviction.

Although some attendance committees of the unions did do their work quite well, and caused some improvement in attendance, most were definitely more lax than the School Boards.¹⁴² The relieving officers were commonly appointed as school visitors by the Boards of Guardians, and were not only too much occupied with their ordinary duties to spend much time and energy for the task of compelling school attendance for which they were aware that they would get more abuse than thanks; but, as they usually visited schools on their fixed days for attending villages for relief purposes, the irregulars made sure that they attended school that day, in order to escape prosecution.¹⁴³ The unions also often gave way to local pressures for more flexibility in their attendance requirements: Darlington Union, for example, allowed children over eight years of age six weeks off school in September for agricultural work - and annoyed Darlington School Board by putting up posters to this effect within the School Board district.¹⁴⁴ In 1880, the H.M.I. for the area said that Teesdale Union was one of the worst in the country for attendance enforcement: there was only one attendance officer, who visited schools once a month, and it had at that time, no bye-laws, except for Barnard Castle which had a separate attendance committee.¹⁴⁵

As a result, attendance in the school attendance committee areas was definitely lower than in the School Board areas. In 1883-4, for example, the average attendance of Teesdale Union was 76.3% (compared to 81.1% of Middlesbrough School Board district, and 81.3% of Darlington School Board district);⁺ in 1882-3 it had been 77.3% (Middlesbrough's was 81.2% and Darlington's 79.6%.)¹⁴⁶

⁺ Barnard Castle district was 76.2%; Staindrop, 73.1%; Middleton, 79.6%.

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CHAPTER VIII: TEACHERS

1. Salaries

The greatest item of School Board expenditure each year was the payment of salaries to the teachers of their schools. That being so, all the Boards took care not to be too extravagant with the rate money in this respect. On the other hand, they dared not be too stringent, as failure to pay adequate salaries would have made it difficult to attract or retain teaching staff; it was bad economics, as well as being against the interests of education, to keep inferior teachers at low salaries, because inefficient teachers resulted in low grants being earned.

The School Boards, especially those of the larger towns, took pains to see that the salaries paid to their teachers were comparable with those of other Boards in the area, and so to avoid either 'wasting' rate money or losing their best teachers to schools outside their districts. When Middlesbrough School Board opened its first school in 1871, it wrote to the British and Foreign School Society Training College at Borough Road, London, asking for details of salaries normally paid to teachers, and were informed by the College that the usual salary for a male ex P.T. (pupil-teacher) was £45-£60 a year, and for a certificated master, £75-£80 a year. The School Board also quite frequently made enquiries about the salaries paid by School Boards in Durham and Yorkshire, especially when its teachers requested increases in salary, and it fixed their salaries accordingly. Many of the other Boards also did this on occasions, in particular, when appointing specialist teachers: for example, Darlington School Board consulted many Cookery Schools, before fixing the salary for its first Cookery instructress.²

Despite the obvious advantage of a common salary scale to the School Boards, who wished to keep in line with their neighbouring districts in this respect, no organised attempt was made until very late to regulate the salaries of Board School teachers throughout the area. In 1900, Thornaby School Board complained that it had been losing many of its teachers to Stockton Board schools. A few months later, Stockton

School Board suggested that a conference of representatives from the local School Boards be arranged to consider adopting a uniform salary scale for Tees-side Board schools. This conference materialised, and was held in 1901 at Stockton. It was attended by representatives from the Boards of Stockton, Darlington, Middlesbrough, Norton, Thornaby and Hartlepool. The representatives rejected a request from the National Union of Teachers to receive a deputation from them on salaries, and then agreed on a common salary policy:

1. no increase of salary was to be privately offered to any applicant already in the service of another Board;
2. pupil-teachers were to be transferred from one town to another, whenever considered desirable;
3. a uniform salary scale for assistant teachers was drawn up, for adoption by the School Boards.³

In 1884, Darlington School Board established a fixed salary scale for all the assistant teachers of their schools (the Board retaining the right to increase the maximum in special cases):

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
ex-P.T's	£40 x 5 - 50	£30 x 5 - 40
certificated teachers	£50 x 5 - 60	£40 x 5 - 50
certificated & trained teachers	£70 x 5 - 80	£60 x 5 - 70

Before this year, most assistant teachers had been paid similar salaries, although a few appointments had been made at slightly lower initial salaries (for example, an ex-P.T. mistress at £25 in her first year). During the period following 1884, the scale was slowly but steadily raised.⁺ In 1890, the male ex-P.T.'s salary scale was increased by £10 a year, and that for certificated untrained masters by £5; the scale for female ex-P.T.'s at the same time was increased by £5 a year. Small increases were also made in 1892, 1894, 1897 and 1899, by which time, the salary scale was:

⁺ The last quarter of the nineteenth century was a period of deflation, when wages in most occupations rose very little, and wage cuts were fairly common during the 1880's. The effects of this, however, must have been offset in the case of the teachers by increased demand in a period of rapidly expanding education.

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
ex P.T's	£55 x 5 - 65 ⁺⁺	£45 x 2½ - 50 ⁺⁺
certificated teachers	£70 x 2½ - 90	£55 x 2½ - 72½
certificated & trained teachers	£75 x 5 - 110	£65 x 5 - 85
chief assistant teachers: £5 above the basic scale.		

⁺⁺ plus £5 for a 1st year certificate

P.T's were paid, for most of this period, £12 a year, increasing by annual increments of £3 to £21 a year, if male, and £11 a year rising to £18½ a year, if female. For a few years after 1876, a higher scale had been paid to attract a better quality of applicants, but this had been reduced again after a short time. Throughout the whole period, the Board paid its monitors 2/- - 3/6d. a week if boys, and 6d. a week less, if girls.⁴

Middlesbrough and Stockton School Boards paid similar salaries to their assistant teachers, although Middlesbrough School Board tended to pay their teachers £5 or £10 a year more, for most of the period, and Stockton School Board paid higher salaries to their staff at the Higher Grade school (where an assistant master received up to £120 a year in the 1890's, and an assistant mistress up to £100). The salaries of their pupil-teachers and monitors kept to within £1 or £2 a year of Darlington School Board's scale.⁵

Not only did the School Boards of the three towns increase the salary scales of their assistant teachers throughout the period, especially in the later years, but they also steadily increased the proportion of their teaching staff who were certificated. In 1885, only 36% of Middlesbrough School Board's assistant teachers were certificated: by 1900, the proportion had risen to 64%. Over the same period, the proportion of assistant teachers in Stockton Board schools who were certificated, increased from 27% to 40%.⁶

The salaries of head teachers varied considerably between the different School Boards, and were not all fixed on the same basic principle. Middlesbrough School Board gave its head teachers a fixed salary, and, in addition, the Drawing grant and half the grant earned by the pupil-teachers passing their annual examinations. In the 1880's the fixed salary scale for headmasters was £100 a year, rising by

increments of £10 or £15, up to £220 a year maximum; for headmistresses of girls' schools, it was £80 rising by increments of £10, up to £130 a year; and for headmistresses of infants' schools, £80 rising to £120 a year. Stockton School Board had a similar scale, except for the headmaster of the Higher Grade school, who received up to £355 a year (in 1901). On the other hand, Darlington School Board paid its head teachers up to 1884 on a basis of a lower fixed salary, but with the addition of one-third of the government grant, plus one-third of the school fees, and half the pupil-teacher grant; sometimes a free house was added. This often totalled up to a considerable annual salary, higher than those of the schools of Stockton or Middlesbrough. In 1879, for example, the head teachers of Albert Road Board Schools received:

	<u>Boys' school</u>			<u>Girls' school</u>			<u>Infants' school</u>		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Fixed salary	90	-	-	35	-	-	30	-	-
one-third grant	77	13	8	46	10	-	41	8	6
one-third fees	61	1	1	32	17	9	22	14	5
Science & Art grant	14	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
P.T. grant	8	-	-	6	-	-	4	-	-
Value of free house	16	-	-	8	-	-	8	-	-
Total earnings:	£266	18	9	£128	7	9	£106	2	11

In 1884, however, this was replaced by a fixed scale of salaries, based on average attendance of the scholars:

	<u>Boys</u>	<u>Girls</u>	<u>Infants</u>
up to 150 average attendance	£130 a year	£ 80 a year	£ 70 a year
151-200	£140 "	£ 90 "	£ 80 "
201-250	£150 "	£100 "	£ 90 "
251-300	£160 "	£110 "	£100 "
301-350	£180 "	£130 "	
351-400	£200 "	£150 "	

In addition, half the pupil-teacher grants continued to be given to the head teachers, but the latter had now to pay rent for any school house which they occupied.⁷

One of the reasons for Darlington School Board introducing its new salary system for head teachers in 1884, was that this enabled it to reduce the expenditure on salaries, which the Denominationalist majority considered too great: the new scale was fixed at a level

slightly below that of the best Voluntary schools of the town. There was also an educational reason for the change. The School Board argued that when salaries were partly based on the results of the annual examinations, the teachers were induced to put unfair pressure on the children to achieve better results. Other Boards also determined the salaries of their head teachers partly on the "payment by results" principle. Middlesbrough, for example, in the 1870's, gave the Drawing grants and half the pupil-teachers grants to the teachers who gave instruction to them, and also awarded the headmistresses of girls' and infants' schools, a sum equal to the grant earned in Standard subjects in excess of an 80% pass. In 1885, it decided to award bonuses of 6d. per child in average attendance to head and assistant teachers earning 'Excellent' Merit grants. Middleton St. George and Middleton-in-Teesdale School Boards also fixed part of the head teachers' salaries on the grant earned in the annual examinations, while, after an unsatisfactory examination result in 1881, Whitton School Board altered the basis of its headmaster's salary from a fixed amount of £110 a year to one of £96 a year plus one-third of the grant earned, as an inducement for him to achieve better results in the future. In 1887, Wolviston School Board made a similar change in its headmaster's salary. Stockton School Board debated the merits of such a salary policy in 1883. The year before, the Board had decided to introduce bonuses for their teachers who earned the better Merit grants (£15 for an 'Excellent' and £10 for a 'Good' award). One of the Board members, William Clarke, proposed a resolution to cease paying these, on account of their bad educational effects: he argued that if the teachers were paid such bonuses, they would use every endeavour to get the children through the examination, and that if they could not do it by fair means, they would use other means. He claimed that 14 children had recently left Bowesfield Lane School because of ill-treatment, which he attributed to the effects of the bonus system. Although the School Board did not take any notice of his objections at the time, it later did change to a fixed salary scale based solely on the size of the school.⁸

Although there was a slight rise in the average salary paid to head teachers over the years, their salaries did not rise as fast as those of assistant teachers: there were fewer revisions of salary for them, and, in Middlesbrough (where average salaries were calculated and published in the Triennial Reports), they rose only 12% for headmasters and 4% for headmistresses, between 1885 and 1900, compared to 17% for assistant certificated masters and 38% for assistant certificated mistresses:

Annual average salaries in Middlesbrough Board Schools

		<u>1885-8</u>	<u>1897-1900</u>
Head teachers:	male	£176 a year	£198 a year
	female	£119 "	£124 "
Certificated Assistants:	male	£ 78 "	£ 91 "
	female	£ 55 "	£ 76 "

In general, the smaller School Boards gave slightly lower salaries than the Boards of the three industrial towns. But not all of them: Middleton-in-Teesdale and Norton Boards, for example, gave similar salaries. In fact, by the 1890's, Norton School Board was consciously trying to keep its salaries in line with them, and in 1898, the Board resolved to pay the same salary scale as Darlington School Board. On the other hand, Middleton St. George School Board, especially in the years following the Denominationalist triumph in 1887, paid salaries lower than those of the town Boards. In 1888, for example, it attempted to appoint a Mistress for the Infants School at £20 a year, but eventually had to offer £30 a year to get anyone at all suitable. Probably the most stringent Boards in the area were those of Wolviston and Whitton. Wolviston Board's salaries were so low that it often found it difficult to attract applicants. In 1893, for example, it advertised for an assistant mistress at £35 a year. As no applications were made, it re-advertised at £40. This resulted in only one applicant, and she was considered unsuitable, and so it allowed a pupil-teacher to take charge of the class for a few months, and eventually appointed an assistant mistress for £45 a year. Even as late as 1900, its headmaster was earning under £100 a year, whereas the minimum salary for a

headmaster on the Darlington scale was £130 a year. In 1881, it appointed a monitor, giving her no salary at all, merely her instruction free. Whitton School Board also tried to economise in salaries. It had a fast turnover of staff, and often attracted few, or no, suitable applicants for the posts it advertised. It paid its Infants' headmistress only £60 a year in the 1880's, and an assistant mistress only £40 a year in 1900; its monitors usually were paid only 1/- a week throughout the period. The Board also kept the number of teachers it employed as low as possible, refusing to allow its Infants mistress to engage an assistant mistress or even a pupil-teacher until the average attendance in her school exceeded 100. When the Headmistress of the Infants school was dismissed, the Board asked the Education Department if a teacher holding only a third Division certificate was competent to take charge of the school or alternatively, if it could appoint a married woman to the post part-time, with an unqualified assistant under her, but the Department refused to permit such economies. In fact, in the case of Whitton, as with the other stringent Boards, the standard of teaching was kept to a reasonable level only by means of the provisions of the Code, and the inspections of the H.M.I's. In 1882, for example, the H.M.I. declared that the only way to achieve satisfactory examination results in Whitton Board school was by appointing an extra assistant master, which the Board reluctantly did; three years later, the H.M.I. refused a Merit grant to the Infants' school, which had no certificated mistress and was overcrowded; this action persuaded the Board to appoint a certificated mistress to teach there (but at the same time giving notice to one of the other certificated teachers in the other school). The Code of 1889 also forced the Board to replace one of its ex-P.T's by a certificated teacher. The restrictions in the Code to the amount of Government grant which could be earned in a school, relating it to income from other sources, also encouraged reluctant Boards to spend more on their schools.¹⁰

Annual increments, even within a fixed salary scale, were not automatically given to teachers who had to apply for each increase, and it was the custom for the School Boards to grant increases only after hearing the report of the H.M.I. If this was at all unsatisfactory, they

did not hesitate to refuse the increase, or even to threaten the teacher with dismissal. In 1885, Middlesbrough School Board defined what it meant by a satisfactory report on a school, which was the pre-condition for any increase in the head teacher's salary: a school which had obtained the full grant for two class subjects, a Merit grant assessed at 'Good' or 'Excellent', and at least 85% passes in the Standards. At times, associations of teachers attempted to persuade the Boards to make general increases in their salaries to teachers. Middlesbrough School Board, for example, received such a request from the Cleveland Assistant Teachers' Association in 1894, while two years later, the National Union of Teachers asked it to pay Infant school headmistresses as much as those of Girls' schools, on the grounds that the work involved was often as great or greater in Infants schools. But the Board took little notice of this. + "

The level of expenditure on teachers' salaries (which depended both on the salary scales and the average number of children taught by each teacher) was slightly lower on Tees-side than the rest of England and Wales, and varied between the different School Boards:

Expenditure on Teachers' Salaries in Board Schools 1877-8

<u>School Board</u>	<u>Total salary</u>	<u>Average attendance</u>	<u>Amount spent per</u>		
	<u>expenditure</u>		<u>pupil in av.att.</u>		
	£	in board schools	£	s.	d.
Middlesbrough	4315	2647	1	12	7
Darlington	2218	1564	1	8	4
Stockton	1347	1013	1	6	7
Norton	513	283	1	16	3
Cowpen Bewley	387	233	1	12	4
Wolviston	138	93	1	9	9
Whitton	<u>133</u>	<u>91</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>3</u>
Total	£9051	5924	£1	10	7d.
England & Wales	£979,480	559,078	£1	15	-d.

+ Evening school salaries varied from 3/6d. per hour for head-teachers to 2/- per hour for female assistants. Middlesbrough School Board, however, allowed its teachers to retain the grant earned in lieu of salary until 1902, after which it gave 2/6d. per hour. '3

The salary expenditure of Stockton School Board was relatively low mainly because at that time its schools were overcrowded and there were many scholars to each teacher (in 1877-8, the average attendance was 86% of accommodation; in 1878-9, it was over 100%). Likewise, the high expenditure per scholar in the case of Norton School Board was partly due to the fact that, whereas the school had accommodation for 622, the average attendance was only 283 that year, and thus the schools were relatively over-staffed (in 1886 there were 6 certificated teachers and 5 pupil-teachers for only 321 scholars in average attendance, in the Board school). As each school had to employ a headteacher at a higher salary than that of his assistants, the expenditure per scholar on teachers' salaries should have been lower in large schools than small schools, and it would have been expected that the smaller School Boards, whose schools had under 100 average attendance (such as those of Whitton and Wolviston) would have had a greater expenditure per head on teachers' salaries than the larger Boards, several of whose schools had an average attendance of 600 or more. However, whereas all the School Boards of Middlesbrough and North Tees-side spent an average of £1 10s. 4d. per scholar on teachers' salaries in 1877-8, the two smallest Boards spent an average of only £1 9s. 6d. This suggests that they exercised a more stringent salary policy than most of the other School Boards of the area.¹²

The School Boards of Tees-side continued to keep down the expenditure on the maintenance of their schools (of which teachers' salaries were by far the largest single item) below the national average, throughout the period. In 1895, for example, whereas the national average expenditure per scholar in average attendance was £2 10s. 2d., that of Middlesbrough School Board was £2 6s. 9d., and that of the Stockton Board, £2 2s. 2d. The School Boards proudly emphasised this proof of their "efficiency" in all their published reports. The Voluntary schools, however, spent even less. In 1884-5, the Voluntary schools of Middlesbrough spent only £1 10s. 0d. on each scholar, compared to the Board schools' expenditure of £1 12s. 10d., while the Voluntary schools of Darlington spent only £1 9s. 10d., compared to the expenditure of the Board schools of £1 19s. 8d. The national average for that year was £1 15s. 10d. for Voluntary schools, and £2 5s. 4d. for Board schools.¹⁴

2. Training the Teachers

At the time when the School Boards came into being, elementary schoolteachers were trained by serving a 5-year apprenticeship in the schools as pupil-teachers, from the age of thirteen; after this, they took the Queen's Scholarship examinations, and some went on to training college for two years, to become trained certificated teachers. While serving their apprenticeship, which was later reduced to four years, the pupil-teachers got experience of practical teaching (they often found themselves in charge of the lower classes) and received instruction from the head teacher. They were expected to study for the examinations in their own time. Whether or not this system worked adequately depended largely on the individual head teacher, but it was not generally considered very satisfactory, and in the later years of the nineteenth century, attempts were made to improve this system of instruction and training.

The teaching profession of Tees-side took an interest in the education of the pupil-teachers, and in 1872 the Tees-side Pupil-teachers Association was established, at the suggestion of Joseph Pease, with J. Dodds, M.P. for Stockton as its first Chairman. It was open to pupil-teachers from all types of schools, and aimed at raising the standard of their education by means of regular examinations and annual certificates of merit and prizes. Money for the prizes was raised from the schools: school managers contributed 2/6d. for each pupil-teacher in the school; teachers paid 3/- each, and the pupil-teachers, themselves, 1/6d. each. The Association drew its membership from all over Tees-side, including Board schools as far North as Wolviston.¹⁵

It was generally considered that the standard of pupil-teacher instruction on Tees-side was poor. The fact that the pupil-teachers had to study in their spare time, and after a full day's teaching, not merely resulted in bad examination results, but also proved a great strain on their health. Yet the School Boards were reluctant to incur the expense of providing better facilities for their education. As late as 1889, the local H.M.I. was complaining that no attempt had been made on

Tees-side to improve the instruction of pupil-teachers by special arrangements, although this was being done all over the country by that time. Darlington was the first Board to take a decisive step in this direction. During the 1880's some of the larger School Boards of England had developed central classes to instruct all their pupil-teachers together and during school hours. As early as 1880, when considering ways of improving on the bad examination results of its pupil-teachers, Darlington School Board had discussed the possibility of central classes, and had even sent a questionnaire to 50 towns throughout the country concerning their views on the subject of pupil-teacher instruction. But it had rejected making any major change in the system then, and merely decided to impress upon its head teachers the importance of teaching their pupil-teachers well. Ten years later, still dissatisfied with the quality of the training of its pupil-teachers, the Board once more considered changes. Spafford, The Principal of Darlington Training College and member of the School Board, proposed that central classes should be established, but this was rejected. However, in 1893, after making further enquiries about the arrangements for pupil-teacher instruction from Sunderland and other neighbouring towns, the School Board finally decided to adopt the system of central classes. It appointed a pupil-teacher Instructor at £130 a year (later £200 a year) and two part-time assistants. The first Instructor was David Forster, Second Master at Sunderland Higher Grade school. After his resignation in 1899, J. W. Stark, B.A., who had been educated at a Board school and the Grammar School, Darlington, was appointed. From 1899, a full-time female assistant was also appointed. Classes were arranged at Skimmergate School for the pupil-teachers before school started in the morning, during school hours in the afternoons, and after school in the evenings, each pupil-teacher taking four classes a week:

Pupil-teacher year	Number of Morning classes	Number of afternoon classes	Number of evening classes
	8.0-9.30 a.m.	1.30-3.30 p.m.	6.30-8.30 p.m.
1	2	2	0
2	3	1	0
3	1	1	2
4	1	1	2

Drawing classes were later added to the timetable on Friday evenings and Saturday mornings. After the Technical College had been built, arrangements were made for the pupil-teachers to take classes in Science and Art there, and in 1899, the Pupil-Teacher Centre was transferred to the College.¹⁶

The Centre was thrown open for use by pupil-teachers from the Voluntary schools, the managers contributing towards its expenses, and the classes were soon attended by nearly all the pupil-teachers of the town. Pupil-teachers from neighbouring school districts, such as Low Coniscliffe, also attended them. In 1900, preliminary examinations were started for all pupil-teachers wishing to enter the Centre, conducted by the Principal (as the Instructor was now called). As a rule, only those who gained 50% at the examination were admitted, although exceptions were sometimes made, on condition that the Centre was not to be held responsible for failure at the examinations.¹⁷

The establishment of Central classes had a noticeable effect on the examination results of the pupil-teachers; both the annual H.M.I. examinations and those for the Queen's Scholarships showed immediate improvement, and were soon well above the average results for England and Wales. In the Queen's Scholarship examination for 1897-8, for example, the Centre earned 91% of the total possible grant, compared to the national average of 46%; the following year, the results were also good:

	<u>Darlington</u>	<u>England & Wales</u>
1st Class	50%	22%
2nd Class	39%	33%
3rd Class	11%	24%
Failed	0	21%
	<u>100%</u>	<u>100%</u>

One of the pupil-teachers went on from the Centre to take a B.Sc. degree at Durham College of Science.¹⁸

The cost of the Centre on the rates was not as great as had been expected, because of the good government grants it earned and the contributions from the Voluntary schools. In 1897, the Centre actually made a surplus of £26, while the average annual rate expenditure on it 1895-8 was only £39.

Although the new system of educating the pupil-teachers in central classes undeniably produced better examination results, not every one felt completely happy about the change. The Chairman of Darlington School Board voiced some of the apprehensions, when he said:

"I hope that in this matter we are not once again swinging from one extreme to the other. It is essential that a young teacher should not only gain information for himself by study, but that he should also learn how to teach. This can only be done by experience in the schools where alone he can become familiar with the different dispositions of the children."¹⁹

The School Boards of Stockton and Middlesbrough were reluctant to take such a decisive step to improve the system of training their pupil-teachers. Both Boards agreed that the existing system did not achieve satisfactory results, but they delayed the establishment of pupil-teacher centres until several years after Darlington had set up one. Middlesbrough School Board tried to ensure that their pupil-teachers studied conscientiously by means of the Superintendent regularly examining them before they took the annual H.M.I. examinations. At one time, the Superintendent ceased regular examinations of the pupil-teachers, but the standards dropped once more, and so he resumed his examinations. But even regular examination by the Superintendent, failed to improve the pupil-teachers' standards sufficiently, and so in 1893, the Board discussed the establishment of a pupil-teacher centre. It rejected a system of day classes at a Centre as too expensive, but, as a compromise, initiated central classes at Victoria Road School outside normal working hours - during the summer from 7.45-8.45 a.m., and during the winter, from 6.0-8.0 p.m. Head teachers were to relinquish their share of the

pupil-teacher grant, but were to continue to interest themselves in the education of their pupil-teachers, checking their attendance cards and allocating them time within school hours for private study. The pupil-teachers were also to give weekly model lessons at their own schools, which were to be criticised and marked by certificated teachers.¹⁰

But this system remained very hard on the pupil-teachers, many of whom either failed to attend the central classes regularly, or found that their health was being adversely affected. Yet despite this, day pupil-teachers' classes were not established in Middlesbrough until 1900, after changes in the Code had prevented pupil-teachers from teaching more than 20 hours a week. A pupil-teacher Centre was then established at Hugh Bell School, under special instructors. The pupil-teachers taught only half their time, after this, the other half being spent at the Centre. The School Board refused to grant a request from the Headmistresses Association that the pupil-teachers be required to teach for less than half their time. A small library was provided at the Centre, and pupil-teachers from Voluntary schools, including those outside the town, were allowed to attend the Centre on condition that they paid a fee of £2 a year and that Middlesbrough School Board was allowed to retain the Science (but not the ordinary) grant which they earned. Pupil-teachers from schools other than those of the Board, also had to pass an entrance examination, before being admitted to the classes.¹¹

As in the case of Middlesbrough, Stockton School Board made only minor improvements in the instruction of its pupil-teachers before the late 1890's. The original system of instruction was for headmasters to teach their own pupil-teachers six hours a week, each pupil-teacher often at a different level and in a different subject. In the 1880's the Board made some improvement, by grouping all the pupil-teachers of the town into separate classes for each grade and subject. This resulted in more specialist teaching, and also, as each grade was more adequately covered, the pupil-teachers did not need to do so much of the work at home on their own. In 1896, Mr. Prest, Headmaster of the Board Higher Grade School, suggested that a pupil-teacher Centre be set up in Stockton, and that the

pupil-teachers be selected from scholars who had already attended the Organised Science school and received a good education. The School Board, however, did not act on this suggestion until 1898, when, after consultations with the H.M.I., it decided to establish a pupil-teacher Centre, and to give preference in their selection of new pupil-teachers to candidates who had attended the Organised Science school. After asking other School Boards for information about their pupil-teacher centres, it appointed an Instructor (A. J. Schofield, B.A., of Perth) for £160 a year, and an assistant mistress, and arranged for morning and afternoon classes to be held, at first in temporary premises in the Y.M.C.A. and the Methodist schoolroom, and then at the Higher Grade school. When Stockton Town Council refused to extend their library facilities to the Centre, the pupil-teachers themselves held a social and started a library with the proceeds; this stimulated the School Board to give them some help. The pupil-teachers attended the Centre four half-days a week, during school hours, and also on Saturday mornings. Voluntary schools, and those outside the town, were allowed to send their pupil-teachers to the Centre for £3 a year - but a request from a father that his daughter attend in order to prepare for a Cookery Diploma was turned down on the grounds that the Centre existed solely for the training of elementary schoolteachers. An entrance examination was held each year to select pupil-teachers for the Centre. In 1900, for example, 9 boys and 22 girls sat the examination, but only 6 boys and 10 girls passed, and two of these were rejected on grounds of age or ill-health. Sometimes applicants who had passed the examination were accepted on condition that they first spent another year at school. The majority came from Board schools: in 1903, for example, 59 of the 72 pupil-teachers attending the Centre were from Board schools of Stockton. But there was great demand for places, and by 1901, the Centre was reported to be overcrowded.¹²

The examination results of the pupil-teachers showed a definite improvement after the establishment of the Centre. Although they were not as good as those of Darlington, they were above the national average. Their most outstanding scholar proved to be A. D. Elliot, the first

pupil-teacher to pass the London Matriculation, who later won a Toynbee Hall Scholarship to Cambridge University.²³

When the Board of Education decided to abolish annual pupil-teacher examinations in 1901, Stockton School Board believed that it was a retrograde step as it removed the inducement of pupil-teachers to work hard, and so it continued similar examinations of their own. The Boards of Middlesbrough and Darlington did the same.²⁴

The smaller School Boards had neither the resources nor the pupil-teachers to establish Centres of their own. They did, however, make a few attempts to raise the quality of instruction for their pupil-teachers. In 1900, Middleton-in-Teesdale School Board instituted competitive examinations in order to select the best candidates for appointment as pupil-teachers under the Board. Middleton St. George entered its pupil-teachers on a correspondence course for the Queen's Scholarship examinations, and later made arrangements for the Principal of Darlington Pupil-teacher Centre to examine prospective pupil-teachers for its school; it even appointed a pupil-teacher whose home was in Darlington, and paid her fares to the Board school each day. Whitton School Board in 1898 handed over the instruction of all its pupil-teachers to one master, and later worked out timetables to ensure that they had time for private study during school time; to ensure that they did not slacken in their work, all its pupil-teachers were instructed to write details of their private studies each day in a special diary, which was inspected, not only by the Headmaster, but also by the Board itself, at its ordinary monthly meetings.²⁵

All the School Boards faced a difficult problem when they tried to recruit a sufficient number of good quality pupil-teachers, especially male pupil-teachers. In 1871, a local newspaper reported that, because of the high wages and demand for labour in the town, the managers of the Middlesbrough schools had been forced to appoint male pupil-teachers from Guisborough and other country districts, who travelled daily from their homes to Middlesbrough. To ensure an adequate supply of pupil-teachers, Darlington School Board told its schools always to keep a good number of

monitors, selected from the ablest scholars who had shown an aptitude for teaching, from which they could select future pupil-teachers. It was also forced in 1876 to increase considerably its salaries for pupil-teachers in order to attract suitable applicants. In 1900, Stockton School Board set up a special sub-committee to report on the dearth of pupil-teachers from which it was then suffering. The sub-committee reported that the shortage of male pupil-teachers was serious: it would eventually lead to an increase in salaries, or the substitution of female for male teachers, which was not educationally desirable. Even if an alternative source of teachers had been available, it would not have produced such good teachers as the pupil-teacher system was producing, by training prospective teachers in school routine and discipline from the very beginning. The sub-committee declared that there were several reasons for the shortage: boys tended to dislike teaching; while the salaries and promotion prospects were not good when compared with other employments. The new Code of 1900 would make the problem worse, as it was going to reduce the period of apprenticeship to three years, and thus leave a gap of two years between a boy leaving the Standards and entering a pupil-teacher apprenticeship. It recommended various ways of encouraging more boys to enter teaching:

1. Commencing salaries should be increased;
2. Head teachers should be asked to call the School Board's attention to likely boys;
3. Further facilities should be offered to pupil-teachers to assist their studies;
4. A bridge between the Standards and the commencement of the apprenticeship should be established (as, for example, the introduction of a Standard VIII);
5. The Board of Education should be asked to increase its grants for pupil-teaching; their training was expensive, and this made Voluntary schools reluctant to take on many, especially as the Code insisted on pupil-teachers teaching for a maximum of only 20 hours a week.

This last suggestion, the least expensive, was the only one on which the Board immediately acted. ²⁶

Pupil-teachers had not merely to be of a reasonable intellectual standard, and suited to teaching; they also had to be of sound health. Darlington School Board instituted regular medical examinations for their prospective pupil-teachers, and several pupil-teachers were dismissed throughout Tees-side, on the grounds that their health was not robust enough for their arduous duties.²⁷

3. Control of Teachers

All the School Boards took a close interest in the appointment and supervision of their teachers - far closer in many respects than is the modern practice of school governors. The smaller Boards could exercise a close supervision during their ordinary meetings, but the larger Boards instituted special committees to do this.⁺

The School Boards took great pains to appoint the best candidates possible to their schools. Although most applicants were interviewed by the Board or one of its committees in the normal manner, some were expected to give demonstration lessons before the members of the Boards. In 1874, two members of Middlesbrough School Board Ladies Committee visited a North Ormesby school to be present while an applicant was teaching. It reported that:

"She is evidently a painstaking well-educated teacher and expresses herself well in teaching, but her voice is weak and the Committee think it very doubtful whether she would be strong enough or have sufficient power of management to undertake such a large school."

She was not appointed. A few years later, the Board's Superintendent travelled as far as Rochdale and Denbigh to inspect two applicants for a post of assistant master under the Board. Stockton Board was particularly careful in the selection of staff for its Higher Grade school; it insisted that two applicants for the post of French teacher give model lessons before a committee of the Board, and each of the eight applicants for the post of Drill Instructor had to give a demonstration of Drill to

⁺ for details of visiting committees etc., see above, pp. 121-4

members of the Board. Sometimes the Boards found it difficult to attract good applicants - this was particularly the case with the more remote country school districts. Some of the Boards, wrote direct to Training Colleges to suggest suitable candidates: Middlesbrough School Board, for example, on occasions contacted Borough Road Training College, London, and the Free Church Training College, Edinburgh. Stockton and Middlesbrough School Boards also tried to discourage serving teachers from applying for posts elsewhere by declaring that it was their policy to promote from within the staff of the Board as far as was possible. Middleton-in-Teesdale School Board, being rather remotely placed, sometimes sent its Clerk to interview applicants at their home towns, or accepted good candidates on testimonials alone, without an interview.²⁶

Most School Boards experienced a rapid turnover of teaching staff. Many teachers stayed only a year or two before moving on to another district. None of the teachers appointed to Stockton Higher Grade Board school had served more than five years at any previous post: for example, the oldest assistant master, aged 36 years, had previously served $1\frac{1}{2}$ years at Leeds Central Higher Grade school, $1\frac{1}{4}$ years at Jarrow Higher Grade school, $2\frac{1}{2}$ years at Nottingham All Saints Commercial school, and 5 years at Pembroke Higher Grade school. The assistant mistress of Wolviston Board school changed four times 1884-94 (due to one dismissal and three resignations) and six times 1899-1903. This rapid turnover was caused partly by the relative scarcity of good teachers in a period of rapid expansion in education, but also because the School Boards did not hesitate to dismiss teachers with whom they were not satisfied. The security of tenure that now prevails in state schools, did not then exist. All the Boards of the area dismissed staff at times for failing to maintain a satisfactory standard of teaching. The annual H.M.I. examination and report was the occasion for the Boards to weed out their weaker teachers, and they did not hesitate to do so. When the examination results were below average, the teachers responsible were frequently brought before the School Board to explain the reason, and warned that they had either to improve or resign. The Boards usually did not leave it to

the H.M.I. to discover their less efficient teachers. Most of the Boards arranged regular visitations of their schools by their committees or officials. Middlesbrough School Board laid down in 1895 that any teacher under the Board who was asked to resign had the right to attend a meeting of the School Management Committee and make any explanation he or she thought well.²⁹

The School Boards maintained strict control over their schools, not merely to achieve a good standard of instruction therein given, but also to keep a tight discipline over their staff. This was particularly necessary in the case of the pupil-teachers, who were often too immature to be in charge of a class. Thus Darlington School Board found it necessary to dismiss one male pupil-teacher in 1874 for indecent conduct towards some girls in the school, while in the same year, Middlesbrough School Board, troubled by the many absences of their pupil-teachers, declared that they had either to produce a medical certificate or forfeit one day's pay for every half day's absence, and added a veiled threat: "Girls who are so frequently absent on account of ill-health are clearly unfit for the office of teacher." The following year, Norton School Board dismissed a pupil-teacher for insubordination. The School Boards also had continually to warn the pupil-teachers to study hard, and sometimes they lost those who decided that they did not like teaching after all: one of Middlesbrough's pupil-teachers, for example, left without notice to go to sea, and the Board insisted that his father pay the £3 penalty for not fulfilling his indenture agreement.³⁰

The School Boards also felt themselves obliged to keep a close watch over their adult teachers. Stockton School Board, for example, insisted that the Headmaster of the Higher Grade school report to it the name of every member of his staff, whenever he or she was late; the Board's major criticism of the scheme for Queen Victoria High School for Girls was that under it the Headmistress had the right to appoint and dismiss staff, and expel pupils without the prior approval of the governors.³¹

But in spite of their severity towards the less efficient teachers under them, the larger Boards, at least, had a quite good relationship with their teaching staffs; when Middlesbrough School Board ceased, the Headmistresses Association of the Town sent it a letter warmly thanking it for its services to education, and expressing regret at its dissolution. It was in the smaller school districts that the Boards' control of the affairs of the schools was likely to be more onerous and cause resentment. In a village, such as Wolviston or Whitton, the Board members were intimately acquainted with the staff, pupils, and affairs of the Board school, and the less tactful members would have found it difficult to refrain from continuous interference. On occasions this resulted in ill-feeling and irritation, and must have accelerated the turnover of staff. In 1893, for example, one of the members of Whitton School Board declared that he had heard that the discipline at the Mixed School had been bad, and got two Board members to look into it. The following year, the members of the Board complained that the Infants mistress had discontinued the custom of making the pupils stand up and say 'Good morning' when a Board member entered her classroom. When questioned about this, she had retorted that she saw no reason to continue the practice, and, when the Board pressed the matter, she resigned, and refused to come to a Board meeting to explain her action, saying that the members could put anything they wished to say to her in writing. The Board, which had found difficulty in replacing previous staff who had resigned, eventually persuaded her to stay on, at which Duncan, one of the members, resigned from the Board in protest. Duncan was returned at the following election, and shortly afterwards, the Infants mistress was asked to resign because of her unco-operative attitude towards the Board. Whitton School Board also kept a close watch on the teaching of the school. It dismissed its first Headmaster after an unsatisfactory H.M.I. report; and when the pupil-teachers failed their examinations under the second Headmaster, the Board insisted that its members be present at his house when he was giving instruction to his pupil-teachers.

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CHAPTER IX: FINANCE1. School Fees

Income for the School Boards came from three main sources: from Government grants, from the rates and from the school fees and sale of school books. Up to 1891, the last of these sources usually brought in just under a quarter of their total revenue.

The school fees charged at the day schools of the Boards throughout Tees-side did not differ greatly, although there were some local variations. Under the Elementary Education Act of 1870, all fees charged at any public elementary school had not to exceed 9d. a week, but in fact most of the fees were kept well below this amount. Darlington School Board fixed the following scale of fees for their schools in 1871:

Infants	2d. per week
Standards I-III	3d. " "
Standards IV-VII	4d. " "

This remained their scale until 1891, although they did introduce slight variations for certain schools: for example in 1881, they charged 6d. per week for standards IV-VII at the Albert Road and Bank Top Boys' Departments, because of the money they had spent on improvements there.

The fees charged by the other School Boards on Tees-side were in general similar, although the smaller Boards did tend in some cases to charge higher fees: Norton School Board charged 6d. a week for children over 10 years, and Wolviston School Board charged the highest fees, about 1d. a week more than most of the other Boards:

children 5-8 years	3d. per week
" 8-10 "	4d. " "
" 10 years or over	6d. " "

Pauper children were admitted by all the Boards to their schools at the normal rate of 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. a week to the Board of Guardians.²

A similar source of income was that of selling books, slates, pens, etc. to the school children. It was the normal practice in the area to make the children pay for them, often at cost price. Stockton School Board even allowed their teachers a commission on their sale to their scholars. However, Middlesbrough and Middleton St. George School Boards provided all the books etc. free for school use, but not if they were

used at home. Darlington School Board provided textbooks free, but not exercise books and slates. The Board school head teachers of that town complained that they had had difficulty in getting the children to buy them, but the Board turned down the suggestion that an extra charge of 1d. a week be made to the scholars in return for the free provision of all school books and materials. A few years later, however, at the request of the school committees, it allowed Gurney Pease and Brunswick St. schools to levy an extra $\frac{1}{2}$ d. a week and provide the books free, as an experiment.³

The average income from school fees and the sale of school books etc. per child in average attendance in Board schools in England and Wales for 1879-80 was 9/3d. a year. For the School Boards of Middlesbrough and North Tees-side in the same year, it was:

School Board	Income from Fees etc.	Average Attendance	Average income per head
Middlesbrough	£1535	2914	10/6d.
Stockton	£689	1539	8/11d.
Darlington	£1221	2554	9/7d.
Norton	£151	272	11/1d.
Middleton-in-Teesdale	£205	351	11/8d.
Cowpen Bewley	£93	266	7/-
Whitton	£71	94	14/-
Wolviston	£56	80	14/1d.

From this it is clear that the smaller School Boards, especially those of Whitton and Wolviston, were the most stringent in making the parents pay for their children's education, with the exception of Cowpen Bewley which was the most generous.

The Elementary Education Act of 1891 laid down that any public elementary school would receive a fee grant from the Government of 10/- per head for each child in average attendance on condition that it abolished its fees, or reduced them by that amount. Parents could also demand free school places for their children, under the Act. All the School Boards in the area accepted the fee grant and abolished fees in their schools in 1891. The grant of 10/- a year was equivalent to a 3d. a week fee for each child, and, as some School Boards charged more, they made a financial loss by accepting the grant and abolishing their

fees completely. This was the case of several of the Boards, such as Stockton, Middlesbrough and Wolviston, although the resulting increase in attendance would have partly compensated for this by enabling them to earn higher government grants. Middlesbrough School Board, which had received $11/2\frac{1}{2}d$, $11/8\frac{1}{2}d$ and $10/10\frac{3}{4}d$ per child in average attendance in fees during the three years before 1891, declared that it lost £600 a year by doing this, and Wolviston School Board also made a considerable loss: the school fees for 1889-90 and 1890-1 had amounted to £56 8s. 9d. and £51 8s. 1d., but the fee grant brought in only £40 and £49 in the following two years. However, Darlington School Board claimed that it had made little difference by accepting the fee grant and abolishing its fees, the fee grant bringing in within £10 of the revenue previously obtained from fees, and Norton School Board was also not much adversely affected, the fee grant being slightly in excess of the previous revenue from fees due to an increase in average attendance during this period. In a public bill, the Board urged the parents in future to send their children to school regularly to ensure that it earned a good fee grant. Middleton St. George School Board circularised a similar address to parents and ratepayers urging them to improve the attendance of their children, as a loss of £9 would have been made on the attendance of the seven months ending in June 1891.

Whitton School Board made an attempt partially to get round the loss of revenue involved in abolishing its fees in return for the fee grant. The Board abolished fees for attendance, but established a charge for books and other school materials for the scholars at a rate of 1d a month up to Standard II, 2d a month for Standards III and IV, and 3d a month over Standard IV. It raised £19 8s. 5d. this way 1891-2, but abolished these charges in October 1892. Darlington School Board also resolved, when it abolished fees, that in future parents should

provide all books etc. at their own expense, with the exception of Rise Carr, Harrowgate Hill and Gurney Pease Schools, where a charge of $\frac{1}{2}$ d. a week was to be made. But in their bye-laws of 1892, they laid down that books used exclusively at school should be provided free, and two years later, the $\frac{1}{2}$ d. charge at the three schools was withdrawn. Middleton-in-Teesdale School Board also continued a 1d. charge for their pupils' copy books until 1894.⁵

Under the 1891 Act, Section 4, the Education Department was allowed to authorise the imposition of fees up to 6d. a week so long as it would be of educational benefit to the district to do so, and sufficient public school accommodation existed in the district where no charge was made. This encouraged School Boards to provide schools giving a higher standard of education in well equipped schools with little extra charge on the rates. Under this section, Middlesbrough School Board's Grange Road School (later called Hugh Bell School) was authorised to charge fees of 2d., 4d. and 6d. a week, but it abolished these fees in 1902. However, the Education Department refused to sanction similar fees for the Wesleyan School in Middlesbrough and the Higher Grade Board School in Stockton, in 1893. In the latter case, Stockton Board had proposed to charge a fee in the elementary department of the school; this had aroused a protest from some ratepayers, and the Education Department had refused to sanction it. But from 1895, it did make a charge of 1/- a week for attendance at the Organised Science school department. Fees constituted £182 of the £948 income for the Science school in 1896-7, and continued to bring in about 20% of the total school revenue in later years. The School Board, however, awarded 20 free places at the school for Stockton children who had passed Standard VI at an elementary school.⁶

Fees were also charged before and after 1891 at special schools, such as Stockton's Deaf School, and at evening classes. Middlesbrough School Board originally charged 4d. a week at its evening classes, but returned half to students attending 75% of the classes and taking the annual examination. This brought in 60% of the income of the classes and enabled them to run at a slight profit. By 1894, these charges had been reduced to 2d. a week (free for students under 16 years who had

passed Standard VII) and in 1903, the total fees were returned to the students if they had made satisfactory attendances or were taking elementary subjects. The other Boards charged similar fees for any evening classes they provided: Darlington from 1894 charged fees of 2d. a week, returning the whole fee if 100% attendance was made, three-quarters of the fees for 75% attendance, and half the fees for 60% attendance. In 1898-1900, £189 was collected this way, and £111 returned to the students. Similarly, Stockton charged 3d. a week or 2/6d. a session in 1899, with the whole fee returned for 90% attendance and half returned for 70% attendance. They charged slightly higher fees for students attending their evening classes from outside the borough.⁷

On the whole, the School Boards were quite generous in their concessions to poor children. Some Boards automatically remitted the fees of children of large families: in the 1870's, for example, the practice at the majority of the Board schools and many of the Voluntary schools of Darlington, was to allow the fourth child of a family in which four or more children were simultaneously attending school, to receive education without paying any fees; in 1881, this was laid down for all the Board schools. This was also done by Middleton St. George School Board, while the Wolviston Board charged children over 10 years a fee of 4d. instead of 6d. a week if they were the second or later children of a family to attend school, and Norton reduced all fees for the children of a family after the first. School fees were also given automatically by some Boards to encourage attendance: Stockton School Board remitted all the fees of children at its Science school who remained there the full three years, and Whitton School Board reduced by 1d. a week the fees of all children who had made 100% attendance the previous week.⁸

Nearly all the School Boards were prepared to remit the fees of children of exceptionally poor parents, who were attending their schools. This was generally recognised as the only just course of action after a Board had established compulsory attendance at school for all children under their bye-laws. The larger School Boards set up special committees to hear such applications, which often met more frequently than the

Boards themselves. But in the smaller School Board districts, parents had to apply to the full Boards at their ordinary monthly meetings. The Boards tended to be sympathetic to applications in times of industrial distress and depression, but more severe in normal times. They often took care to see that remission was given only to cases of real need where the parents could clearly not afford to pay school fees for their children. Darlington School Board, although it had turned down a similar proposal in 1872, established a scale of incomes in 1882 which laid down the limits to remission of fees:⁺

family of 2 persons:	remission only given if income was under 10/- a week
" " 3 " " " " " " " "	" " 11/6d. "
" " 4 " " " " " " " "	" " 13/- "
" " 5 " " " " " " " "	" " 14/6d. "
" " 6 " " " " " " " "	" " 16/- "
" " 7 " " " " " " " "	" " 17/- "
" " 8 " " " " " " " "	" " 18/- "

It unsuccessfully asked the Board of Guardians to follow this scale in granting the payment of fees to Voluntary schools, and it also insisted that parents applying for remission produce a certificate from their employers showing the wages earned in the preceding four weeks. In 1885, Stockton School Board prosecuted two parents for fraudulantly obtaining remission of fees while in receipt of good wages. Middlesbrough School Board, however, treated each case on its merits: according to the circumstances of the parents fees might be remitted for periods up to 6 months, for all or part of a family, or only arrears of fees were remitted and the family ordered to pay in future. This was the usual policy among the Boards of the area. Norton School Board in 1879 referred several cases of applications for remission to the Board of Guardians to find out whether the families were sufficiently poor to warrant remission, as did Wolviston School Board on occasions, but this was out of keeping with the other Boards who considered that the Board of Guardians placed a stigma of poverty on such applications and might discourage genuinely needful parents from applying.⁹

⁺ During the 1880's, a steelworker earned about 25/- a week, a lead-miner 20/-, and an unskilled or Agricultural worker 15/-.

At times, the Board members appeared over-zealous in their attempts to ensure that rate money was not wasted on unjustified remission. In 1884, a working class member of Darlington School Board, E. McCulloch, protested at a public meeting that questions were often put to women applying to the Board for remission of their children's school fees "of such a nature as he should not like to put to his own wife or daughter". Challenged by an indignant member at the next Board meeting to justify these remarks, he quoted the example of a woman who had been deserted by her husband and who had applied for remission for two of her five children. She had been asked where her youngest child had been born and who had been the father (the father had turned out to be the lodger). He declared that the Board should only have concerned itself with the two children for whom the mother had applied for remission of fees. The Chairman of the Board, who admitted that he had put these questions, claimed that he had asked about the father in order to see if the father was contributing to the child's maintenance, and, on discovering that he was not, to help the mother by advising her to sue for its support. He added that, in any case, he did not believe the Board should put a premium on prostitution.¹⁰

By law, School Boards could only remit fees for six months at a time. But most Boards usually preferred to remit them for shorter periods - three, two or one month - and renew remission on further application from the parents. The majority of applications were genuine cases of hardship. Stockton School Board's 1885 Report declared that most were cases of widows bravely struggling to maintain a family and keep out of the workhouse, or of deserted wives or men disabled or temporarily unemployed. The pages of the School Boards' minute books are packed with such cases, and reveal a great variety of types of distress. On January 7th, 1878, for example, the General Purposes Committee of Middlesbrough School Board deal with 21 cases, a selection of which gives some idea of the range of cases and the treatment they received:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Person applying</u>	<u>Particulars</u>	<u>Order</u>
Mrs. Murray	Self	Living separate from husband who has been in prison for ill-treating her, but is now at liberty. 2 boys at Stockton St.	Children to go to school and husband to pay arrears.
William Scot Fireman	Wife	2 children at Stockton St. Has been out of work but has now got a situation.	Arrears excused; to pay in future.
Mrs. Harland Widow	Self	1 girl at East St. Board School. Takes in washing.	Arrears to be excused and fees remitted for one month.
Mrs. Martin Married woman	Self	2 boys at Denmark St. Board school. Husband has been away for 12 months and not supporting family.	Arrears to be excused; to be paid for in future.
Christopher Scurrill Blacksmith	Self	1 boy at Denmark St. Board School. In bad work. Now employed at workhouse.	Arrears to be excused and to get Guardians to pay fees in future.
George Brown Labourer.	Wife	1 girl at East St. school. Has been out of work.	Arrears to be excused.
Mark Slee Boilersmith	Wife	3 children at Denmark St. Board school. Out of work on strike.	No relief to be granted.
John Davison Shingler	Wife	3 children at Denmark St. Board school. Out of work and has not had a day's work for 2 years. Is under doctor's hands. Wife living separate.	Remit fees for 1 month and arrears to be excused.
Henry Murton	Wife	Found by enquiries to be in good work. 2 boys also in work. 3 children at school.	No relief to be granted and summons to be issued for the arrears.

The number of cases of fees remitted at any one time in the area quite accurately reflects the state of trade and industry, especially that of iron and steel. In the prosperous year of 1883, for example, Middlesbrough remitted fees for only 441 children (some of which were renewals of remission for the same children), while in the depression year of 1886, they remitted the fees of 3,839 children; likewise, Stockton School Board remitted £176 of fees in 1883, but £541 in 1886. Not all the applications were granted, even in a time of depression: Darlington School Board, for example, granted the following remissions:

	<u>No. of parents applying</u>	<u>No. of children for whom applied</u>	<u>No. of children whose fees remitted</u>
1874-6	531	1271	1084
1877-9	719	1900	1733
1880-2	564	1451	? (523 parents)
1883-5	1288	3259	3091
1886-8	2241	5844	5773
1889-91	1133	2741	2678

As these figures are for numbers of applications, not applicants, most children were included more than once: the 5773 applications granted in 1886-8, for example, represent about 1800 different children and the 2678 for 1889-91, about 900 children. In 1886, one of the peak years of depression, remission for 1947 children was granted, representing about 600 different children; as there were 3270 children attending the Board schools in that year, the children obtaining remission constituted 19% of the school roll. In 1882, a year of relative boom, the Board remitted the fees of only 4% of its scholars."

Such remission formed a considerable proportion of the total possible income from school fees. For example, it amounted to about a quarter of the possible income in a year of depression of Middlesbrough and Stockton School Boards, but under one-tenth in most other years:

	<u>M'bro'</u>	<u>Stockton</u>	<u>M'bro'</u>	<u>Stockton</u>	<u>M'bro'</u>	<u>Stockton</u>
	<u>1886</u>		<u>1888</u>		<u>1890</u>	
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Total income from school fees	2180	1455	2640	1856	3233	2209
Total remission	<u>676</u>	<u>541</u>	<u>231</u>	<u>423</u>	<u>220</u>	<u>223+</u>
Possible income	2856	1996	2871	2279	3453	2432
% remission to possible income	24%	27%	8%	18%	6%	9%

Even in the good years, there was always a hard core of children whose parents could never afford their fees: in Middlesbrough in 1880, for example, the Warden reported that there were 20 parents, with 46 children who were "chronic cases" of fees being repeatedly remitted by the Board.¹³

All the School Boards remitted the fees of some children. It is impossible, however, accurately to compare their relative generosity, partly because there is a lack of statistical evidence for some of the Boards, and partly because each Board was in an individual district which had its own types of employment problems: a farming community such as Wolviston would not be much affected by a depression in the iron industry, while Middleton-in-Teesdale depended largely on the fortunes of the lead trade. But the details of the treatment of applicants in the minutes of the various School Boards do convey the impression that the larger Boards tended to give remissions more generously, especially in times of depression, and that the smaller Boards were more stringent: Wolviston School Board probably rejected a higher proportion of applications for remission than any other Board; they were also the fastest to take legal action for arrears of fees, and tended to remit for one month at a time, rather than three or six months.¹⁴ The smaller Boards, such as Wolviston, and Middleton-in-Teesdale, tended to remit arrears of fees, rather than remit in advance.

The only School Board in the area to attempt to get out of its responsibility of remitting the fees of poor children attending its schools, was that of Middleton-in-Teesdale. In January, 1887, the Board asked the Guardians of Teesdale Union to remit the fees of such children attending Middleton Board school as well as those attending Voluntary schools. In support of this unusual request, the Board argued that if it once commenced to remit the fees of children of poor parents who failed to pay, very few fees, if any, would be paid at all, and, as the town was then in a very impoverished state, it could not afford to be extravagant in this respect. The Guardians also had better facilities for making enquiries in such cases than the School Board. These arguments did not satisfy the Guardians, for they rejected the School Board's

request, and abruptly told them not to waste their time over such matters. The Board refused to be put off and decided to press the matter further. It asserted that under the law, whereas it was optional for a School Board to remit fees, it was compulsory for a Board of Guardians to do so when asked, and it began to refuse admission to its school of poor children whose school fees had not been paid. But the Guardians were equally determined not to take on this additional burden. As one Guardian commented, to do so would have the effect of encouraging pauperism, for it would accustom people to apply to the Guardians for things, and, "when they get one thing, they are always ready to come for another". The Guardians declared that no other School Board had passed this duty over to the Poor Law Union, that the School Boards were better acquainted with those who applied for remission, and that it would be cruel to expect parents to come all the way to Barnard Castle, where the Guardians met, to secure remission of school pence; in any case, the remitted fees would have to be taken out of the town's rates, even if the Guardians were responsible for ~~it~~^{them}. "Of what use is Middleton School Board if they don't do their duty?" exclaimed one Guardian. Thus, in spite of the fact that the Local Government Board supported the School Board's claim that they were obliged to remit the fees, the Board of Guardians continued to reject the School Board's request that they do so. As late as February of the following year, a threat by the School Board to take legal action against them, was greeted by shouts of laughter in a meeting of the Guardians.

But the Guardians, faced by an inflexible School Board, backed by the law and the Local Government Board, could not hold out for ever. In April 1888, after a lively debate, the Guardians reluctantly gave way and decided by 9 votes to 4, to adhere to the law and consider applications for remission of fees at Middleton-in-Teesdale Board School. At the same time, they reaffirmed that in their view, this was senseless, and due entirely to the selfishness of the School Board members who wished to pose as supporters of an economical policy.¹²

In the case of certain parents, it proved difficult to obtain the school fees of their children, even if remission had been refused. Most

of the schools contained some children whose fees were in arrears. For example, of the fees due to Middlesbrough School Board over the quarter up to October 1880, 11% had been remitted and nearly 10% were in arrears. Sometimes individuals who had been sympathetically treated in the past accumulated large arrears which they were then loth to pay off: two of Middleton-in-Teesdale's most persistent offenders, a mason and a tailor, whose excuses had been listened to in the past few years, owed £3 14s. 3d. and £5 3s. Od. by October 1883. Eventually, they were excused part of their arrears on condition they paid the remainder by instalments.¹⁵

In 1874, Middlesbrough School Board laid down that every week their teachers should report to the Beadle all children whose fees were in arrears, and the Beadle, after visiting the parents, was to report to the Board all cases of fees being two or more weeks in arrears and order the offending parents to attend a meeting of the Board and explain the arrears. But this did not work completely satisfactorily, for three years later, the Superintendent informed the Board that there was still a lot of arrears of fees in the schools of the Board and that, although there was much genuine poverty prevailing at the time, he was convinced that several parents could pay better than they did. He advised the Board to consider taking Court action to recover the arrears as some School Boards were doing at the time. His advice was followed, for a few months later he was told by the Board to select twelve of the worst cases and summons them before the County Court, and two years later a further 34 cases were taken to the Court. Most of the other School Boards were also forced to resort to legal proceedings to secure their fees; most, as Middlesbrough, used this method only against the worst offenders, but Wolviston did this much more as a matter of course, and the Court usually ordered payment by instalments over a specified period. But despite their severity, Wolviston School Board lost £50 12s. 7d. in fees over 10 years up to 1885, which were irrecoverable due to the parents dying or leaving the district. Similarly, Darlington School Board in 1884 wrote off over £188 arrears of fees as irrecoverable.¹⁶

The very lenience of a sympathetic School Board, as in time of depression, sometimes increased the problem. In 1881, Middlesbrough School Board's Superintendent reported that the Board had allowed many parents who had been irregularly employed in the depression to run into arrears, and as a result, some parents had had to be proceeded against in the County Court. Also, any increase in the fees of a school provoked reluctance among the parents to pay. In 1881, when Darlington School Board established a uniform scale of fees for all their schools, the fees of Harrowgate Hill school were increased by $\frac{1}{2}$ d. a week to bring them into line, and the managers of the school soon complained that many parents were refusing to pay the increase (the school by early 1883 already had arrears of fees amounting to £25 16s. Od., some dating back for three years). But the Board remained adamant in maintaining that the parents had to pay.¹⁷

Most of the School Boards were not keen to prosecute regularly. They thus tried other ways than threats of prosecution, to secure the fees from their scholars. Middleton-in-Teesdale School Board decided to charge fees monthly because the London Lead Company paid their wages monthly, and several Boards eventually decided to refuse to admit children to their schools who did not pay their fees punctually, and, if necessary, prosecute them for non-attendance. This policy was reinforced by a Court Appeal judgment of the 1880's which laid down that arrears of fees which had been allowed to accumulate for some time could not be sued for. Because of this judgment, and also because the economical Voluntary party had just previously won control of the Board, Darlington School Board revised their regulations in 1883 to insist that fees be prepaid before a child was admitted to one of their schools. Norton and Wolviston Boards also did this in 1884, and Middleton-in-Teesdale Board in 1885.¹⁸

2. Rates

In 1870, while the Elementary Education Bill was being debated, W. E. Forster forecast that the educational rate would never exceed 3d. and that the cost per head in Board schools to be paid out of the rates

was not likely to rise above 30%. This, however, proved to be a most optimistic forecast: by the 1870's and 1880's the rate had already increased to 6d. or more in many districts.¹⁹

In common with the rest of England and Wales, the average educational rate levied increased steadily over the period for most of the School Boards, and especially for those who were forced to erect new schools because of the rising population in their districts:

Average yearly rate in £ levied for education

<u>School Board</u>	<u>1877-80</u>	<u>1887-90</u>	<u>1897-1900</u>
Middlesbrough	7d.	6d.	1/-
Stockton ²⁰	2½d.	7d.	1/4d.
Darlington	3½d.	5d.	10½d.
Norton	6d.	4d.	5½d.
Middleton-in-Teesdale	5d.	5½d.	8½d.
Cowpen Bewley	½d.	-	-
Whitton	4d.	4d.	6½d.
Middleton St, George	-	7½d.	7½d.
Wolviston	8d.	7d.	6½d.
Average for Middlesbrough & North Tees-side	4½d.	6d.	9d.
Average for England	5d.	7½d.	11d.

However, such a crude comparison of the rates raised for education between the School Boards can be misleading; it certainly cannot conclusively indicate how generous a Board was in providing education for its ratepayers. Much depended on how many new schools a particular Board had to build (whether it obtained many of its schools as free gifts, as in the case of Middleton St. George, Cowpen Bewley and to a lesser extent, Darlington, or had to erect a large number itself due to fast rising population or poor educational provision by voluntary bodies); it also depended, to an even greater extent, on the rateable value of a particular district: the same policy might have appeared extravagant in a poor district, but stringent in a rich one, if the School Boards were to be judged according to the rate levied. For example, in 1890, a 1d. rate produced greatly different revenues for the various School Boards in the area, even if considered per head of population:²¹

<u>School Board</u>	<u>Product of a 1d. rate</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>1d. rate per head of pop.</u>
Middlesbrough	£910	75,000	3d.
Stockton	£710	49,000	3 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.
Darlington	£640	35,000	4 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.
Norton	£120	3,700	7 $\frac{3}{4}$ d.
Middleton-in-Teesdale	£35	2,000	4 $\frac{1}{4}$ d.
Whitton	£65	1,100	1 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.
Middleton St. George	£30	900	8d.
Wolviston	£20	700	6 $\frac{3}{4}$ d.

The relatively high rateable value of Whitton (due to the predominance of the Carlton Ironworks in the village) and Norton (an attractive residential town) explains the fact that they had the lowest educational rates on North Tees-side in the later years of the School Board period. Most of the School Board districts had an increasing rateable value in line with their increasing populations. In the case of Middleton-in-Teesdale, however, because of the decline in the lead trade, the town's rateable value decreased steadily throughout the period: a 1d. rate in 1881 produced £51 (or 5 $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per head of population) but only £27 (or 3 $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per head of population) in 1901. This caused great difficulties for the School Board, as a feeling grew up in the town that the increase in the educational rate was due to extravagance and mismanagement of the Board.⁺

The rateable value of the towns on Tees-side was low compared to that of many other towns in England of similar populations. For example, some Northern towns had the following rateable values in 1890:²²

<u>Town</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Rateable Value</u>	<u>1d. rate per head</u>
Gateshead	81,000	£253,000	3d.
Halifax	80,000	£310,000	4d.
Huddersfield	82,000	£363,000	4 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.
Newcastle	161,000	£858,000	5 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.
South Shields	57,000	£251,000	4 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.
Scarborough	35,000	£178,000	5d.

Because of this, the town School Boards of Tees-side were very proud that they were keeping the rates as low as they were. In 1882, the Chairman of the Stockton Board commented on the fact that the rate of the

⁺ see above, p.73-4

Board had never exceeded 5d. and that, as many other towns in the North which had less to provide educationally had had higher rates, they could justly congratulate themselves. The government grant and fees had met most of the cost of running the Board schools (although their building had cost a 2d. rate in loan redemption and interest), and most of the remaining rate expenditure went on the salaries of the school wardens, other officials and the sending of children to industrial schools, all of which benefited the whole town; the fact that the School Board paid the whole cost of these had made the cost of Board schools appear higher relative to the other elementary schools, whereas in reality they had been no higher.²³

It was to offset such inequality in rateable values that the Government gave special financial aid to those Boards which were in districts with a relatively low rateable value. By the 1897 Necessitous School Boards Act, which amended Section 97 of the 1870 Elementary Education Act, a rate deficiency grant was given to those School Boards whose rates produced less than a given amount per child attending their schools: they were given the difference between the product of a 3d. rate and 7/6d. per head of Board school average attendance if they were levying a 3d. rate, with another 4d. per head in average attendance for every 1d. by which their rate exceeded 3d. The Tees-side School Boards with the lowest rateable values were able to obtain some financial aid under this Act: Middlesbrough for example claimed amounts rising from £650 in 1897 to £1598 in 1902, while Stockton and Middleton-in-Teesdale School Boards also benefited by it. But others, such as Darlington School Board, had too high a rateable value to qualify for assistance in this way.²⁴

Most of the School Boards on Tees-side had to find about a quarter of their schools' incomes from the rates; for example, the revenue of the three town Boards' schools about 1880 was composed of the following amounts:

Annual average income per head in average attendance

<u>School Board</u>	<u>Grants</u>	<u>Fees</u>	<u>Rates</u>	<u>Total</u>
Middlesbrough (1879-82)	16/11d.	10/11d.	5/-	£1 12s. 10d.
Darlington (")	15/7d.	9/11d.	10/-	£1 15s. 6d.
Stockton (1882-5)	17/2d.	11/7d.	6/2d.	£1 14s. 11d.

But this did not include rate income for annual payments of debt redemption and interest on the school buildings. Once this was included the rates' contribution was usually in excess of W. E. Forster's estimated 30%: in the case of Middlesbrough School Board 1894-7, for example, the annual average cost of each Board scholar in average attendance including debt charges of 12/4d., was £3 1s. 6d.; as grants and fees only produced £1 14s. 2d., the rates had to supply the additional £1 7s. 4d., or 45% (24% to cover deficit on maintenance, and 21% for interest and redemption).²⁵

As each child educated in a Board school cost the ratepayers about a quarter of his maintenance costs, the School Boards were not keen to educate scholars from outside their districts unless they paid the full costs. In 1888, Middleton St. George School Board asked the Overseers of Low Dinsdale and Morton Palms to pay the full costs of children from their parishes who were being educated in their school. They worked out the costs to be £1 16s. 9d. for each child. Low Dinsdale paid their share but Morton Palms was reluctant to pay as much as that. As it was difficult to get money from them, the School Board asked the Education Department to make the two parishes contributory districts of Middleton St. George. This was done in the case of Low Dinsdale only, and its rate contribution was calculated on the average attendance of pupils at the Board school who lived there.²⁶

3. Income and Expenditure

An examination of the accounts for a typical year in the 1870's and 1880's reveals that most of the School Boards at that time received about half their income from rates, about a quarter from government grants, and just under a quarter from school fees, etc. The revenue of Cowpen Bewley School Board was exceptional throughout

Income and Expenditure of the School Boards (excluding Capital)

School Board (in order of population)	<u>Income:</u>				<u>Expenditure:</u>			
	<u>Grants</u>	<u>Fees etc.</u>	<u>Rates</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Admin.</u>	<u>Maintenance</u>	<u>Debt</u>	<u>Other⁺</u>
	<u>1877-80</u>							
Middlesbrough	26%	17%	57%	0%	11%	72%	16%	0%
Stockton	32%	21%	47%	0%	14%	66%	18%	1%
Darlington	32%	22%	45%	1%	13%	84%	1%	2%
Norton	21%	16%	62%	0%	8%	66%	25%	1%
Middleton-in-Teesdale (1878-80)	32%	25%	43%	0%	4%	94%	0%	2%
Cowpen Bewley	36%	20%	9%	34% ⁺⁺	9%	90%	0%	1%
Middleton-St. George	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Wolviston	20%	20%	60%	0%	7%	60%	29%	4%
Whitton	20%	27%	53%	0%	5%	70%	24%	0%
	<u>1897-1900</u>							
Middlesbrough	48%	3%	48%	1%	3%	76%	21%	0%
Stockton	50%	1%	48%	1%	5%	77%	17%	1%
Darlington	44%	1%	54%	1%	5%	82%	12%	0%
Norton	51%	0%	45%	2%	4%	71%	24%	0%
Middleton-in-Teesdale	60%	0%	40%	0%	4%	75%	21%	0%
Cowpen Bewley	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Whitton	35%	0%	64%	0%	5%	84%	10%	1%
Middleton St. George	46%	0%	54%	0%	9%	91%	0%	0%
Wolviston	45%	0%	55%	0%	4%	75%	20%	1%

⁺ including elections

⁺⁺ voluntary subscriptions

the whole period, in that most years it received large voluntary subscriptions which allowed it to keep its rate low, or dispense with it altogether some years (its average rate 1877-80 was only $\frac{1}{2}$ d. a year). In the last decade of the School Board era, however, the Boards' income forms a different pattern, for, due largely to the fee grant of 1891, income from school fees had disappeared, with one or two minor exceptions, and this had been more than compensated by an increase in the government grants. For most of the School Boards, grants and rates each now brought in about half their income.

Throughout the whole period by far the greatest part of the expenditure of the School Boards went on the maintenance of their schools - if debt payments are ignored, in each case this composed over three-quarters of their total expenditure. Interest and repayment of debt expenditure varied considerably between the different Boards, depending on how many schools they had to build, but, as the population of the school districts increased in most parts of the region, so the debt burden grew steadily for most of the School Boards, both absolutely and relative to their total expenditure: by 1897-1900, it constituted about a fifth of the total expenditure for 5 out of the 8 School Boards then in existence in the area; only Middleton St. George and Cowpen Bewley School Boards had no debt, as they had built no schools. Administrative expenditure alone, showed some relative (although not absolute) decline for most School Boards, especially the larger ones.⁺

The need for economy was ever present in the minds of School Board members of whatever party: although the Denominationalist party publicly proclaimed it was an essential part of their policy to achieve the utmost economy, the Unsectarian party never admitted extravagance with rate money, and prided itself on being able to combine ample educational provision with efficiency and lack of wastage in the rates. Although certain proposed measures were fought over by the parties on the issue of economy

⁺ for more details of government grants, see Chapter VI; and for details of expenditure, Chapters on Administration, Educating the Children, Elections, etc.

versus more generous treatment of Board education, changes of party control in the long run had little real effect on the level of rate expenditure of any School Board. From the available evidence, it is impossible to deduce that any one party when it was in control of a School Board proved much more economical than another in practice. Likewise, no conclusive deductions are possible in this respect when comparing different School Boards, because it is difficult to compare like with like in this matter, each Board having its own individual set of problems.

At certain times, however, quite fierce struggles were fought over the issue of economy, and on occasions a party did win control of a School Board on a policy of restricting rate expenditure. In 1882, the local H.M.I. commented that the School Boards in South Durham were getting much more economical, and that the bad times of those years of depression and ever increasing rates had caused the public to elect persons pledged to economy, especially in the poorer districts. It was during the following year that the Denominationalist party wrested control of Darlington School Board from the Unsectarian party. Long term trends, however, appear to have been little affected by such changes of control, despite some irritating cuts in expenditure by the 'Economical Party' which at times provoked fierce party struggles. In the months following their election victory, the Denominationalist party on Darlington School Board passed a series of economy measures designed to reduce the rates. It fixed a new scale of head teachers' salaries below the level of salaries paid by neighbouring Boards and by the best Voluntary schools in Darlington; it placed a limit of £5 to the expenditure on Board school prizes, and arranged for their distribution within the schools themselves instead of in public; it stopped the practice of giving buns to the pupils of Rise Carr School after the annual examination; and it proposed to reduce the teaching staff from 69% over the Code minimum to 40% (and thus below the national average). Yet by the 1886 election, such measures had had no very noticeable effect. The teaching staff had actually increased to 81% over the Code minimum and

the Unsectarian party was able to point out that the first Voluntary Board had spent more than the Unsectarian Board which had preceded it, in its three years of office:

	<u>Ordinary Expenditure</u>			<u>Ordinary Revenue</u>		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Unsectarian Board (1879-82)	17,235	17	-	18,227	1	6
Voluntary Board (1882-5)	18,451	16	7	18,872	3	2
Increase:	£1,215	19	7	£645	1	8

The Voluntary Board had in fact made a slight saving in administrative expenditure (£19 6s. 9d.) but this had been more than outweighed by a heavy increase (£1448 12s. 8d.) in the maintenance of Board schools, which had forced up both the gross and the net costs of each scholar in average attendance:

Cost per head in average attendance

	<u>Gross Cost</u>			<u>Net Cost</u>	
	£	s.	d.	s.	d.
Unsectarian Board (1879-82)	1	16	7	9	11
Voluntary Board (1883-5)	1	19	8 $\frac{1}{4}$	10	4 $\frac{1}{2}$
Increase:		3	1 $\frac{1}{4}$		5 $\frac{1}{2}$

There had indeed been some increase in revenue to offset this: the government grant and the income from school fees had increased, but this had been the result of the more generous Code conditions for grants and to a stricter method of collecting fees after a Court decision on the matter. The Voluntary Board had also borrowed quite heavily, leaving the Board in greater debt than when it took over, and spending more on the interest and redemption of loans each year. The Unsectarian party claimed that all this proved that the Voluntary party was less business-like in their methods than it had been when in control of the Board, and that it had failed to honour its pledges in the 1883 election to be more efficient and economical.²⁷

The Voluntary party did actually claim in the 1886 election that it had managed to fulfil its promises and had in fact made a reduction in the rate expenditure. It had raised only 10d. in rates 1883-5, whereas the Unsectarian Board of 1879-82 had raised 1/1d. over the three years. But the Unsectarians easily proved this claim to be false: such

claims ignored the fact that the Voluntary Board had inherited a financial balance from their Unsectarian predecessors. The Unsectarian Board had raised 1/1d. in rates, but had only spent 11d., leaving a 2d. balance. The Voluntary Board had spent this 2d. balance and another 10d. raised in rates, thereby spending the equivalent of a 1d. rate more than the Unsectarian Board. Furthermore, the Voluntary Board had put the proceeds of the sale of Bank Top school into its revenue account calculations, whereas this should have been classified as capital revenue.²⁸

Other School Boards on Tees-side had similar stories. A party, elected on a policy of economy, at times immediately launched a programme to achieve this, but appears to have had little long term effect on the finances of the Board concerned, and its proposals amounted to little more than a post-election flourish. Thus, immediately after the Voluntary party had won control of Middleton St. George Board in 1887, it reduced the salaries of the school warden and the Clerk. On the other hand, it was the Unsectarian party in Stockton which introduced a series of economy proposals after winning the 1885 School Board election: it abolished the office of Inspector of Schools and appointed a Clerk and an Accountant at a saving of £120 a year to do the work instead; it appointed a skilled workman as caretaker of one of its schools to also act as absentee visitor, which enabled it to dismiss one warden and save £33 4s. Od. a year; it moved the Board offices from Wellington Street to Dovecot Street at a reduced rent of £15 a year; it more strictly enforced fines on conviction and publicly sold all articles made by the pupils in the schools. The "Northern Review" attacked this policy, accusing it of being largely one of doing as little as possible before the next election so as to be able to be acclaimed as the party which was responsible for the most economic administration: "Now we like economy, but confusion we say to Scroogism, for the present Stockton School Board is truly as rasping a rasper as ever the senior partner of Scrooge and Marley was, in his most rasping days." But the School Board was unable to get away completely with its short-sighted policy, for the Education Department forced it to provide new schools for 1300

children before the next Board election, and the reduction in rates thus achieved proved to be only temporary. On Middlesbrough School Board it was an individual member, William Bulmer,⁺ who revealed a passion for reducing the rate expenditure, and repeatedly pressed for considerable economies, some too wild to be taken seriously by the other members, and some partly adopted by the Board, which at that time contained a Denominationalist majority. At his instigation, a special finance committee was set up in 1887 to consider such economies as could be made in the Board's expenditure, consistent with its educational duties. The effects of this are apparent in one or two later actions of the Board: for example, a few months later, it stopped the former practice of sharing amongst the Board teachers the 6d. a head of pupils in average attendance, given to schools earning Excellent or Good Merit grants.²⁹

If no clear difference in the long term level of rate expenditure can be distinguished between the School Boards under the control of the Unsectarians and those under the Denominationalists, so also is it difficult to generalize over any differences in this respect between the town and the country School Boards. A crude comparison of their expenditures in terms of a 1d. rate is valueless, as each Board was to a large extent unique with regard to the exact nature of the educational needs and problems in its particular district. The rate expenditure of a School Board was to a considerable degree determined by factors outside its control: the proportion of children requiring extra public elementary school places, the provision of elementary and non-elementary education by voluntary bodies, the rateable value of the district, etc. Nevertheless, an examination of the Tees-side School Boards' minute books does suggest that, while all the Boards professed to stand for economy and efficiency, it was the Boards of the smaller districts - in particular Wolviston, and to a lesser extent, Whitton - which tried to restrict their expenditure more strictly than the larger Boards. The

⁺ see above, pp. 61-2 for more details.

school fees of Wolviston School Board were the highest of the area and were amongst the most strictly enforced; it paid the lowest salaries to its teachers that it could (in 1881, it engaged a monitor for no salary at all); it kept down its administrative expenses by getting its school-master and Chairman to do much of the work, and it even attempted to pay its Warden on a "payment by results" basis. Whitton School Board also appeared ruthless in its quest for economy on many occasions: rejecting applications for salary increases from its teachers and officials probably on more occasions in proportion to its staff than any of the other School Boards; making cuts in the teaching staff when the opportunity arose; and continuing to charge for books after the abolition of its school fees after the 1891 fee grant.³⁰

4. Loans

Under section 57 of the 1870 Elementary Education Act, a School Board could borrow money on the security of the school fund or local rate in order to provide school accommodation. All the School Boards in the area under study did borrow sums of money to erect or adapt school buildings, except those of Cowpen Bewley and Middleton St. George, which had no need to build any new schools. By 1901, the debt incurred by some Boards in this way had amounted to a considerable sum, especially those in whose districts the population had greatly increased:

<u>School Board</u>	<u>Debt in 1901</u> £	<u>Debt per head of population</u>		
		£	s.	d.
Middlesbrough	106,910	1	1	2
Stockton	73,933	1	8	9
Darlington	25,661		11	6
Norton	8,325	1	16	9
Middleton-in-Teesdale	2,443	1	4	7
Whitton	1,299	1	2	-
Wolviston	786	1	1	7
Middleton St. George	-	-	-	-

Most of these loans were of considerable amounts, for the erection or major alterations of buildings. But some of the more economically-minded School Boards did on occasions try to use their power of borrowing to keep the rates as low in the short run as was possible. For example, Middleton-in-Teesdale School Board on one

occasion asked the Education Department whether it could pay for two clocks and a harmonium out of the loan account, but the Education Department refused to sanction this. Similarly, after it had won control of Darlington School Board, the Denominationalist party put a series of small items to the capital account, such as sums of £126 for a school's heating apparatus, £443 to enlarge a school playground, and £285 for purchasing the rights of St. Paul's Church over Harrowgate Hill schools. The Unsectarian party criticised this policy, saying that as nearly all the Board schools had been handed over as free gifts, and as there was no interest or redemption to pay on them, it was inexpedient to borrow small sums for alterations etc., which should be taken out of the revenue account. But the Denominationalists took no notice of these criticisms, and continued to borrow over many years for small amounts of expenditure whenever they could.³¹

The School Boards normally borrowed from the Public Works Loan Commissioners, which was often considerably cheaper than raising the money from other sources: in 1870, the Mayor of Stockton told a town council meeting that if a School Board was to borrow from the Public Works Loan Board at $3\frac{1}{2}\%$ over 50 years, the annual payments of interest and redemption would amount to only $4\frac{1}{2}\%$, which was well below what could be achieved by loans from other sources. The great majority of the School Board loans were in fact raised in this way, though not all. The Boards were not always certain of being able to obtain a loan from the Public Works Loan Board: the Chairman of Darlington School Board said in 1879 that even if the Education Department recommended a loan for a school, it did not absolutely follow that it would be granted; it depended very much on whether Sir John Lubbock was present one day, or someone else another: no control was placed over the Commissioners to see that they were absolutely reliant.³²

The main reason for raising loans elsewhere, however, was that more favourable terms could sometimes be thereby obtained. The market rate of interest fluctuated considerably during this period (the Bank of England Rate varied between 1870 and 1904 from 2% to 9%), whereas

the interest rate of the Public Works Loans Board changed very little. For most of the years in this period, the latter's rate of interest was $3\frac{1}{2}\%$ for loans over 50 years, or slightly more for shorter periods, but for a short time in the late 1870's, it did rise to $4\frac{1}{2}\%$. Up to 1890, nearly every loan was obtained from the Public Works Loan Board, although there were some grumblings by the School Boards about the rate of interest which in some years seemed too high: in 1884, for example, Middlesbrough School Board joined some other Boards in a petition to the Education Department asking for the rate of interest to be reduced by the Public Works Loans Board. In the hope that this would be soon done, Middlesbrough School Board secured a temporary loan from the National Provincial Bank, but a few months later, converted it into a permanent one from the Public Works Loans Board at $3\frac{1}{2}\%$.³³

After 1890, some of the School Boards began to look round for better terms. Middleton-in-Teesdale School Board in 1890 instructed its Clerk to write to two private firms asking on what terms they would lend money for the new school, but eventually, the Board decided to borrow from the Public Works Loan Board. In 1895, Darlington School Board advertised for a loan of £6,490 for land and buildings in Corporation Road rather than borrow from the Public Works Loan Board, and it managed to get a loan from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners at $3\frac{1}{8}\%$, thereby saving $\frac{3}{8}\%$, and in 1896 and 1897, it borrowed another £1,900 from them on the same terms. Stockton School Board also borrowed at better terms than the Public Works Loans Board could offer in the 1890's, from the Clergy Mutual Assurance Society, the Atlas Assurance Company, and the Corporations of Stockton, Bolton and Huddersfield, while Middlesbrough School Board borrowed from the Police Superannuation Fund, and in 1895, joined in another appeal to get the interest rate of the Public Works Loans Board reduced.³⁴

In 1898, Stockton School Board, which could then obtain more favourable terms from Stockton Corporation, tried to convert its existing loans from the Public Works Loans Board into new loans from other sources at a lower rate of interest. It obtained a loan from

Stockton Corporation in anticipation of repaying the balance owed to the Public Works Loans Board, whereby it expected to save £50 a year in interest and redemption payments. But having done this, it discovered that the regulations of the Public Works Loans Board prevented such repayments unless a premium of 10% of the balance was paid. This would have been too expensive, but the School Board was able to repay a loan from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners (at a premium of 2 years' interest) with the money, and thereby achieved a net saving of £916 7s. 6d. over the next 45 years.³⁵

The appeals from the School Boards for a reduction in the Public Works Loans Board's rate of interest were not unsuccessful, for in 1897 the Board reduced its rate from $3\frac{1}{2}\%$ to $2\frac{3}{4}\%$ for all future loans. Although the rate within a few years once more rose to $3\frac{1}{4}\%$, for most of the time it was cheaper to borrow from the Board than from alternative sources (by 1902, for example, Stockton Corporation were charging $3\frac{5}{8}\%$), and the School Boards once more turned to the Public Works Loans Board for loans as a matter of course, for the remaining years of their existence.³⁶

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CHAPTER X SCHOOL BOARDS AND OTHER AUTHORITIES

1. The State and School Boards

Although, under the Elementary Education Act 1870, the School Boards had been given considerable discretionary powers in certain respects - whether or not to enforce compulsory attendance (until 1880), pay fees to Voluntary schools (to 1876), or to have religion taught in their own schools, and in the estimation of additional educational requirements of their districts - for the most part, they were quite rigidly controlled by the state: they were allowed only to spend rate money on items specifically authorised by Acts of Parliament, which also laid down certain duties on the Boards and gave the Education Department great powers over their activities; their schools were subject to regular inspection by the Inspectors of the Department, who had considerable power in their authority to refuse grants to schools on certain grounds; and the type of education provided in their schools was largely determined by the requirements of the annual Codes of the Education Department. Professor Eaglesham has stressed the remarkable power contained in the Education Department's authority to draw up and impose the Code on schools, as a condition of financial aid; he calls it "an all-powerful and extremely flexible instrument", for the Education Department could:

"insert conditions governing sites, buildings, qualifications of teachers and the content of the curriculum; and indeed the whole running of the school. Unless the board conformed, the Department could refuse to pay any grant or part of the grant; or - a most effective weapon - warn that the grant would be withheld another year. Unless the School Board came to heel, it lost not only the grant, but its very power to raise a rate; for by not conforming to the Code, the school ceased to be a 'public elementary school'."

This power could be used for good or for ill. In general, the Codes of the late nineteenth century were quite enlightened, once they had been freed from the restrictive Payment by Results policy of Lowe's Revised Code. But this did not completely remove the resentment the School Boards sometimes felt towards such central restrictions, especially when the Codes proved in fact to have been more progressive

in spirit than the schools or the Board members: the Chairman of Darlington School Board on one occasion criticised the system of Codes: "which are not only guides to us but are also the very fetters in which we are bound". He complained that the Codes forced the schools to change at the slightest whim of the authorities and showed no definite plan in the minds of their authors except for a lust for experiment. Because of this, the School Boards on several occasions petitioned for changes in the Codes.^{+ 2}

In addition to the Education Department's powers of controlling education through its Codes, its permission was necessary for many of the Boards' actions. Under the Elementary Education Act of 1870, the bye-laws of the School Boards had to be approved by the Education Department before they could be implemented, and the Education Department had also to approve of any loans raised to build or enlarge schools, before a Board could borrow from the Public Works Loans Commissioners or from another source. In a letter of February, 1872, signed by Cumin, the Education Department told Middlesbrough School Board that before recommending a loan "My Lords" had to be satisfied on the size and cost of the site for each school, and the plans, specifications and cost of the proposed buildings. It asked for such plans to be sent to them along with a map of the borough with the school sites marked on it. (The letter ended with a request that the School Board, in all future correspondence with the Department, write on one side of foolscap paper, and upon consecutive pages, beginning with page one!) On several occasions, the Department insisted on alterations being made in the plans or the estimates, before it gave approval. When Stockton School Board exceeded its original estimate by £1300 for building Tilery Road and Bowesfield Lane schools, the Education Department refused to sanction a further loan for this amount, until a deputation from the Board had visited Whitehall and explained the reasons for the excess to its satisfaction.³

⁺ see below, pp 331-2

The Education Department also had a duty to see that the School Boards provided sufficient school accommodation for all the children in their districts. On numerous occasions, it urged upon the Boards to increase their accommodation, this being particularly necessary in the fast growing towns of Middlesbrough and Stockton. The Education Department also acted as adviser to the Boards on various administrative or educational matters, and were frequently consulted by the School Boards in the early years when they were not very sure of their legal powers - although the Boards did not always follow its advice: Norton School Board, for example, refused to re-phrase their bye-laws along lines suggested by the Department in 1873. Sometimes the Department acted as a court of appeal for disputing factions within a School Board. On one occasion, the Clerk to Middleton-in-Teesdale School Board was instructed to write to the Education Department to ask whether, when the vice-chairman of a Board had taken the chair at a meeting because of the absence of the chairman, it was his duty to vacate it if the chairman later entered. Both parties of Middleton St. George School Board likewise appealed to the Education Department for support in 1885, in the bitter struggle over whether or not the Board could take over the National School or build a Board school to rival it. In this case, the Education Department took great pains to try to reach a peaceful settlement, but when that had proved to be impossible, it finally backed the School Board party.⁺ In general, however, relationships between the Education Department and the School Boards proved to be as harmonious as could have been expected, and there was no major dispute between them in the area. It was in such a spirit of harmony that Middlesbrough School Board chose Sir George Kekewich, Secretary to the Department, to preside at the ceremonial opening of new Marton Road schools in 1898.⁴

The eyes and ears (and sometimes the mouth) of the Education Department were the H.M.I's. The local Inspectors continually gave advice to the School Boards, and pressed them to make improvements in

⁺ see above, pp. 76-80

the schools. Sometimes it took much perseverance on the part of the Inspector before anything was achieved: the H.M.I. had to ask Darlington School Board several times in the 1890's to increase the playground space of their Kendrew Street Schools, and to move their lavatories to an appropriate distance from the main building, before the School Board actually carried out these improvements. The ultimate weapon in the hands of the Inspectors with which they could force improvements upon an unwilling board in the case of a particularly bad school, was the threat to withhold the government grant. This was done on more than one occasion on Tees-side: for example, in 1883 the H.M.I. threatened to withhold the grant for Wolviston Board school if the Board did not carry out the improvements in the school's equipment which he had suggested the previous year. Likewise, the H.M.I. refused to allow a grant for Whitton Board's Infants school in 1894; despite the fact that the teaching there was efficient, until the lavatories had been put in order: they had no doors or partitions and were undrained. Immediately upon hearing this, the Board ordered that they be put right, and was given the grant. Yet despite their role of spurring on recalcitrant Boards, the relationship between the Inspectors and the Boards and schools in the area was generally good. When Mr. Swettenham retired from his post as H.M.I. for Tees-side, the Boards expressed much gratitude for his past services. The Inspectors sometimes also acted as peacemakers between warring factions - as in the case of the dispute over the proposal to erect a Board school at Middleton St. George - and they were frequently asked for advice by the Boards on various educational problems. Yet it was inevitable that occasionally this friendly co-operation would be broken by some tactless action: in 1900, for example, Middleton St. George School Board showed great indignation over the fact that the Inspector had written some comments in its school log book, and wrote to him demanding an explanation.⁵

The reports of the H.M.I's who covered the Tees-side area during the School Board period, which were partially published in the annual Reports of the Committee of Council on Education, reveal their authors

to have been well-meaning and quite enlightened, and their influence must have been for the good. But they were also individuals whose opinions and standards did vary. It was because of this that Middlesbrough School Board in 1876 asked the Education Department to adjust the districts of the Inspectors so that all of Middlesbrough School Board area was under the same Inspector:

"the reason for this is that interpretations of the requirements of the Code vary so greatly that teachers feel that no comparison from reports or grants can be instituted between schools examined by different Inspectors."

This request was granted.⁶

The chief watchdog of the state in seeing that the School Boards did not overstep their powers was the Poor Law District Auditor, whose duty it was to examine all the Board accounts and make sure that no expenditure of the rate money was 'ultra vires'. If the audit did reveal rate money spent on something which had not been specifically authorised by Act of Parliament, the District Auditor had to surcharge the amount with the result that the Board members who had signed the cheque were obliged to refund the money. Appeal from a surcharge could be made either to the Local Government Board (which usually acted on the advice of the Education Department) or through a Court of Law (as in the Cockerton Case).

None of the School Boards of the area did in fact appeal to a Court of law, probably not only because of the expense of conducting a case, but also because they were willing to accept that the District Auditor's interpretation of the law would probably be right, and because there was a good chance that even if the Local Government Board did uphold the District Auditor's decision, it would remit the surcharge. In one case, however, a local School Board was directly affected by a Court appeal, although the case had been instigated by another Board. Due to the lateness with which Middlesbrough Town Council obeyed a precept from the School Board, the latter was forced to pay £105 1s. 4d. interest on a bank overdraft in 1878. The Auditor disallowed this on the grounds that it had no legal authorisation for paying the interest, and surcharged the amount. Upon appeal, the Local Government Board upheld the Auditor's decision, but remitted the surcharge. But in the following year, London

School Board took a similar case to the High Court of Justice (R. v Reed), which ruled that the District Auditor was not justified in disallowing interest on such temporary loans for current revenue expenditure, and this over-ruled the Local Government Board's decision. On hearing about this judgment from their Clerk, Middlesbrough School Board passed a resolution authorising overdrafts in future of up to £6,000. But the following year (1880), the Court of Appeal reversed the ruling of the High Court, and consequently, in the audits of Middlesbrough School Board's accounts of 1880 and 1881, the District Auditor again surcharged the School Board for interest on overdrafts; and again, in each case, appeal to the Local Government Board resulted in remission of the amounts.⁷

On nearly every occasion that a surcharge was made on a local School Board, the latter made an appeal to the Local Government Board. Occasionally, the District Auditor's decision was reversed as in the case of Darlington School Board when it was surcharged £1 for maintenance of a child in an Industrial school (although the Local Government Board at the same time confirmed and remitted a surcharge of £1 7s. 6d. which had been the expenses that the School Board had incurred in taking a boy to an Industrial School in Sheffield).⁸ In nearly every case that the Local Government confirmed a surcharge on a local Board, it did in fact remit the account.

Most of the School Boards of Tees-side were surcharged on occasions, but in no cases were the surcharges numerous, or the amounts very large. But the School Boards did vary in this respect, some, such as Wolviston and Middleton-in-Teesdale having no surcharges made on them at all. The large town Boards, although they had to make far more payments both in number and variety of items of expenditure, did not have any more surcharges than the average smaller Boards - this was probably due to the fact that their Clerks were usually also the Town Clerks and thus experts in what was legal in this respect. The Board with the most surcharges in the area was that of Middleton St. George, despite the fact that it was one of the shortest-lived Boards of Tees-side. An examination of their surcharges will serve to illustrate the main types

of surcharge which most of the other Boards also incurred. In 1886, Middleton St. George School Board was surcharged £2 2s. 0d. out of its £24 1s. 4d. election expenses on the grounds that it had paid its returning Officer (the Clerk to Darlington Poor Law Union) twice for the same job at the election: £2 2s. 0d. as Presiding Officer, in addition to £10 10s. 0d. as Returning Officer. The Chairman of the School Board, who had signed the cheque, had to pay back this amount, appeal to the Local Government Board apparently being unsuccessful. It is not recorded whether or not the Clerk to the Union reimbursed him. The following year, two small surcharges were made (7/- and 10/-) against which no appeal was made, and in 1888, the Board members who had signed the cheques were surcharged a total of £25 3s. 4d. which represented the payments made to the Board's solicitors in respect of their expenses over the Elementary Education Provisional Order Confirmation (Middleton St. George) Bill of 1887 which had authorised the compulsory purchase of land on which it had been proposed to erect a Board school. The District Auditor listed eleven reasons in support of the surcharge, arguing that it was the duty of the Education Department and not the School Board to secure the confirmation by Act of Parliament of Provisional Orders for compulsory purchase, and that the Education Department had taken the necessary steps to do so. The members appealed to the Local Government Board which reversed £22 17s. 6d. of the surcharge and remitted the remainder. Finally, in 1900 and 1901, the Board was surcharged for £4 and £6 which represented the annual contributions to the Teachers' Superannuation Fund which the Board had paid for two of its teachers, on the grounds that the teachers themselves, and not the Board, should have paid them. Appeal to the Local Government Board brought remission of both amounts. The financial risk involved in authorising expenditure of dubious legality was felt by the members of Middleton St. George School Board, and in 1896, the majority of the School Board refused to confirm the minutes of a previous meeting until certain members undertook to repay to the Board certain items of expenditure if the Auditor surcharged them. ⁹

The District Auditor also made sure that the financial records of the School Boards were kept in good order. Every item of expenditure had to be properly authorised in the Minutes before the expenditure was legal: in 1891, the Auditor surcharged Whitton School Board £1 8s. Od. Banker's commission on the grounds that the Minutes contained no authorisation of the amount. He gave instructions to the same Board to improve the administration of its finances:

1. No payments in future were to be made by individuals of the Board;
2. The Clerk, and not the schoolmaster, was to make out receipts for payments;
3. All future payments ordered by the Board had to be made out by written orders on the Treasurer or the bank;
4. The Board had to decide whether or not the salary of the Clerk was to include his rail fares and write a minute to that effect, or in future they would not be allowed;
5. Any payment of bank commission had to be authorised in the Minutes;
6. The school warden had to be a properly appointed person, at a salary stated in the Minutes;⁺
7. The Clerk had to request duplicate invoices for all goods ordered for the schools, one to be sent to him and one with the goods, so that receipt of them could be properly checked.

But despite such instructions, the finances of Whitton School Board continued to be rather disorganised: many corrected entries were made in the cash books, and in 1897, the District Auditor was again obliged to surcharge the Board £5 1s. 8d. which represented overpayment of salaries to two pupil-teachers: one being paid a salary increase too early, and the other being promoted from monitor to pupil-teacher and paid accordingly, but with no note of this appearing in the Minutes. The Clerk declared that as his department had been responsible for these errors, he would pay this himself, but, although the Board thanked him for this generous offer, it was later arranged that the teachers themselves would pay by deductions from their future salaries. This, however, proved unnecessary, for upon appeal, the Local Government remitted the amount. A few months later, it was discovered that a third

⁺ see above, p. 246

pupil-teacher had been overpaid, but that this was partially offset by the fact that while a monitor he had been underpaid (8/- a month instead of 2/- a week). It was arranged to deduct the net amount of £1 6s. Od. from his salary.¹⁰

The greatest legal confusion in the School Board finances was probably in connection with the expenditure of rate money on non-elementary education, which the Cockerton Case made well known throughout the nation. This case arose when the District Auditor surcharged London School Board's expenditure on Science and Art schools and classes in 1899. As the Board wanted a final legal decision as to what was legal, it decided to appeal against this to a Court of Law and not to the Local Government Board. The judgment, confirmed by the Court of Appeal in 1901, laid down that:

- (a) it was not legal to pay for Science and Art classes out of rates, and
- (b) "elementary education" for which rate expenditure was legal, was only education for children, and so rate expenditure on evening classes for adults was illegal."

The School Board chiefly affected in the area under study was that of Stockton, the only one to maintain an Organised Science School. Its Organised Science school found it impossible completely to balance its expenditure by its income from grants and fees in most years, leaving a deficit to be covered by the rates: £320 4s. 9d. in 1896, £35 14s. 4d. in 1896-7, £8 12s. Od. in 1898-9, and £9 6s. 7d. in 1899-1900.¹² In 1898, the Board was obviously worried about the legality of financing secondary education from its rate money, for it circularised a large number of School Boards throughout the country, questioning them as to how they financed, and kept the accounts of their Organised Science schools. The replies showed that several School Boards did spend rate money on them, were conscious that this was probably illegal, but were prepared to disregard the law as they were confident that the Local Government Board would continue to reverse or remit any surcharges, as had been its custom over the past few years.¹³ In 1900, the District Auditor said that the Board should include the Science school accounts

in the School Board accounts since the school was under the management of a committee appointed by the School Board, but the Board decided not to change its system of accounts until it had heard the result of the appeal of the London School Board in the Cockerton Case. In March, 1901, the Board of Education wrote to Stockton School Board declaring that if the Cockerton judgment was upheld by the Court of Appeal, the Board of Education would have to cease paying grants to a School of Science or to Science and Art classes which were illegally being maintained partly through the rates, but also reminding the Board that it could convert its School of Science into a Higher Elementary school by conforming to the Minute of 6th April, 1900.⁺ The District Auditor also warned Middlesbrough School Board in July 1901 that certain expenditure incurred at the Hugh Bell and Evening Continuation Schools was probably illegal, but that he had allowed it because of the legislation then being prepared to make such expenditure legal (the Cockerton Act 1901). This confusion, however, was cleared up by the Acts of 1901 and 1902, which authorised expenditure of rate money on non-elementary education for a limited period of time, on condition that the Boards obtained the permission of their County Council or County Borough Council. Under the 1901 Act (the Cockerton Act), Durham County Council approved rate expenditure on the education of students over 15 years and on the Organised Science School by Darlington School Board (£250) and Stockton School Board (£400), and this was repeated the following year. The 1902 Education Act finally solved the problem by simply abolishing the School Boards.⁴

The School Boards did not always passively accept the dictates of the Education Department, or even of Parliament. On many occasions they all sent petitions to the Department or the Government, criticising certain provisions in the Codes or proposed legislation, or asking for some reforms to be carried out. Middlesbrough School Board twice sent

⁺ for details of this Minute, which severely restricted the work of the Higher Grade Schools, see Eaglesham "From School Board to Local Authority", p.50.

the Education Department petitions criticising the Code requirements on knitting and needlework, on the suggestion of its Ladies Committee, and in 1889 it informed the Education Department that it regretted that the recommendations of the recent Royal Commission Report had not been included in the Code, and requested that the latter be accordingly revised. The School Board also disliked the yearly changes in the Code, and in 1885 petitioned the Education Department to make revisions in the Codes triennially. Darlington School Board similarly sent the Department petitions on a variety of subjects, for example to re-enact section 25 of the 1870 Act, to introduce the teaching of the decimal system of coinage, to get a Royal Commission established to simplify spelling, to encourage more cookery classes throughout the country, to codify the Elementary Education Acts and clear up the doubtful state of the law between the Factory and Education Acts, etc. Certain subjects proved to be favourite ones about which several School Boards petitioned the Department or Government: for example, the sale of intoxicating liquor on Sundays, the reduction of the Returning Officers' charges at School Board elections, and the compulsory inspection of private schools. Impending legislation often stimulated petitions by the School Boards in support of, or against, the provisions of the Bill being considered by Parliament. Darlington Board successfully asked the Government to give the 1891 fee grant for scholars between 3 years and 15 years, instead of only between 5 and 14 years as originally planned. When Gorst's Bill of 1896 was being debated in Parliament, Middlesbrough School Board sent the Education Department and local M.Ps copies of six resolutions it had passed on the Bill, demanding that the School Boards should continue to exist and to be free from interference from the County and Town Councils, that the minimum standard of education should be fixed by the Education Department and not by County or local authorities, and that if any elementary schools were to be exempted from rates, all should be. When the 1901 Cockerton Act was being passed, Stockton School Board petitioned the Government that School Boards should not be subordinated to other local authorities in matters of higher education, and that the Bill be

amended so as to allow the Boards to maintain from rates any school or class which was not then legally supported from the rates, subject only to the sanction of the Board of Education. The 1902 Education Act, the Minute of 6th April 1900, and the various changes of the Codes similarly provoked critical petitions from the local School Boards.¹⁵

The School Boards also regularly sent copies of resolutions to various public figures, expressing their congratulations or condolences. Nearly every School Board in the area supported an address to the Queen in 1887 congratulating her on the progress of education during the 50 years of her reign, while most of them also sent letters of condolence on the deaths of Gladstone, Queen Victoria and lesser royal persons. Some of them even sent the American Ambassador letters on the death of President McKinley in 1901.¹⁶

2. School Boards and the Rating Authorities

Under the Elementary Education Act of 1870, the School Boards could raise as much rate money as they needed by issuing a precept on their Town Council or Poor Law authority, which was then legally obliged to pay the money. This system did not prove completely satisfactory, and caused some friction between the Boards and the rating authorities. The latter often resented their role of being merely paymasters without possessing the right of having their views on the size of the precept even considered by the School Board. The Chairman of Darlington School Board on one occasion commented on this problem. He said that the relative position of the two bodies was awkward and likely to cause friction: when the precept came before the Town Council, certain members were bound to criticise it, yet the School Board was not officially represented on the Council and thus could not reply to such criticisms. To try to ease such friction, some of the School Boards, such as Darlington, supplied an estimate of their probable financial requirements at the beginning of the Council's financial year. The Boards did this out of consideration for the Town Council, and were not obliged to do this, and therefore were irritated when criticisms were made by the Council over any difference which might arise between the estimate and the actual precept, due to any changes in the Code or some other reason.¹⁷

This problem flared up in Middlesbrough in 1875. The Town Council, after considering the School Board's estimate for the coming year, had passed a resolution protesting about the proposed increase in the expenditure on education, and had actually reduced the School Board's estimate from £5000 to £3000. The Board replied by sending to the Council a copy of a resolution it had passed, which stated that:

"while the Board will always be ready to accept and consider any recommendation of the Council or any other constituted authority, or indeed of any ratepayer of their district, they must remind the Council that they are a corporate body elected by the ratepayers for the purposes clearly defined by Statute and responsible to those who elect them, and that while they cannot admit the right of any body or person to dictate to them the course which in administering the law they should follow, their actions will always be guided by a desire to economise, consistent with the enforcement of education generally."

The Superintendent also drew up a report to the Corporation on the work and expenditure of the School Board, justifying its expenditure, and showing that it was not great compared with that of other towns. Again, in 1894, Middlesbrough Town Council asked the School Board for further information as to the cause of an increase in the rate expenditure on education. The Board again replied that it was not bound to make estimates, merely to issue a precept which had to be paid, but that it had made a practice of giving warning through its estimates of probable expenditure in advance for the convenience of the Town Council. (It also explained the increase, which had been due to the ever increasing population and which had required more schools to be built).¹⁸

In general, the relationship between the School Boards and the rating authorities in the area was quite good, better than perhaps could have been expected. This was achieved partly because, although not officially represented on the rating authority, it did have certain connections: the School Boards in the towns appointed the Town Clerks as their Clerks for most of the period, and several Board members were also town councillors.⁺ But on occasions, the rating authorities did show their

⁺ see above, Chapter IV, section 1.

resentment by a reluctance to honour the precepts promptly. Middlesbrough School Board received grants from the rates late in 1877 and 1879, which forced them to rely on overdrafts from the bank. This also happened in Stockton in 1893 and 1896. In the former year, the precept had been issued in September for payment in October, but by December 9th it still had not been paid, and the School Board was forced to rely on the willingness of its bank to finance overdrafts. Rev. G. S. Ordish, one of the members of the Board, said that this placed the School Board in a dilemma: it either had to borrow money and so add to the rates, or issue a mandamus on the Corporation, threatening imprisonment if it did not pay. In 1896, Stockton Council explained why it had not sent its rate grant as promptly as the Board had demanded: the School Board asked for three-quarters of its total rate expenditure by September every year, whereas the town council raised its rates by two equal half yearly instalments, and so found it very difficult to find sufficient money to hand over to the Board for the first few months' precepts of the financial year. Middleton St. George School Board also at times had difficulty in securing prompt payment of its precept on the Poor Law Guardians, but the Board which faced the greatest difficulty in the area in this respect, was Whitton School Board. In 1875, 1879, 1880, 1883 and 1884 the Overseers of Stillington parish failed to send the rate money for several months after the date for which it had been demanded and after the School Board had repeatedly threatened to take legal action against them; for example, a precept was issued for payment on 17th September, 1874, yet by June, 1875, the Clerk was still asking for the part of it which had not been paid.¹⁹

3. County Council and Technical Education

The Technical Instruction Act of 1889 authorised the County Councils, County Borough Councils and Urban Sanitary Authorities to levy a 1d. rate to help supply technical instruction ("the principles of science and art applicable to industry") under the supervision of the Science and Art Department.²⁰ They could do this in various ways: by setting up their own schools, by making grants to existing schools or

classes for equipment etc., or by providing scholarships and exhibitions. The following year, the Local Taxation (Customs and Excise) Act gave "whisky money" to the County and County Borough Councils with which they could also aid technical instruction. This was a blow to the School Boards, as it established a rival set of authorities interested in education and with the power to spend rate money on it. In many districts, it led to a struggle for control of non-elementary education between the two bodies.

The School Boards on North Tees-side came within Durham County Council administrative area. In 1891, the County Council proposed to give aid to districts within the County which had a need for financial assistance for technical education and had showed their readiness to raise local funds for this themselves. In February 1892, it set up a separate committee for the promotion of Technical and Manual Education, which it named an "Education Committee". The membership of this committee had strong Darlington links, as its Chairman was Sir David Dale, and one of its members was A. J. Pease. Nearly a hundred local committees were set up throughout County Durham to provide technical education, which claimed grants from the County Council as well as the Science and Art Department. Among these, were local committees in Darlington, Stockton, Middleton-in-Teesdale, and Norton (for a few months in 1897). No local committees were set up in Wolviston, Whitton or Middleton St. George. Durham County Council Education Committee also gave grants for equipment to some of the secondary schools of the County to whose governing bodies it sent its representatives (which was the price the schools paid for receiving financial aid from the local authorities); for example, Councillors R. Roger and G. S. Ordish and Alderman J. Samuel (all local men, and one a member of the School Board) were appointed to the managing body of Stockton Higher Grade School. However, the Education Committee had few dealings with the School Boards, except in the case of Stockton, with respect to its Higher Grade School.²¹

In 1896, after the publication of the Bryce Commission Report, Sir John Gorst tried unsuccessfully to get a Bill through Parliament to make County Councils and County Borough Councils the local education authorities in place of the School Boards. Having failed to accomplish this by Act of Parliament, the Government tried to achieve part of this by administrative action: they inserted into the Science and Art Regulations of 1897 a Clause VII which allowed the local secondary education authorities (the County and County Borough Councils) to notify their intention to take over all Science and Art instruction within their areas, after which all new schools and classes were to get grants only if they acted in unison with them. Both Durham County Council and Middlesbrough County Borough Council were recognised as organisations responsible for Science and Art instruction within their areas under Clause VII, although Durham County Council did pass a resolution which it sent to the Education Department and the local M.Ps criticising Clause VII: it declared that the establishment of official secondary education authorities could lead to a conflict between Town Councils and School Boards, and that such a course was "incompatible with any satisfactory organisation of secondary education and is opposed to the views repeatedly expressed by both the Lord President and Vice-President of the Council on Education, and that a step of this kind should not have been taken without procuring statutory authority." Of all the local committees conducting classes within the area under Durham County Council, only one refused to work with the County Council Education Committee under Clause VII: Stockton Technical Instruction Committee. However, in 1899 West Hartlepool Technical Instruction Committee threatened to withdraw from the arrangements because of the delay with which Durham County Council Education Committee handed over the grants to it. After a visit from the Secretary of the Education Committee it withdrew the proposal it had made to the Science and Art Department to withdraw, but renewed it the following year because the promises made to it by the Education Committee to speed up payment of grants had not been carried out. However, after the Education Committee had written to the Board of Education defending its system of paying

grants, the Board told West Hartlepool that it did not see any reason to sever its connection with the Education Committee under Clause VII.²²

The School Boards had quite good relationships with the local technical instruction committees. Quite early, in May 1891, Stockton Town Council agreed to adopt the 1889 Technical Instruction Act and spend up to 1d. rate on technical education. It appointed a Joint Technical Instruction Committee composed of 6 members from the School Board and 7 members from the Town Council. The School Board was recognised by Durham County Council and the Science and Art Department as the authority for day Science and Art classes in the Higher Grade School, and the Joint Technical Instruction Committee for evening Science and Art classes, for grants from the County Council under the 1890 Act. These arrangements ensured close co-operation between the Corporation and the School Board. Likewise there was no attempt at rivalry in Darlington, where the Town Council adopted the Technical Instruction Act in 1890. The School Board nominated two of the members of the Town's Technical Instruction Committee (three, after 1894), and said in its Annual Report of 1891, that, as the Town Council had adopted the Act, it did not propose to make any provision for technical instruction. The Board co-operated with the Committee by placing schools at its disposal at nominal charges, merely to cover the cost of heating, etc., while the Committee asked the Board to act as the Committee appointed by the Council to carry on Evening Continuation Schools, to which the Board agreed. The School Board and Technical Instruction Committee conferred over all programmes for technical classes, and in particular on the running of the Technical College; the Director of this College, appointed by the Technical Instruction Committee, was also appointed by the School Board as Headmaster of the evening school there. The Town Council also, at the request of the School Board, appointed two representatives from its members to the managing committee of the Free Library. Likewise, there was also much co-operation in the smaller School Board districts where local committees had been established. Middleton-in-Teesdale School Board, for example, willingly allowed the technical instruction committee to make full use of its classrooms, and was permitted to nominate some of the local committee's members.²³

As was to be expected, Middlesbrough, whose Board members were often also town councillors, followed a similar pattern of harmony and co-operation. Middlesbrough Town Council adopted the Acts of 1889 and 1890, but allowed the Finance Committee to deal with applications for aid until November 1900, when it set up a Technical Instruction Committee of twelve members, of which three were at the time members of the School Board, and three others (Bell, Wilson and Ellerton) had some years before, been chairmen or vice-chairmen of the School Board. The School Board passed a resolution stating that it approved of the Committee and would work in co-operation with it, and there is no record of any dispute between the two bodies. This was helped not merely by the fact that many present and past members of the School Board sat on the Committee, but also because the School Board (apart from a request which was granted for £10 a year for their scholarship fund) never asked for financial aid under the Technical Instruction Act. It easily got permission under the Cockerton Act of 1901 to carry on its evening classes if necessary out of the rates.²⁴

But if the relationship between the School Boards and local committees was one of co-operation, that of the County Council with the School Boards and local committees proved less harmonious, in spite of the fact that the County Council recognised the value of the School Boards in the sphere of elementary education (Durham County Council Education Committee opposed Gorst's Bill of 1896 in a resolution, on the grounds that "In as much as School Boards have proved of much service in many districts and especially in towns, it would recommend the Council to protest against all the proposals in the Bill which may tend in any way to impair their continued educational usefulness". It also supported a resolution in 1902 that County Councils under the new Act should be responsible only for secondary, and not elementary, education.)²⁵ The County Council Education Committee on occasions refused applications for aid; in 1892, for instance, it refused to assist Darlington School Board's Cookery School, and two years later, informed the School Board that it did not intend to pay a grant for students taking Arithmetic,

classifying this as an elementary, and not a technical, subject. There was a general resentment at the severity of the regulations which the Education Committee insisted upon before making any grant. This is illustrated by strong criticisms expressed at a meeting of the Durham and Cleveland District Union of Teachers, which passed a resolution, which was sent to the County Council, drawing its attention to the number of evening classes that failed to come under the requirements of new regulations issued by the Education Committee, and stating that the stringency of the regulations was restricting interest in commercial education in the area. One speaker declared that the Education Department's ruling had for many years worked well, and so he failed to see any justification for the County Council's regulations which were hampering the evening schools. J. T. Hall, Chairman of Darlington School Board, seconding the motion, said that Darlington School Board had tried in the first session to put itself under the control of the Education Committee, but that it had soon found out that it had made a great mistake. The difficulties it had found had been principally with respect to red tape: for instance, it had been encouraged to begin a course of dressmaking and had thought that it would receive a grant from the County Council, but in the end, after incurring all the expenses, it had received no grant because its teacher had used a chart! Again, the Board had taught Arithmetic, but because it had not advertised it as commercial, it had been refused a grant. Alderman Burn of Stockton claimed at the meeting that 17 of the classes in Stockton were affected by the new regulations to the extent that their grant would be reduced from £700 to £300. He declared that the saying "a bundle of red tape and a long roll of sealing wax" was appropriate to the Durham County Council Education Committee. Yet in spite of this outburst, the Education Committee replied that it could not alter these regulations for that year. ^{2b}

The 1901 Cockerton Act, and the Board of Education Minute of the same year concerning evening schools tightened the control of the County Council over the School Boards, the former by insisting that the

County Council's permission be obtained for illegal expenditure of rate money on non-elementary education, and the latter by discouraging any evening schools which were carried on by a School Board independently of the County Council, by imposing penalising restrictions on them if they did. The Boards reluctantly felt obliged to submit, but before Darlington School Board decided to place their evening schools under Durham County Council it wrote to several neighbouring School Boards asking for their advice on the advantages and disadvantages of so doing.²⁷

The School Board which struggled most against the encroachment of Durham County Council on the control of education in its district, was that of Stockton. There was a series of disagreements during the last decade of the century between the County Council Education Committee and the School Board and Joint Technical Instruction Committee, which caused much ill-feeling, and largely concerned the Higher Grade School:

1. The Education Committee delayed for over a year paying a grant for building and fixtures of the Organised Science school of the Higher Grade school, which had been claimed in April 1893, on the grounds that it first wanted to know whether or not the technical institute which the Town Council had contemplated establishing, was in fact going to be set up. Eventually, it made a grant to it of the £2000 which had been previously set aside for the proposed technical institute.
2. When £1574 8s. 7d. was claimed as apparatus grant for the technical evening classes of the Higher Grade School in 1896, the Education Committee recognised only £1390 16s. 5d. of it for its 75% grant (making a net grant of £1043 2s. 7d.). It refused to reconsider the items it had disallowed, even after the Joint Technical Instruction Committee had declared that these items were necessary for the instruction.
3. The County Council Education Committee initially recognised the Organised Science school for grant purposes only from 26th May, 1897, rejecting the School Board's request that it be recognised from 1st June, 1896; it turned down the School Board's suggestion

that the matter go to the Science and Art Department for arbitration, and refused to see a deputation on the question. Eventually a compromise was reached and recognition was fixed for 24th February, 1897.

4. After the School Board and the Town Council had decided that the day Organised Science school was to be managed by the School Board and the evening classes by the Joint Technical Instruction Committee, the County Education Committee asked them to entrust both to the management of the Joint Committee, on the grounds that the elementary work of the School Board should be kept completely separate from that of the Organised Science school and technical evening classes both in administration and finance. This was rejected by the School Board and the Joint Committee, who had already got recognition from the Science and Art Department. But the School Board did agree to accept two representatives from the County Council on the Organised Science School Committee (although there was some resistance even to this within the Board, one member voting against it, and four abstaining.)
5. In order to qualify for Durham County Council annual grants under the 1890 Act (it received an average of £148 a year 1896-1903), the Organised Science school had to submit to the regulations of the County Council Directory, which caused much irritation. For example, in 1898, the County Council notified it that it should be conducted purely as a third grade secondary school, and not teach students up to 17 years of age, as had been intended. The Education Committee told the School Board that, in view of these regulations, and bearing in mind the interests of the older Boys' High School, no scholar over 16 years was to be eligible for County grant unless definitely training to become a pupil teacher. The School Board replied that not many students were likely to stay on after 15 or 16 years (only 32 were then doing so), but that if a three-year course was to be provided as the Department wanted, the County Council regulations conflicted with this, as it could not be done unless the children stayed on till 16 or 17 years.

6. The County Education Committee exercised strict control over the evening classes; it angered the Joint Technical Instruction Committee in 1898 by disallowing Millinery and high class Cookery classes, and refusing to see a deputation from the Joint Committee in support of these classes. On another occasion, it refused to make a grant for a certain class because the register had not been completed on time owing to the fact that the caretaker at the school had given the teacher of the class the wrong register.²⁸

In view of this uneasy relationship between the County Council and Stockton, it is not surprising that the latter decided not to come into closer contact with the Council by agreeing to adopt Clause VII of the Science and Art Directory, and so get its grants through the County Council instead of direct from the Department as previously. Both the School Board and Joint Technical Instruction Committee of Stockton passed resolutions to this effect, the Joint Committee also adding that "the County Education Committee as at present constituted is not the most suitable body to have charge of the Science and Art instruction in the county". It reaffirmed this decision, after the Secretary of the County Education Committee had written to it trying to persuade it to change its mind, and after it had written to the County Council and Science and Art Department enquiring as to the consequences of refusal. The fact that it was already running several Science and Art classes at the time that Clause VII was published, meant that it could both provide technical education and keep to a large extent independent of the County Council. This proved, however, to be merely a short reprieve, for by the 1901 Cockerton Act, it was forced to seek the County Education Committee's approval for its expenditure of rate money on the Organised Science school and any other "illegal expenditure" of rates, and thus Stockton's secondary education at last came within the orbit of the County Council - the only alternative being to conform to the Board of Education's Minute of 6th April, 1900, which would have seriously curtailed its educational provision in the Higher Grade School.²⁹

The Education Act of 1902 ended the period of legal and administrative uncertainty and confusion. Under it, County Councils and County Borough Councils became Part II Authorities, responsible for secondary education in the whole of their districts, and for elementary education in the areas not covered by the Part III Authorities (municipal boroughs whose population was over 10,000 and urban districts whose population was over 20,000). The School Boards were hostile to this Act which ended their existence, with the exception perhaps of those in the County Boroughs. In the latter areas, there was little real change in the education system of the towns, except for the substitution of the towns' education committees for the School Boards - and several of the members of the new education committees in the towns were often former School Board members. Thus, unlike most of the School Boards on Tees-side, Middlesbrough School Board did not pass a resolution condemning the 1902 Bill, and when the town's Education Committee was established, two of its ten non-Council members were nominated by the School Board, and other former Board members sat as some of its eleven Council members.³⁰

The School Boards in Durham County ceased to exist on 1st April, 1904, but all the small School Boards on North Tees-side agreed to act as local sub-committees for the County Education Committee until September 1904.³¹ Darlington and Stockton, as non-county boroughs, became Part III Authorities, and the Education Committees of the towns took over from the School Boards in February and March 1904, with several former Board members serving on them, as well as the officials of the School Boards being re-appointed by them: 9 of the 13 members of Stockton School Board were appointed on to the new Education Committee (4 of the 14 Councillor members and 5 of those who were co-opted); 3 of Darlington School Board were appointed on its Education Committee.³²

4. Other Bodies

The School Boards of the area had little regular contact with each other, but they sometimes sought each other's advice on certain questions, and there were occasions when attempts were made to act jointly. In 1893,

an Association of School Boards of England and Wales was formed which the large town School Boards of Tees-side joined, but the smaller Boards, such as that of Middleton-in-Teesdale, refused to join as they did not think it was worth the expense. Stockton School Board sent two representatives to its meetings in London, and in 1900 managed to get the Association to adopt a resolution calling for measures to be taken to increase the supply of male pupil-teachers. In 1899, a Northumberland and Durham Federation of School Boards was formed, but again, only the Boards of the large towns of North Tees-side (Darlington and Stockton) joined, the others refusing on grounds of expense.³³

Two attempts were made by the School Boards of Tees-side for joint action. In 1877, a conference of the School Boards of Tees-side was called to discuss the establishment of a joint Industrial School. Some of the Boards, such as Hartlepool, refused to take part, but those of Stockton and Darlington discussed the matter for some months, before they discovered that the venture would be illegal. Darlington School Board then petitioned the Government for an Act to be passed enabling School Boards jointly to set up and maintain an Industrial School. Such an Act was passed in 1879, and Darlington School Board at once invited the Boards of Stockton, Hartlepool, Throston and West Hartlepool to join in a conference on the subject. (Middlesbrough had its own Industrial School). This conference was held on 13th November, 1879. It was attended by six delegates from Stockton School Board, two from Hartlepool, and three from Darlington, and it recommended that a joint School be set up on Tees-side. It also decided to invite the School Boards of Stranton, Throston, Thornaby, Norton, Wolviston, Cowpen Bewley and Whitton to join in the project. Although both Stockton and Darlington School Boards officially resolved to support such a School, those of Norton and Wolviston refused, and those of Stranton, Hartlepool and Thornaby, although quite sympathetic, would not commit themselves, and the project petered out through lack of enthusiasm, and was not revived. More successful, however, was the proposal of Stockton School

Board in 1901, to combine in adopting a joint scale of teachers' salaries on Tees-side, to prevent the temptation of one School Board "poaching" from another by offering slightly higher salaries. This was agreed upon, and generally implemented.^{+ 34}

Apart from these two isolated cases, official contact between the Tees-side school Boards was infrequent, and occurred only either when one Board was considering a problem and wished to learn from the experience of its neighbours, or when a Board wanted the support of other Boards for a petition it was sending to the Education Department. Stockton School Board, for example, asked neighbouring Boards on various occasions questions about their average attendance, how they collected fines for non-attendance, what they did for their defective children, and other matters; while Darlington School Board in 1880 sent a circular to 50 towns in different parts of the country asking how they trained their pupil-teachers and received replies from 27 of them. Again, in 1896, when it was considering establishing a Higher Grade School, this Board wrote to the Higher Grade schools of Leeds and Sunderland, and Rutherford College at Newcastle requesting information about the staffing etc. of their Organised Science schools, and four of the Board's members and officials visited the Organised Science schools of Gateshead, Jarrow, Sunderland and West Hartlepool.³⁵

Under the Elementary Education Act 1876, Section 10, poor parents who wanted to send their children to Voluntary schools had to apply to the Poor Law Guardians for payment of fees. This replaced Section 25 of the 1870 Elementary Education Act, under which the School Boards had been given the authority to do this. School Boards, however, could still remit the fees of children of poor parents attending their own schools, if they wished to give them free education.

This new system created some problems. There was a stigma of poverty attached to applying for payment of fees to the Poor Law Guardians which deterred some poor parents from doing so, and which was not attached

⁺ see above, p. 270

to applying to the School Boards for remission of fees. Also, there was sometimes a noticeable lack of uniformity between the treatment of such cases by the Poor Law Guardians and the Boards. It was to overcome this, that Darlington School Board proposed to the Poor Law Guardians in 1883 that a uniform scale of payment and remission of fees should be drawn up for both bodies to apply. The Board of Guardians, however, refused to co-operate over this. Three years later, in order to try to take the stigma from application to the Poor Law Guardians, Darlington School Board proposed that its school warden should be also appointed by the Poor Law Guardians as their Relieving Officer for Darlington, thus allowing all parents to be dealt with by the same officer, whether they were applying to the Guardians for payment or to the School Board for remission of fees. The Guardians accepted this only on condition that the School Board, and not they, paid the warden an extra £7 for his additional duties. For the same reason, the Guardians also agreed to meet in the School Board offices to hear applications for payment of fees.³⁶

The various interests in the School Board districts often tried to influence the Boards, not only by sponsoring candidates at elections, but also by putting direct pressure on the Boards when certain questions arose in which they were interested. Meetings of ratepayers in Stockton, for example, petitioned the School Board in 1893 against establishing a Higher Grade school, and in 1898, to build another Board school at Portrack, while in Darlington, the local Peace Association sent a memorial to the School Board in 1903 protesting against the introduction of Drill in the Board schools. The first Middleton St. George School Board, a majority of whose members were Unsectarians, was subject to strong pressure from ratepayers who were organised by the Voluntary interest in the town. In 1885, they urged the Board to appoint the Poor Law Relieving Officer as the School Board warden in order to reduce the rate expenditure, and to appoint the Secretary of the National School Trustees as the Clerk to the Board without salary. In 1888, the ratepayers organised a public meeting and deputation to the same School Board to protest against the increase in teachers' salaries. The outcome of this proved to be rather a fiasco: one

of the leaders of the deputation had told the Board's Chairman that he was not going to turn up, and this was taken to mean that the deputation would not take place, but not all the Board members were informed of this; as a result, the Clerk, one member of the Board and two reporters turned up, and waited for the deputation in the school, while the members of the deputation waited outside for the other members of the Board to arrive. After half an hour, they left, and, in the words of the local newspaper: "thus, when the doleful quartette aforesaid left the school-room, they met an equally disconsolate party of deputationists kicking their heels in the street waiting for the Board to turn up", and the whole affair petered out. The teachers of the Board schools also at times tried to influence the Boards' policies, particularly on the question of salaries: petitions for salary increases were sent to the Tees-side School Boards at various times by the National Union of Teachers, the Cleveland Assistant Teachers Association, and the Darlington Association of Certificated Assistant Teachers.³⁷

Another source of pressure on School Boards came from the local trade unions. In the 1890's, several Boards were asked to ensure that all the firms they employed to build or repair their schools, paid union wage rates. In 1898, Stockton and Thornaby Trades Council wrote to Stockton School Board complaining that Messrs. Pickersgill & Co. were failing to pay proper union rates. The Board contacted the firm which assured them that they were paying the proper rates. Stockton School Board, in fact, had some time previously resolved that all contracts entered into by the Board should insist that wages paid by firms doing work for it be not less than the recognised union rate. This had also been done by Darlington and Middlesbrough School Boards, after they had been asked to do so by the local trade unions. The major offending firm in this respect on Tees-side, appears to have been the North of England School Furnishing Company. In 1894, Darlington Trades Council complained to the School Board that the firm was not employing their workers according to union rules, but after the School Board had seen the Company about this, the latter agreed to fall into line in this respect, and

reduced the working hours of their employees to 50 hours a week. A few years later, the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners complained to both Darlington and Stockton School Boards that the North of England School Furnishing Company were not paying according to union wage rates. Darlington School Board arranged an interview between the Union and the Company, and the firm finally gave way. The Unions tried to put pressure on the School Boards over other matters as well: for example, when a vacancy occurred on Stockton School Board through the retirement of a member, the Amalgamated Society of Engineers asked the Board to elect E. Edwards, who had stood as a Working Men's candidate at a previous election, but on this occasion, the School Board did not try to satisfy the Union, and chose someone else.³⁸

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CHAPTER XI VOLUNTARY AND PRIVATE SCHOOLS

1. School Boards and Voluntary Schools

The Elementary Education Act of 1870 proved to be the great turning point of English elementary education. Up to 1870, elementary schools had been provided by voluntary bodies, almost entirely linked to the churches. It had developed piecemeal, encouraged by Government aid, but with no overall plan to establish universal provision of elementary education. It was the realisation that large gaps still existed in the provision of education, and of the likely economic and political repercussions of this, that had provoked the Education Act. Once the Act had been passed, the voluntary bodies interested in education had to decide upon a fundamental issue of policy: were they prepared to support a state system of education in the future, or did they intend to rival it by continuing their own schools, side by side with the State schools? The establishment of a dual system of education in England was the result of a large section of the voluntary bodies choosing the latter course of action.

Most of the Tees-side elementary schools had been built by Non-conformist, Anglican or Catholic bodies. Most of the Nonconformist schools belonged to the British and Foreign School Society, but there was also a vigorous group of Wesleyan Schools. The Anglican schools were either Church Schools or were attached to the National Society. The Roman Catholics had not built many schools before 1870, but there was a growing Catholic population on Tees-side, and they were determined to find the resources to educate their own children.

After the 1870 Education Act had been passed, the British and Foreign School Society decided to support the state system, for it had no quarrel with the Religious Instruction provided for the Board schools under the Act, and, as a report of the Society commented: "School Boards are in reality British School committees, some upon a gigantic scale, and with few exceptions, the schools are British schools with a different name". The British society now preferred for the most part to let the School Boards maintain its schools, and to

concentrate its resources upon the training of teachers. The Anglicans and Catholics, on the other hand, were in general, determined to oppose the erection of Board schools. The Wesleyans, as a body, could not make up their minds for many years whether to maintain their own schools or aid the expansion of the School Board system. In September 1870, a meeting of the Whitby and Darlington District of the Wesleyan Church resolved as a compromise, to build as many day schools as possible where there was a need for them, but in districts where this was impracticable, to co-operate in the formation of School Boards. By the end of 1872, it was reported that the Wesleyans had made up their minds wholeheartedly to support the unsectarian education of the School Boards.

The struggle against the establishment of School Boards and the erection of Board schools thus came from the ranks of the Catholics and Anglicans - although not all the members of these Churches were necessarily opposed to the School Boards. The Act provided a stimulus for them to build as many schools as they could, and, where possible, to obviate the necessity of establishing a School Board; where one was set up, they tried to limit the provision of Board schools as much as possible. Every Voluntary school built in 1870, was regarded as a "brand snatched from the burning". In November 1870, Rev. Pettit, preaching at St. Thomas' Church, Stockton, called for funds for church schools and denounced the secularising tendency of modern education. In the same month, the Denominationalist newspaper, the "Middlesbrough Exchange", argued for an extension of the voluntary system of education, rather than the establishment of School Boards and rate-aided schools. It called on the members of all churches to see that Voluntary schools were erected, by generous financial support. Two years later, it had not revised its opinions:

"School Board education is expensive beyond the anticipations of its promoters ... It is all very well to accomplish the education of our gutter children and street arabs, but the excellence of this is slightly diminished when we consider the cost of the officialdom by which it is accomplished. The quotations of red tape have always been denoted by high figures, and the School Board red tape, instead of being an exception, only goes to prove how high a rate this article may reach when it is combined with educational efforts ...

The ratepayers' pockets have to accommodate the scruples which secularists have invented for the consciences of the neglected children who have grown up in rags, squalor and filth."

The paper used the Denominationalists' twin cry of economy and the value of religious education to support its advocacy of a containment of the School Board system.²

The Roman Catholics proved to be the most determined of the voluntary bodies to provide the maximum number of school places for their children after 1870. In Darlington, where there was a large number of Catholics, they expanded their accommodation so fast, that by November 1870, they had provided, or were in the process of providing, places for nearly 1,000 children, or more than one-fifth of their population in the town. In addition to their new schools at Albert Hill, their schools at Brunswick Street were extensively enlarged, and a school room in Whessoe Lane was being rented. The Roman Catholics would not tolerate their children being educated in State schools, which were teaching a State "ersatz" form of religion, in place of the true Catholic Faith. In October 1870, when the Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle came to Darlington to lay the foundation stone of the new St. Williams Roman Catholic School, Rev. H. Coll, the priest of Darlington, who was also present at the ceremony, declared in a speech that they had been forced to begin building the school despite the fact that they had not yet raised two-thirds of the cost, because of the new Education Act: "The State now desired not only a monopoly of temporalities, but the right to interfere in religious matters". Likewise, in Middlesbrough, where no Catholic schools had been built before the Education Act, the Catholics made great efforts through meetings and other activities to raise funds, and in the early 1870's, opened two schools. In Stockton, the Catholics were able to build St. Mary's School in 1871, expand it in 1872, and later to build St. Cuthbert's School (in 1884) and Carlile Memorial School (in 1900). In Cowpen Bewley, the Roman Catholics in their enthusiasm provided so many additional places that their new school at Port Clarence was refused a grant by the Education Department on the grounds that it was unnecessary.³

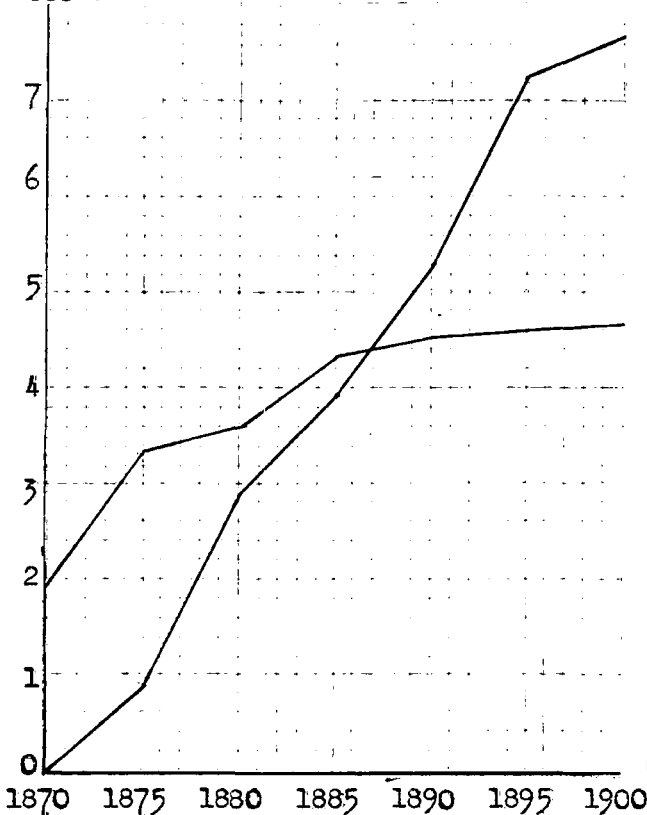
Average attendance

MIDDLESBROUGH.

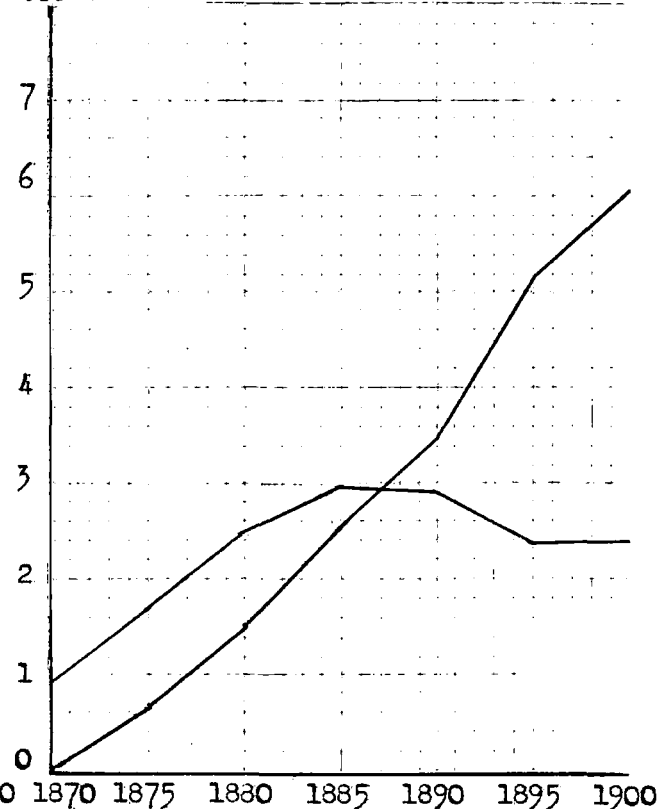
Average attendance

STOCKTON.

'000's



'000's

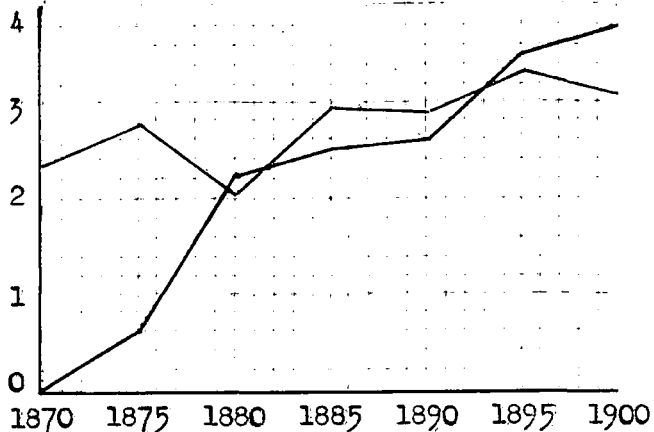


Average attendance

DARLINGTON.

BOARD AND VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS: average attendance 1870-1900.

'000's



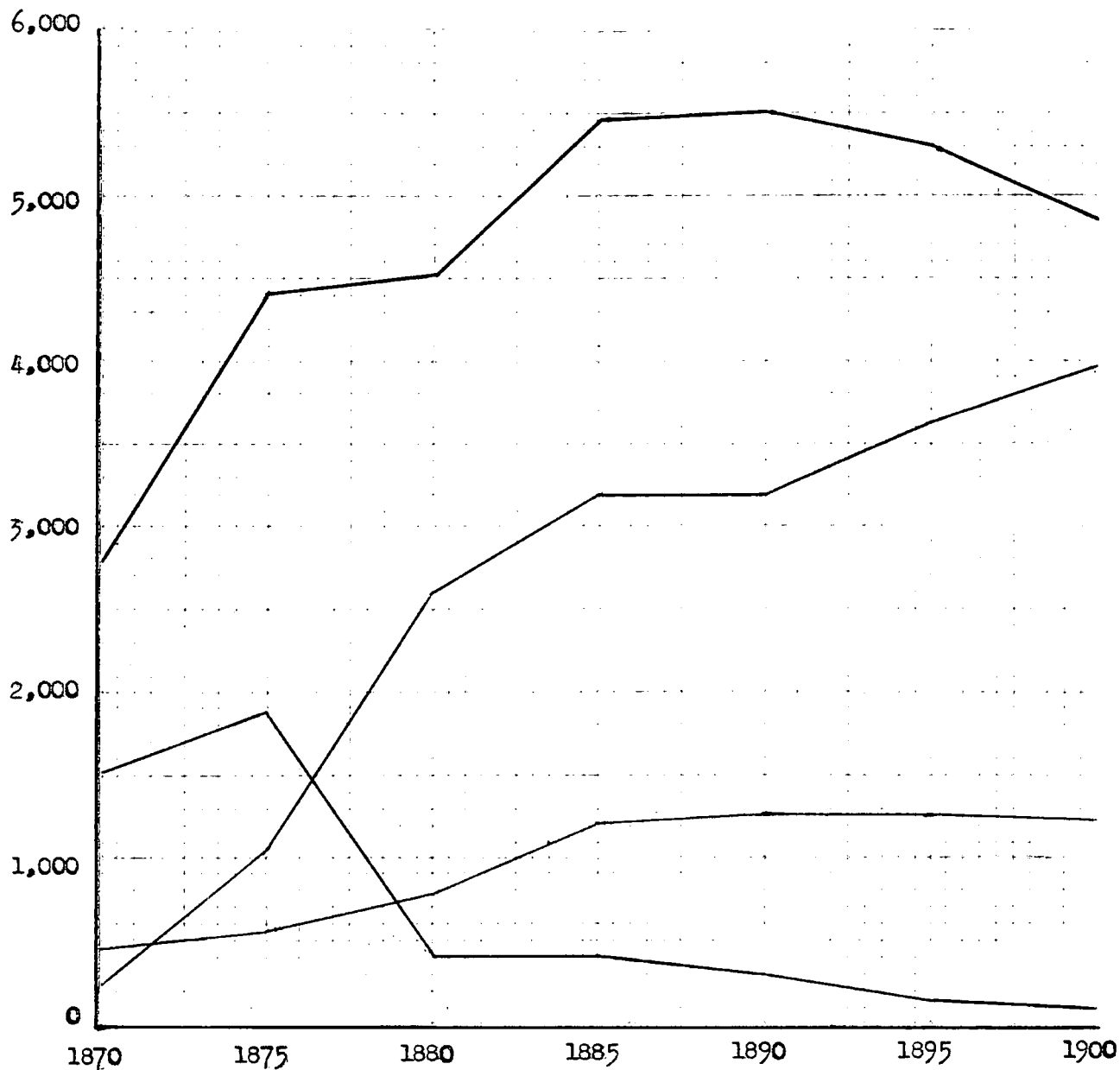
Board schools: ———

Voluntary schools: ———

VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS OF MIDDLESBROUGH, STOCKTON AND DARLINGTON:

average attendance 1870-1900.

Average attendance.



Church schools: ———

British schools: ———

Catholic schools: ———

Wesleyan schools: ———

The Denominationalists in the three industrial towns on Tees-side were resigned to the establishment of School Boards, although only in the case of Middlesbrough and Stockton were there large educational deficiencies. But in the case of two of the smaller school districts on North Tees-side the Denominationalists did put up a fight to prevent a School Board from being set up: in Norton, where the Church Party, energetically led by their vicar, unsuccessfully tried to raise sufficient money to maintain efficiently the National School, which would have obviated the necessity of a School Board; and in Middleton St. George, where, after the first School Board election had returned an Unsectarian majority, the Denominationalists attempted to render the School Board unnecessary by raising the funds to keep the National School solvent, and fiercely fought the School Board's efforts either to take over their school or to build a rival one - they did manage to prevent this from being done before the second election, which returned a majority of Denominationalists, and after which, they quite happily transferred the National School to the Board at a nominal rent of 5/- a year.⁺ In the case of two school districts, voluntary sympathies were sufficiently strong to prevent a School Board being established until one was forced upon them by the Education Department (Wolviston and Cowpen Bewley); in the latter case, the Board was rendered unnecessary, and dissolved in 1885.⁺

The greatest opportunity for rivalry between Voluntary and Board schools existed in the three towns of Middlesbrough, Stockton and Darlington, where both Voluntary and Board schools were soon firmly established. In fact, so great were the educational needs of the towns, due to their fast growing populations and the enforcement of compulsory education, that it was possible for both kinds of school to expand. The educational statistics of these towns reveal to what extent this happened (see graph, p.356). The Roman Catholic schools grew steadily in both accommodation and average attendance in the three towns. The Anglican schools also showed a steady expansion, although not as great

⁺ for details of the struggles in Norton and Middleton St. George, see pp.13 and 76-80

as that of the Catholic schools. The Wesleyan schools, in the two towns where they existed, like those of the Anglicans, expanded somewhat throughout the period. The slight dropping off in average attendance during the last few years, was probably due to the effects of the fee grant of 1891. This did not hit the Catholic schools much, as these charged low fees in general, and catered for the poorer classes, and in some cases might have actually benefited by the fee grant and abolition of fees. But several Anglican and Wesleyan schools, which often charged higher fees, and, in the words of Mr. Bernay, the local H.M.I., provided for a "superior class" of children, like those of the smaller tradesmen, either had to abolish their fees completely and find the financial deficit from other sources, or reduce, but still continue, their fees, and so deter some parents from sending their children to the schools. Middlesbrough School Board's Superintendent commented in 1891 on the fact that the town's Voluntary schools had suffered in attendance after the adoption of the fee grant, as some still retained fees, although much reduced. The Voluntary schools in general found it increasingly difficult to attract sufficient subscriptions during the later years of the period, and so were forced to offer poorer educational facilities compared to those of the rate-aided schools. The effects of this can be seen by comparing the number of vacant places in the schools of the different bodies. By 1900, the percentage of average attendance to accommodation in Board and Voluntary schools showed significant variations between the Board schools and those of the various churches:

Elementary Schools (1900-1)

	<u>Board</u>	<u>Catholic</u>	<u>Anglican</u>	<u>Wesleyan</u>
Middlesbrough	89%	77%	74%	88%
Stockton	86%	74%	77%	-
Darlington	81%	59%	67%	81%

It is also noticeable that the Voluntary schools in the later years of the period achieved less educational successes than the Board schools. In Middlesbrough, for example, the Voluntary schools did better in the scholarship examinations for the High School during the 1880's, but worse, in the later 1890's. This also encouraged greater expansion in the Board, than the Voluntary schools. ⁵

Only the British schools showed a rapid contraction. This was because the Society was quite happy for the School Boards to take them over, and preferred to spend its money in other directions. All the British schools were transferred to the School Boards in Middlesbrough and Stockton, while in Darlington, the only one it retained was a practising school for the Training College. The British schools were in fact the only ones in the area to be willingly transferred to the School Boards. The only Anglican schools to be transferred in the area were handed over as a result of financial difficulties which made it impossible for the schools to be continued efficiently (as, for example, in the cases of Norton and Middleton St. George), while the only Catholic school to be handed over to a School Board, that of St. Patrick's, Darlington, was no longer being used, and was sold for a considerable sum of money which was to be spent on other Catholic schools.

Most of the schools transferred to the School Boards by the British and Foreign School Society were handed over as free gifts or for a nominal charge. In Darlington, for example, as early as 1871, the managers of three British schools offered to transfer them to the School Board: Rise Carr (built 1869) as a free gift; Skinnergate (1818) for a small consideration; and Bridge St. (1840) for £10 a year on a seven-year lease. The Board thoroughly investigated the financial and structural condition of each school, before making any decision. They accepted the first two offers (with only Catholic Rev. Coll voting against acceptance), but held out for better terms in the case of Bridge St. School, only accepting it two years later when it was offered unconditionally. It also accepted the offer of Albert Road British School in 1873. Two years later, the managers of Bank Top British school (which had been built by subscriptions from Joseph Pease and the shareholders of the North of England Railway when the Railway Company had brought many workers into the town) offered the school to the Board, the only condition being that the Quakers were to have the right to use the rooms on Sundays. The school was in excellent condition, and had been self-supporting financially, all its costs being met by government grants and school fees. The Board accepted the offer, as it also did

Voluntary Elementary Schools of Darlington ?

<u>Owners</u>	<u>School</u>	<u>Departments</u> ⁺	<u>Subsequent History</u>
British & Foreign S.S.	Bank Top	B. & G.	Trans. to Board 1.3.75.
" " " "	Albert Road	B.,G.&I.	" " " 19.6.73.
" " " "	Rise Carr	I.	" " " 1.5.72.
" " " "	Bridge St.	M.	" " " 1.1.74.
" " " "	Skinnergate	M.,I.	" " " 1.9.72.
" " " "	Kendrew St.	G.,I.	" " " 1.9.75.
Mrs. Pease	Gurney Pease	M.	" " " 1.8.78.
Roman Catholic	St. Patrick's (later Brunswick St.)	B.	Purchased by Board 5.5.79.
Church of England	Harrowgate Hill (St. Paul's)	M.I.	" 6.1.79.
South Durham Schools	Cleveland St.	?	Closed down.
United Methodist Free Church	Albert Hill	?	Closed down.
Church of England	Holy Trinity	B.,G.,I.	Still in existence, 1904.
" " "	St. Cuthberts	B.,G.,I.	" " "
" " "	St. John's	M.,I.	" " "
" " "	St. Paul's	B.,G.,I.	" " "
Roman Catholic	St. Augustine's	G.,I.	" " "
" " "	St. Williams	M.	" " "
Wesleyan	Bondgate	B.,G.,I.	" " "

⁺ B = Boys; G = Girls; I = Infants; M = Mixed.

the offer of Kendrew St. School (built by the Congregationalists 1850) as a free gift. The financial condition of this school was also good, only £17 8s. 11d. having had to be met from voluntary subscriptions the previous year. In 1878, Mrs. Pease presented to the Board Gurney Pease Memorial School, (which had been erected in 1873 in memory of her husband), also as a free gift. In contrast to the British Schools, when Catholic or Anglican Schools were offered to the School Board, much more profitable terms were usually insisted upon. Darlington School Board was forced to pay £1050 for St. Patrick's Roman Catholic School (the trustees originally had asked for £1200), and £700 for St. Paul's Church of England Schools, Harrowgate Hill, and also in the latter case, concede the right of St. Paul's Church to use it on Sundays and other religious days (rights which were later relinquished in return for the payment of £285 by the School Board).⁷

The transfer of schools to Middlesbrough and Stockton School Boards followed a similar pattern. The British schools of these towns were fairly quickly handed over to the Boards on very favourable terms. The Catholics and Anglicans resisted any efforts to secure the transference of their schools. As early as June 1871, Middlesbrough School Board accepted an offer of transfer at £25 a year rent from the managers of Stockton St. British School; this school needed some repairs to put it in a satisfactory condition, but only two members (a Churchman and an Independent) voted against the Board's acceptance. Four years later, the school was permanently transferred to the Board. Three of the four trustees of the school were members of the School Board (Fallows, Wilson, and Brentnall). In the same year (1875), Southbank and Lower Faversham British schools were transferred to the Board. On the other hand, when the School Board asked the trustees of a Roman Catholic school in Sussex St. if they were prepared to let the school, which was then unoccupied, to the Board, their request was rejected on the grounds that preparations were being made to re-open the school. Similarly, in Stockton, the only British school, Hume St., was transferred to the School Board on a lease, in 1891. In 1874, the School Board purchased

the Old Ragged School from the Trustees for £1500 and the following year was given Regent St. Infant school, which had been built by public subscription in 1839 but had not received any grant for many years and so was in great financial difficulty. No Roman Catholic or Anglican schools were handed over to either School Board.⁸

Once a School Board had been set up, however controversial its establishment had been, and however fiercely the voluntary interests had struggled to prevent the necessity for one, its relationship with the Voluntary schools within its district usually proved good. In Middleton St. George and Norton, where the fiercest struggles had taken place, any possible rivalry was obviated by the transference of the Voluntary schools to the School Boards. In Middleton-in-Teesdale, however, there was an attempt in 1891 to raise funds in order to establish a new Voluntary school, and so avoid the rate expenditure on a new Board school which the School Board was proposing to erect, but this failed through lack of support.¹⁰ The harmonious relationship operated in districts where an Unsectarian majority controlled the School Board, as well as in districts where the Board had a Denominationalist majority. Although at times the latter Boards proved more sympathetic to the voluntary interests, for most of the time there was in fact little difference between the Boards in this respect. This harmony was probably mainly due to the fact that the population of most of the area was fast increasing and consequently there was ample scope for both systems to expand side by side. The Voluntarists recognised that they alone could not provide sufficiently for the educational needs of such rapidly expanding districts, while the School Boards were so concerned at the level of rate expenditure they were forced to incur merely to fill the gaps left by the Voluntary schools that they welcomed any further contribution by the voluntary interests. In some of the smaller districts, such as Middleton-in-Teesdale, Middleton St. George and Whitton, possible rivalry was prevented by the fact that, when the Board school had been established, no other school existed in the district to rival it.

From time to time, however, some friction did arise between the School Boards and the voluntary bodies. Sometimes this was caused by actions of School Boards being interpreted by Voluntary schools to be attempts to compete with them. Thus in December 1872, "An Anxious Inquirer" wrote to a local newspaper accusing Middlesbrough School Board of deliberately placing new Board schools close to thriving Voluntary Schools in order to draw off their scholars instead of erecting them in neglected areas. This letter was referring to the new Board school in Denmark St. which was built within a short distance of Southend British schools; the latter also made a protest about this, to the Education Department. The letter also complained that the School Board was providing free books in its schools to children who were not paupers. Two years later, it was Middlesbrough School Board which was protesting to the Education Department that St. John's Church was proposing to move its school to within 200 yards of the site of a proposed new Board school in Grange Road. But this protest was of no avail, for the Education Department sanctioned the transference of St. John's schools, and the School Board thereafter felt obliged to cancel its purchase of land in Grange Road. Such accusations of direct rivalry were made against other School Boards in the area. In September 1879, a local newspaper accused Darlington School Board of doing this, and trying to fill its schools at the expense of the Voluntary schools; the Board emphatically denied any such policy."

The jealousy felt by independent schools towards any activities of Board schools which might have encroached upon their sphere, is also illustrated by a letter which the committee of Middleton-in-Teesdale Grammar School sent to the School Board in 1901, calling attention to the fact that the Board school was teaching Shorthand, and said that this was contrary to the Cockerton Judgment. The School Board sent back a sharp rejoinder, informing the Committee that the Board considered itself competent to manage its own affairs and did not need any advice from them. The Board also passed a resolution that Shorthand and Algebra be continued at the school as before.¹²

On the other hand, bitter feelings sometimes arose for opposite reasons: when a Voluntary school decided to close down and the School Board urged it to continue, and educate as many children as possible. When St. John's Church, Middlesbrough, decided to build their schools near Grange Road, they intended at the same time to close down their old schools in Marton Road and sell them. The School Board, on learning about their plans, declared its opposition to the removal of schools which were in the midst of so dense a population. It sent its protest to the Education Department and resolved that if necessary, the Clerk was to go to London in order to present the Board's case in person. The Board argued that the only way to supply the educational deficiency created by the closure of the old schools would have been to purchase and pull down property in one of the main thoroughfares of the town, which would have been very expensive. It stated that, in view of the fact that the school had been aided by building and annual grants from public funds, such an action "most prejudicial to the educational interests of the town" should not be sanctioned. But the managers of St. John's school justified their action by declaring that they were closing their old schools in order to raise the money to build larger schools; they were placing the new schools near St. John's Church in order to make use of them as a Sunday school as well. After the H.M.I. had visited Middlesbrough to hear both sides of the dispute, the Education Department sanctioned the action of the Voluntary school managers. Likewise, when the Trustees of Stockton's Blue Coat Charity school announced that they were discontinuing the school because of financial difficulties, the School Board fought fiercely to keep it open, either as a Voluntary school or as a Board school. It wrote to the Charity Commissioners stating that the school had been an efficient elementary school and had shown a profit in the annual balance sheet; it was greatly needed in the town and should be continued. But the Trustees closed down the school in March 1894, and refused to re-open it when asked to by the School Board, stating that some of the teachers had already left the district. The School Board then opened negotiations to

take it over and maintain it as a Board school, but the Trustees insisted on too high a price: an annual rent of £200, or a sale for £5,500. The Board rejected their offer, stating that under section 23 of the 1870 Education Act, it could pay only a nominal price. The Trustees then revised their offer, saying that they were prepared to let the school to the Board for a three-month period at only £5 a year; the Board, however, insisted on a minimum of a one year's lease. The obstinacy and ill-feeling, however, on both sides caused the negotiations to break down, and as a result, 800 children were kept from school for nearly a term while the school was unoccupied, and the overcrowding in neighbouring schools was so intense that the Education Department temporarily waived its lower limit of 10 square feet per pupil in average attendance, for six months.³

These flashes of bad feeling between School Boards and voluntary bodies were not typical of any of the school districts. In general the relationship between the two bodies remained very harmonious and co-operative. Summing up the history of education during this period in Darlington, the Chairman of that Board declared in 1904 that there had been no ill-feeling between voluntary bodies and the School Board: "The managers of our Voluntary schools have always endeavoured to meet the requirements of the Board of Education, which have increased as time has gone on, and the rivalry between them and the Board Schools has always been of the healthiest kind." In the towns, the Boards never tried to restrict the expansion of the voluntary schools, but, on occasions, the Schools Boards of the smaller districts did affirm that there was no need for any new schools in their districts and so prevented the Education Department agreeing to give new Voluntary schools an annual grant. This happened in Cowpen Bewley when a new Roman Catholic School was built in 1879, and also in Norton when an attempt was made in 1881 to revive the National school. In the three industrial towns, the School Boards welcomed any voluntary contributions towards supplying the educational deficiency which was ever present due to the steadily increasing population, and so offered no resistance to proposals to build new Voluntary schools. Thus, when Middlesbrough School Board was

consulted by the Board of Education as to whether a new Catholic school was necessary in 1901, it readily agreed that one was, and so the school should receive an annual grant. Stockton School Board likewise supported the erection of St. Cuthbert's Roman Catholic School in 1884. It even supported the proposal to establish a middle-class public school for boys in 1891, at the very time that it was planning to build its Higher Grade school.¹⁴

The School Boards at times publicly announced that they were prepared to give priority to Voluntary school plans for expansion, before deciding upon providing additional Board school places. Stockton School Board made such a policy declaration in 1871, while in its Triennial Report of 1885, it stated that:

"The Board having strictly regarded the rule that extended school accommodation should be made only in localities where it was essential to the carrying out of the Education Acts, no case has arisen in which a denominational school has been crippled by what the Board has done - their sustained efficiency being sufficient to secure not only their perpetuation but also their prosperity. To the credit of those who manage these institutions, be it recorded that not one of the number pronounced efficient in 1870 has been given up or transferred to the Board for lack of means of support. They continue well conducted, well attended and yielding results that compare advantageously with those reported from other, and in some respects, more favoured towns."

Such an optimistic assessment of the fortunes of the Voluntary schools could have been equally ascribed to Middlesbrough or Darlington.¹⁵

Although both the Denominationalist and Unsectarian School Boards favoured the continuance of the Voluntary schools, if for no other reason than to keep down the rates, some of the Denominationalist-controlled Boards did appear to pursue this policy more positively than the Unsectarian Boards. In 1895, for example, the Denominationalist majority on Darlington School Board, in face of Unsectarian opposition, passed a resolution which it sent to Parliament, and which declared "that in the interests of education and economy as well as of justice and religious freedom, all efficient public elementary schools, whether Voluntary or Board, are entitled to largely increased assistance out

of public monies". It also defeated a rival resolution proposed by the Unsectarians, which called for an extension of Board education only, and no additional aid to denominational schools. Sometimes the opponents of Denominationalist-controlled School Boards accused them of favouring Voluntary schools to the positive detriment of the Board schools. This produced one of the main points of controversy during the very fiercely contested Darlington School Board election of 1886. During the election campaign, the Unsectarians were able to point out that, whereas attendance in Board schools had increased every year between 1871 and 1882, while the Board was under Unsectarian control, (an average increase of 246 a year) Board school attendance actually decreased during the first triennial period of Denominationalist control: it fell by 149 in average attendance 1882-3, and did not recover to the 1882 level for some years. This fall could not have been due, as the Denominationalists claimed, to a migration of population, because the fall would then have affected both Voluntary and Board schools alike; yet during the first period of Denominationalist rule (1883-5), whereas the number attending Board schools had decreased by 51, those attending Voluntary schools had actually increased by 485. The Unsectarians also claimed that this failure to expand Board education had forced some children to be sent to schools of a different religion against their parents' wishes, because nearby Board schools had been overcrowded. This had happened in the Albert Road and Albert Hill areas, where about 40 Protestant children had been driven into Catholic schools during this period. The Denominationalists had thus been using their powers of compulsory school attendance to drive children into schools of an alien religion against freedom of conscience, which, the Unsectarians asserted, proved ~~that~~ their claim to stand for freedom of choice in education to be hypercritical. In contrast to this, while the Unsectarians had been in control of the School Board, both Board and Voluntary education had been allowed to expand - and the Unsectarians had not, as they had been accused of doing, tried to "blot out the very existence of Voluntary schools". For example, during the last triennial period of Unsectarian rule, the Voluntary schools had actually expanded faster than those of the School Board: ¹⁶

		<u>Accommodation</u>	<u>Average Attendance</u>
Board schools increase	1879-82	453	434
Voluntary schools increase	1879-82	459	440

In general throughout the period, however, little real difference can be traced in the relative expansion of Board and Voluntary schools during periods when the Denominationalists controlled the School Boards and those when there were Unsectarian majorities. Although the Denominationalist party publicly proclaimed that its policy was to encourage the maximum expansion of the voluntary sector of elementary education, the Unsectarians in practice were also quite sympathetic towards the Voluntary schools, and, apart perhaps for a very few extremists, they would not have been prepared to have incurred the expense of replacing the Voluntary schools by those of the School Boards. None of the Boards tried to attract scholars from Voluntary schools by over-estimating the additional accommodation necessary to supply future deficiencies. They rather tended to under-estimate necessary additional accommodation, and, whatever party was in control of the Boards, there were usually more empty places in the Voluntary schools than the Board schools. In 1891, for example, the average attendance represented a considerably higher proportion of the available places in the Board schools than those of the Voluntary bodies in the three towns:

Percentage of average attendance to accommodation: 1890-1

	<u>Board schools</u>	<u>Voluntary schools</u>
Middlesbrough	89%	77%
Stockton	92%	73%
Darlington	74%	66%

In 1892, it was reported that there was such a shortage of accommodation in Middlesbrough, that the Voluntary, as well as the Board schools were overcrowded. Clearly, there was no attempt here to squeeze out the Voluntary schools by over-estimating future deficiencies which the School Board would have had to provide for; rather was the Board grateful for the contribution which the Voluntary schools were making towards the provision of elementary education in the town. '17

There is no evidence, either, that the School Boards attempted to secure a contraction of the Voluntary schools in other ways. The school fees charged at Board schools were not much lower than those of most of the Voluntary schools. In 1879 in Darlington, for example, the fees at Board schools were 2d. a week for Infants, 3d. for Standards I-III, and 4d. for Standard IV and above. The fees charged at the eleven departments of the town's seven Voluntary schools were similar: all the Infant schools charged 2d. a week; all charged 3d. a week for Standards I-III, except for the Boys' departments of the Wesleyan and St. Patrick's (Roman Catholic) Schools, which charged 4d. for Standards I-III, and also St. Cuthbert's and St. John's (National) schools, which charged 4d. a week for Standard III. Likewise, all the departments charged 4d. a week for Standard IV and above, except for the Boys' departments of St. Patrick's, St. Augustine's and the Wesleyan schools, which charged 5d. and 6d. a week, and the Girls' departments of St. Cuthbert's and Trinity Schools, which charged only 3d. a week.¹⁶

The Denominationalist party on the School Boards made constant efforts to ensure that the salaries of the teachers of the Board schools were not made higher than those of the Voluntary schools. At times they opposed proposed salary increases for Board school teachers, not merely on the grounds of economy, but also because such increases would have forced the Voluntary schools to have made similar increases. One of the most controversial actions of the Denominationalist majority on the Darlington School Board in its first term of office, was to introduce a new salary scale for Board head teachers which was below that of the best Voluntary schools of the town. By 1900, however, the Voluntary schools were hard pressed to pay as high salaries as those of the Board schools, and this, along with other financial difficulties of the Voluntary schools throughout the country, was one of the reasons for the 1902 Education Act. The Voluntary schools also appear to have staffed their schools less generously than the School Boards. The Cross Commission published the staffing details of three school districts of Tees-side in the mid-1880's: the returns showed that the Voluntary schools had

then an average of 79 scholars per teacher (excluding pupil-teachers) while the Board schools had an average of 61:

	<u>Middlesbrough</u>		<u>Darlington</u>		<u>Barnard Castle</u>
	<u>Board</u>	<u>Voluntary</u>	<u>Board</u>	<u>Voluntary</u>	<u>Voluntary</u>
Number of schools answering circular B.	7	6	9	6	4
Average attendance	4074	4376	2566	2615	571
Number of certificated teachers	40	34	16	13	6
Number of un-certificated teachers	38	28	15	15	-
Number of pupil-teachers	38	35	23	25	7
Number of pupils to teachers	52	71	83	93	95
Number of pupils to all staff, including pupil-teachers	35	45	47	50	44 ¹⁹

The School Boards could assist the Voluntary schools in various ways. Under the 1870 Education Act, the Boards were authorised to pay the fees of poor children attending them, if they wished to do so. As income from school fees constituted a considerable proportion of the income of Voluntary schools (1880, for example, it was 31% for the Voluntary schools throughout the country) payment of fees could be of great financial benefit to the schools, especially in a period of depression, when up to a quarter of the scholars found it difficult to pay them. It was for this reason that the more extreme Unsectarians fiercely opposed payment of fees to denominational schools from the rates. The School Boards of Middlesbrough and North Tees-side, despite the fact that some had Unsectarian majorities, all provided in their

bye-laws for payment of fees to Voluntary schools until 1876, when payment was transferred to the Poor Law Guardians. Usually, as in the case of Darlington and Norton, the School Boards were prepared to pay fees only up to the amounts that the Boards charged in their own schools, although the Middlesbrough Board was more generous, and was prepared to pay fees up to 6d. a week (the maximum fees at its schools being 4d. a week at the time). However, this issue caused bitter feelings, and proposals were put forward by the more extreme Unsectarians to prevent, or severely restrict such payment. For example, at a meeting of Middlesbrough School Board Edward Williams unsuccessfully proposed "that it is inexpedient to pay fees for children in private or denominational schools, and that no such fees be paid in future so long as there are Board schools not full." Because of such bitterness over this question, attempts were made to reach a compromise in the matter. In Darlington, Henry Pease and David Dale proposed that fees to denominational schools should be paid not from the rates, but from a voluntary fund, and they guaranteed to cover any financial deficiency which the fund might incur. When Pease withdrew from this arrangement, his place was taken by Theodore Fry, until the 1876 Act removed the necessity for the fund. The managers of St. Paul's school, Darlington, attempted to secure even more financial aid from this fund: in 1875, they applied for payment for books and materials, as well as the fees of poor children, but the Board rejected this on the grounds that it was not legal under its bye-laws, and said that it was not prepared to alter these.²⁰

J. Dodds, Liberal M.P. for Stockton, attempted to persuade Stockton and Norton School Boards to adopt a similar compromise measure to that agreed upon in Darlington. He wrote to these Boards, offering to pay the fees of poor children attending Voluntary schools himself, stating that Thornaby had accepted a similar offer. But the Denominationalist majority on Stockton School Board rejected the offer, in face of the opposition of the Unsectarian Party, saying that acceptance of the offer would be implicit condemnation of Section 25 of the 1870 Act (which had authorised rate expenditure on fees of denominational schools). Norton School Board diplomatically side-stepped a decision on this issue

by replying that, as there were no denominational schools within its district, there was no necessity to accept the offer. The Act of 1876 largely ended the controversy, although from time to time School Boards which had a Denominationalist majority petitioned the Education Department for a re-enactment of Clause 25 of the 1870 Act, on the grounds that the fact that the Poor Law Guardians were responsible for payment after 1876 placed a stigma of poverty on the payment of fees to Voluntary schools, and this caused many parents to prefer to send their children to Board schools where the fees were remitted, rather than to apply to the Guardians.⁺ 21

The School Boards assisted the Voluntary schools in other ways as well. Darlington School Board (with a Denominationalist majority) invited the Voluntary schools to make use of the facilities of its Cookery School and Manual Instruction Classes, while the Boards of the three large towns also opened their Pupil-Teacher Centres to the Voluntary schools; in the case of Stockton this was done in the face of opposition from the Unsectarian minority on the Board. The managers of Middlesbrough Wesleyan School even asked the School Board if its Superintendent would inspect their school two or three times a year. (The Board did not reject this, but it was never in fact done). The Boards also co-operated with the Voluntary schools by arranging conferences with them to discuss common problems. For example, in 1878, Darlington School Board arranged a conference with them to consider ways of improving attendance; the conference agreed on a series of measures to achieve this. Darlington School Board also took great pains to be as tactful as possible in its dealings with the Voluntary schools, even when the Board was controlled by the Unsectarians. In 1877, for example, when a Mr. Lowe demanded to examine the attendance returns, the Board declared itself willing to show him those of the Board schools, but were reluctant to allow him access to the returns of the Voluntary schools which were included with them. As Lowe insisted, the Board reluctantly agreed to allow him to see all the returns, but at the same time wrote

⁺ for more details of this controversy, see above, pp. 51-5

to the Voluntary schools warning them that the Board could no longer guarantee the secrecy of their returns, and expressing the hope that the schools nevertheless would continue to send them to the Board regularly.²²

2. Endowed School Schemes

The School Boards sometimes came into conflict with voluntary interests when schemes for independent schools were being drawn up. In general, the Boards gave their support to schemes which would improve the educational facilities of their districts, but they did not hesitate to put forward criticisms of any bad features in the proposed schemes. Darlington School Board, for instance, warmly supported the 1874 scheme for Queen Elizabeth Grammar School, Darlington, after the Endowed Schools Commissioners had accepted certain amendments which the School Board had suggested (that two co-opted governors, and two nominated by St. Cuthbert's Church be replaced by four nominated by the School Board and Town Council). Under the final scheme, the School Board and Town Council each nominated four of the twelve governors. Middlesbrough School Board likewise approved of the new scheme of 1900 for the High School, which gave the Board four representatives on the governing body. Norton School Board approved the scheme for Norton Grammar School in 1898, under which it was allowed to nominate one of the ten governors, but it rejected a suggestion that it apply to be represented on the governing body of Stockton Grammar School, on the grounds that, as it could not spend any rate-money on it, its representation would have been purely nominal.²³

The schemes concerning Stockton educational endowments, however, proved to be more controversial. A trust had been established in 1856 to set up Ragged Schools in the town, but these schools were closed down and sold to the School Board in 1874. In November 1887, the School Board asked the trustees if it could utilise the £2,000 proceeds and interest from the sale of the schools, which the trustees were still holding, but one of the three trustees, J. Crosby, replied that:

"The Ragged School was built with moneys subscribed by Church people and Dissenters and therefore the fund ... could never properly be placed under the management or control, or subject

to interference or suggestions, of such a body as a School Board which might at any time be composed of people who professed no religion at all. Especially wrong would it be to allow a fund voluntarily subscribed by friends of religious education to be applied in relief of rates of persons (whether religious or irreligious) who never subscribed in their lives to voluntary education."

As the trustees had to be unanimous over any course of action, the other trustees were unable themselves to help the School Board over this. The School Board then applied to the Charity Commissioners, and asked them to see that the funds were applied to educational purposes in the town. The Board argued that its views should be heard as the fund consisted of money raised from the sale of the school paid for out of rate-money, and in any case, the Board had been legally appointed to carry out the provisions of the Education Acts and had a responsibility to advise on such matters. It appealed to the Commissioners to consent only to a scheme which would be strictly unsectarian and under public control. However, the Commissioners replied that they could only act upon application by the trustees, and could only hear the Board's suggestions once a scheme had been published. But they did contact the trustees and urge them to make application for a scheme to be drawn up, and in January 1889, an Assistant Commissioner visited Stockton to make enquiries for a new scheme for the trustees, and saw both the trustees and the School Board. As a result, the Stockton Exhibition was founded out of the trust fund, to provide exhibitions and scholarships for poor children of the town. The Board of Governors consisted of two School Board members, one from the town council, one from the Poor Law Guardians and three co-opted members; a result very pleasing to the School Board.²⁴

The Stockton Blue Coat Charity scheme caused a much longer drawn-out struggle between the School Board and Denominationalist interests. The Blue Coat Charity School, which closed in 1894, had been quite heavily endowed, originally by Anglicans, but later also by persons not associated with the Church of England. The Charity Commissioners decided to draw up a scheme under which the funds would have been devoted to secondary education, and offering special advantages to poor children,

and also exhibitions open to scholars from all the town's elementary schools. In March 1894, the first scheme was published; but this aroused such a great protest from the School Board and the Rate-payers Association that it was withdrawn and a public enquiry was held. The School Board, which at the time was controlled by the Unsectarian party, attacked the scheme on the following grounds:

1. That the proposed fees were too high, and thus the Charity funds were going to be applied to a class of person not originally contemplated by the founders of the Trust;
2. That the Church of England had too much control under it; the headmaster should not have been required to be a member of the Church of England, and general religion and morality should be taught in the school, not the doctrines of the Church of England;
3. That girls, as well as boys, should have been provided for;
4. That the benefits of the Trust should have been confined to Stockton parish;
5. That the School Board should nominate more of the governors; the proposed governor from Thornaby Corporation should be withdrawn, and the ex-officio governors should be the Vicar of Stockton, the Mayor and the Chairman of the School Board.²⁵

The scheme provoked so much controversy that the Charity Commissioners decided to defer any decision on it, and await the Report of the Royal Commission on Secondary Education. In April 1897, they published a new scheme, which proposed the establishment of a day school along the lines of an Organised Science school, and which incorporated the suggestions of the School Board that the Headmaster be not required to be Anglican and that (if financially possible) there be provision also for girls. Finally, in November 1897, the scheme was further amended, and, after being approved of by the School Board (which now had a Denominationalist majority), it was sanctioned by Parliament. Under it, the influence of the Church of England was still retained, although somewhat modified (the governors consisting of the three vicars of Stockton, two representatives from the Town Council, two from Durham County Council, one from Thornaby Council, one from Durham University, six co-opted and only one from the School Board). Stockton Grammar school was opened under the scheme in January 1900.²⁷

The scheme for Queen Victoria High School for Girls in Stockton, caused less criticism. The sole amendments proposed by the School Board referred to the powers given to the Headmistress under it. It suggested that she be not allowed to expel scholars without the permission of the governing body, and that the appointment and dismissal of staff be also subject to the approval of the governors. But the Charity Commissioners only slightly modified the scheme along these lines (the only change being that the Headmistress was obliged to "report" staff changes to the governors) and allowed the Headmistress to retain much more autonomy than the School Board desired. The scheme was approved in 1902, and under it, the School Board was allowed one representative on the governing body.²⁸

3. Private Schools

One of the greatest problems which faced many of the School Boards was that of the existence of private adventure schools in their districts. There was no control over these schools, and anyone could enter the teaching profession and open such a school. Reports, such as that of the Newcastle Commission, revealed quite horrifying conditions in some of these schools.

The problem was mainly felt in the large towns, because there were few private schools in the countryside, proprietors of private schools finding it too difficult to attract sufficient numbers of pupils in the more remote areas. Thus Whitton, Middleton St. George and Middleton-in-Teesdale had no private schools, only Church and endowed schools (or, in the case of Middleton-in-Teesdale, one provided by the Lead Company). In Wolviston, however, a Mrs. Acomb carried on a school which attracted several children of the village or from neighbouring areas. In 1880, there were 46 children attending her school. As only 3 of these were over school age, and 7 from Elwick, she was educating 36 children from Wolviston, or one-third of those of school age (a census of 1882 revealing 106 children of school age in the parish). In Norton, according to a census of 1873, there were 92 children attending 3 private schools there, out of 477 children of Norton attending any school.²⁹

Most of the private schools of Tees-side were located in the towns, where they attracted large numbers of children. Middlesbrough had 31 private adventure schools in 1870 with 1068 (21% of those at school in the town). About half of these were providing for middle-class children and charged fees of more than 9d. a week. In Stockton, in 1871, there were 13 private elementary schools, with 498 on the rolls, while 2845 children were attending public elementary schools in the town. Darlington had 11 private schools, with 449 children on the rolls in 1871 (whereas 4019 scholars were attending public elementary schools at the time).³⁰

After sufficient places in public elementary schools for all the children of the districts had been provided by the School Boards, parents sent their children to private adventure schools for two main reasons. One was due to snobbery or ignorance on their part; some parents believed that because the fees of private, were higher than those of public schools, the former schools provided a superior type of education. The other reason was more ominous: many parents sent their children to private schools as a means of evading the compulsory education insisted upon by the bye-laws of the School Boards. Private adventure schools were prepared to register the attendance of pupils even if they had been present only part of the day, and were deliberately negligent in their attendance records. The schools thus became places of refuge for children whose parents wished to evade compulsory education. The School Boards made repeated attempts to secure reliable attendance records from them, but usually with most unsatisfactory results. In 1875, Middlesbrough School Board reported that of the 28 private adventure schools in the town, only 8 supplied the Board with weekly returns of attendance, and that, in their estimation, 30%-50% of children said to be attending, in fact did not - the schools not minding whether or not they attended so long as they got the fees.^{+ 31}

⁺ for more details about this problem, see above, Chapter VII, Section 1.

The private adventure schools posed a problem to the School Boards, not only because they provided a means of escaping compulsory education, but also because the education there given was often of a very low standard, and in surroundings that were most unsatisfactory from a sanitary point of view. In 1881 and 1885, the conditions prevailing in the private schools of the town were reported on to Stockton School Board: in not one case was the ventilation found to be satisfactory, and most of them were overcrowded; in one case, the school was being held in a Mission room which had accommodation for 100 children, but 150 scholars were on the roll and 162 actually present on the day it was inspected. It was run by the proprietress and her sister, and was badly lit and ventilated. In another case which had attracted the attention of the School Investigation Committee, a child of 11 years had been going to an Infants school kept by an old woman who did not herself profess to teach, but kept the school on in memory of her dead daughter who had been a schoolmistress; she could not even read or write. The School Board, after hearing these cases passed a resolution which they sent to the Education Department, directing the Department's attention to:

"the large number of schools (so called) held in small private houses in this town which are for the most part unsuitable for the purpose, they being held in one room of a cottage not more than 10 to 12 feet square, and in which not infrequently 25 to 60 children may be found under the care of a person who is very ignorant of the duties of a schoolmistress, as well as of the sanitary arrangements for so large a number of children."

Similar conditions came to light in Middlesbrough and Darlington, although the latter School Board did admit in 1875 that about half of the private schools of the town were fairly efficient and capable of teaching the 3 R's and had reasonable sanitary conditions. The other half, however, were satisfactory in neither respect. In 1882, the wardens of this Board gave the Board details of the private schools then in existence: 32

<u>Proprietor</u>	<u>Accommodation at 8 sq.ft. per child</u>	<u>Number on roll</u>	<u>Average attendance</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
Mrs. Denham	18	18	?	Not willing to keep a register or report on absentees. This person has 10/- week parish relief.
Miss Penman	46	35	30	Well conducted school.
Mrs. Hornsey	24	28	20	Well conducted school.
Miss Atkinson	21	19	16	Certificated teacher.
Mrs. Herne	18	28	?	Has lowest class of children. Little yard and the children play in the street.
Miss Milburn	23	17	15	Respectable school.
Mrs. Meacock	23	30	25	Respectable school.
Miss McCormack	41	30	25	Respectable school.
Miss Lightfoot	<u>19</u>	<u>39</u>	25	Respectable school.
	<u>233</u>	<u>244</u>		

In districts where private schools were flourishing, the School Boards were very conscious of the problem which they presented, but they were at a loss as to how exactly they could tackle it. The Boards were cautious about interfering with them, partly because they had no real legal right to intervene, and, in some cases, partly because the Boards appreciated that the schools provided a living for their owners. But all the School Boards which were faced by the problem did make some attempts to curb the worst features of the schools. They had, however, no legal powers to inspect the schools or to insist on any minimum standard of efficiency, and they constantly petitioned the Government to give them or the H.M.I's such powers. In 1875, for example, Darlington School Board suggested to the Education Department that:

1. The same space should be required for children in private schools as for public elementary schools;
2. Accurate registers should be made obligatory on the schools, and the School Boards should be given the authority to inspect them at reasonable times;

3. The school rooms should be open for inspection by the Boards or their officers at all reasonable times.

In the same year, the School Boards of Middlesbrough and Norton supported Hull School Board's petition for compulsory inspection of Dame and Adventure schools, and got their M.P's to support it in the House of Commons; Middlesbrough School Board also suggested that private schools be only considered efficient if:

1. The head teacher was a graduate, or was certificated, or had passed some other high level examination; or
2. The scholars were regularly presented for examination at the University Local examinations; or
3. The H.M.I. or School Board inspector examined the school premises and instruction, and declared them to be suitable and conforming to the requirements of the Code.

It also suggested that no persons should in future be allowed to open a new school unless they held a certificate from the Education Department.³³

But these petitions had little impact, for the School Boards never acquired the powers which they wanted, which would have enabled them to control the standard of private adventure schools. Indeed, in the later years, when offering such suggestions, the Boards, fully aware of the cautiousness of the Education Department, did not expect it to do much about the problem.

But there were more indirect ways of tackling the problem posed by the private schools. One such means, was to use their powers under Section 74 of the 1870 Education Act which had authorised them to enforce compulsory education. Several School Boards decided to summon before the magistrates for non-attendance parents whose children were attending unsatisfactory private schools; it would have then been for the parents to have proved that their children were receiving efficient instruction. Middlesbrough and Stockton School Boards decided to try this procedure in some of the worst cases, while Wolviston School Board considered pursuing this course of action if the other methods of ending Mrs. Acomb's school proved unsuccessful. However, the Boards found it

almost impossible to prove to the magistrates that attendance at a private school did not satisfy the law, and they had to look for other ways of tackling the problem.³⁴

Another weapon which the Boards could utilise in their fight against the bad private schools was to secure their condemnation on sanitary grounds. This approach met with more success than the other methods they had tried. In September 1873, Middlesbrough School Board ordered its Clerk to draw the attention of the town's sanitary committee to the overcrowding in Mrs. Pearson's dame school at Linthorpe, and to take proceedings against it. The Corporation then intervened, and the overcrowding soon ended. Likewise, in 1881, Stockton School Board referred 41 private adventure schools to the sanitary authority, and as a result, 20 had soon ceased to exist. But such methods tended to have only a temporary effect. By 1885, for example, 16 new schools had been opened up in Stockton to take the place of the 20 closed in 1881.³⁵

Because the School Boards were unable to control the activities of the private schools, they flourished and remained a problem for many years. Although the number of private schools declined in some districts for a few years after the establishment of the School Boards (in Darlington, for example, the number of private schools by 1880 had dropped from 11 to 6, and the number on their rolls from 449 to 125) they appeared to increase again during the early 1880's. By 1882, Darlington had 9 private schools with 244 on the rolls, whilst in Stockton, by 1885, there were 21 private adventure schools with 786 children on their rolls, compared to 13 in 1871, with 498 on the rolls. The number of children attending private schools in Middlesbrough showed little change up to the mid-1880's. But after this time, the private schools began no longer to present so serious a problem. Wolviston School Board appears to have had no more trouble from Mrs. Acomb's school after 1885 (when it had decided to take proceedings against it on sanitary grounds) while the other Boards ceased to discuss the problem or to petition the Education Department about it. Mr. Blackiston, Chief H.M.I. for the North East, reported that the 1891 Act which had for the most part made elementary education free, had caused

a large number of worthless private schools to disappear, and by 1900, only a very few private schools still existed in the area: 5 in Middlesbrough, 3 in Stockton and 8 in Darlington, some of which were art or commercial schools. The problem of the unsanitary dames' schools was now at an end.³⁶

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CONCLUSION

The School Boards of Tees-side, on their establishment in the 1870's, faced many problems. In common with the Boards elsewhere in the country, they were expected by their electors to provide a sufficient number of elementary school places for the needs of their districts, and to do this for as low a cost as was feasible. But the fast industrial expansion of much of the area, which virtually caused a population explosion, made this a much more difficult task than the one facing most of the other School Boards of the country. The School Board of a fast expanding town such as Middlesbrough, found it necessary to spend much effort and money merely to provide education for the same proportion of the population which had been receiving it when the Board had been set up. The low rateable value of much of the area made this even a greater problem: industrial towns such as Middlesbrough and Stockton, and even the country town of Middleton-in-Teesdale which was being affected by a decline in the lead trade, had a much lower rateable value than many other towns of England and Wales. The School Boards also had to decide whether or not to exercise their powers of compulsory school attendance under the 1870 Education Act, and if so, they were faced by a considerable task when they tried to accomplish this in the face of opposition from employers and parents. Private adventure schools posed an additional problem, for they often obstructed the work of the School Boards, both by providing a very low standard of education, and also by acting as a means whereby children could avoid the enforcement of compulsory school attendance. Above all, the School Boards faced the risk of being irrevocably divided between different factions over matters of policy, and such disunity would have the effect of arousing much hostility to their actions and cause instability in their administration by making it possible that their policies would be changed every three years. This danger was intensified to some extent by the cumulative system of voting, which encouraged minority representation, and so made it more likely that a School Board would become the battlefield for warring factions. Certain issues were potentially explosive in this connection: the questions of Religious Instruction in Board schools, of

School Board policy towards the Voluntary schools, and in particular, of the possible subsidization with rate money of denominational education through the payment by the Board of the fees of poor children attending Voluntary schools.

In later years, other problems emerged. The Great Depression along with the establishment of compulsory elementary education led to a demand for secondary and technical education in both day and evening schools, and the School Boards had to decide how far to promote such instruction. The legal problem of the expenditure of rate money on non-elementary education, complicated this matter. As other authorities were empowered by the acts of 1889 and 1890 to supply technical instruction, there was also the risk of friction arising between them and the School Boards, if they attempted to rival one another.

The policies of the School Boards of Middlesbrough and North Tees-side were to a far less extent determined by politico-religious factors, than might at first have been supposed. None of them succumbed to the danger of being torn apart by sectarian passions, and on each Board there usually prevailed a wide area of basic agreement. The two main parties - the Denominationalists and Unsectarians - were in fact not really organised parties in the modern sense at all, but loose associations of groups holding similar views. This made them much more flexible, and the members of each of the parties represented a wide range of opinions, extreme and moderate. Many issues thus cut across party lines, differences on principle being often less of official party policy than of individual belief. Separate interests within each party advocated their own special policies, sometimes in face of opposition from within their own party: the Roman Catholics, for example, advocated the use in Board Schools of the Douai Bible on occasions, while the Working Men's representatives sometimes demanded the provision of school meals, or cuts in rate expenditure. There were also many Independent members who pursued their own individualistic programmes, such as Bulmer on Middlesbrough School Board who proposed a series of sweeping cuts in Board expenditure. In addition, the members of both parties were usually willing to compromise over matters of policy in order to reach a generally acceptable solution to any problem.

Certain issues provoked little controversy, and policies could often be decided upon which were generally acceptable to the members of both parties. Both parties officially supported the enforcement of compulsory attendance at school; they both agreed upon the necessity of Board schools (with the exception of the Denominationalists at Middleton St. George during the first three years of the School Board, and the members of Cowpen Bewley School Board in the 1880's); in the towns, both parties also agreed upon the necessity of the Voluntary schools educating large numbers of children. Both parties claimed to be efficient, and prided themselves on being economical compared with many other School Boards of the country. In fact, there was so much basic agreement of policy on some School Boards, especially those of the smaller school districts, that many elections were uncontested, and apathy became apparent, both among the electors, many of whom did not bother to vote, and among the members, many of whose attendance at Board meetings was very poor. At several elections in the smaller districts, the candidates did not even publish their religion or political party. There were also other issues, which, although controversial, were not debated along party lines. The question of whether or not Stockton School Board should build a Higher Grade School during the 1890's, proved unpolitical in this sense, while even the question of Religious Instruction in Board schools cut across party lines, as was clear when it was debated on Darlington School Board, where members of both parties could be found who wished for the total exclusion of Religious Instruction in the schools, or for undenominational Religion to be taught there.

The two parties were divided, however, over certain matters of policy, as became clear at election times. In general, the Denominationalists stood for greater economy in the provision of Board education, the expansion of Voluntary schools in preference to that of Board schools, and the teaching of more Religion in elementary schools; the Unsectarians, for ample provision of Board education and the prevention of any financial assistance to voluntary schools out of the rates.

But these differences usually proved to be more apparent in principle than real in practice. The Denominationalists might make an issue of "economy", but the Unsectarians also could not afford to get the reputation of being too liberal with the ratepayers' money; likewise, however much the Unsectarians in the industrial towns distrusted the voluntary schools, they appreciated the fact that many children had to continue to be educated in them if the rate expenditure was to be kept down to a reasonable level. None of the School Boards thus ever consciously attempted to squeeze out the Voluntary schools by overestimating an educational deficiency, or by other methods. In addition, whatever they said in the heat of an election, most of the School Board members were careful to treat any potentially explosive issue in a spirit of compromise and conciliation, with the result that, although differences of opinion openly remained, little sectarian bitterness was aroused, and most of the policies of the Board towards such issues tended to be unprovocative and moderate, whichever party was in control. Thus, all the School Boards ^{decided} on some form of undenominational Religious Instruction and worship in Board schools, with the possible exception of Cowpen Bewley, and when feelings were enflamed in Darlington over the payment of fees for poor children attending voluntary schools, a compromise solution was finally reached when a voluntary fund was established for this purpose. This spirit of conciliation can also be seen in the selection of successors for retiring Board members. These were chosen on the basis of selecting a person who most closely represented the same interest as the retiring member; the controlling party did not make use of such an opportunity to increase its majority of the Board.

The parties tended to be most partisan at election time and while in opposition. Most of the elections - at any rate in the towns - were fought along party lines, and the Board members felt more free to advocate any extreme views they might have held, when their party had not control of the Board. Thus, although a tendency was noticeable in some cases for the Denominationalists to be more economical and to expand Board schools with less enthusiasm than their opponents (as for

example those controlling Darlington School Board in the second half of the period), there was usually no great difference in practice between the Boards under Denominationalist control and those under Unsectarian control. The parties also lacked consistency in pursuing controversial policies. In the first flush of victory, a party which had just won control of a School Board might force through several reforms along the lines it had advocated when in opposition and during the election campaign, but such measures never achieved any great permanent effect, and the party's enthusiasm for such measures tended to peter out after a time. The Denominationalists achieved no great economies after their triumph in the 1883 Darlington election, and did nothing to alter the provisions for Religious education in Board schools which they had criticised in the past, while the changes in party control of the Stockton School Board during the 1880's and 1890's resulted in no lasting changes in the School Board policies - the only short burst of measures for more economy in Board expenditure of this School Board were in fact made when the Unsectarian party was in control during the late 1880's, and this had little effect on the level of the rate expenditure. The Stockton Unsectarian party in fact, proved just as reluctant to provide additional Board school places as the Denominationalists, when they were in control of the Board.

Party pronouncements, especially during the election campaigns, thus tended to exaggerate the differences between the two parties. The Denominationalist party proved extravagant in its claims to greater efficiency and economy, as were the Unsectarians in their claims to be much more progressive with respect to the provision of Board education, and they exaggerated the harm which the Denominationalists might do to Board education if they won control of the School Boards. In tackling most problems, the parties differed little in practice, for their members were for the most part sincere in doing their best in carrying out their duties, and were largely pragmatic in approach. If differences between the policies of the two parties when in control of the Boards were at times discernible, it is difficult to generalize about

them. At any one time, the Unsectarian party of one School Board might be more "economical" than the Denominationalist party of a neighbouring Board. A few years later, this might well be reversed. One party on Middlesbrough School Board might have a different approach to the same problem as the equivalent party on Stockton or Darlington School Boards. Each School Board was to some extent individualistic in respect of its problems and the policies of both its parties, and in most cases there was a basic continuity of policy which was little affected by changes in party control.

If it is almost impossible to generalize with confidence about any differences of policy and achievement between the two parties, it is much more apparent that differences did exist between those of the School Boards of the large industrial towns and those of the small rural districts. The smaller School Boards, especially those of Whitton and Wolviston, tended to be much more stringent in policy. They levied a lower educational rate, paid lower salaries to their teachers and officials, charged higher school fees, and proved less generous in the remission of fees for poor children. As a result, the standard of education which they provided was often lower than that of the town Board schools, and their administration less efficient. It was to be expected that School Boards of rural villages would not be able to afford to appoint the full-time officials that the town Boards could: expert lawyers as Clerks, accountants as finance officers and even educationalists as Board Inspectors. It was also to be expected that such small School Boards could not provide the wide range of educational facilities which the towns Boards, with large populations to serve, could provide, such as secondary and technical classes, pupil-teacher centres, and industrial and other special schools. But in fact, they proved to be less generous than could have been reasonably expected even from Boards in small villages: they tended to spend less on administration, even when the relative sizes of their budgets were taken into account; they made no real attempt to provide adequately for evening classes, and they proved less efficient in their enforcement of school attendance.

At their dissolution after the 1902 Education Act, most of the Tees-side School Boards, especially those of the three industrial towns, could look back with some justifiable satisfaction over the record of their achievements. Practically all the children of their districts were receiving some form of efficient education, and average attendance at school had steadily improved over the previous thirty years. The problem of the bad private adventure and dames' schools had virtually disappeared, in spite of the incentive to send their children to such schools to parents who wished to evade compulsory school attendance, and the inadequacy of the School Boards' powers for fighting the worst cases. The Boards had provided and maintained elementary schools which were of quite a high standard for the most part, and had done so at a reasonable cost. The ratepayers had come to recognise that the Boards were doing useful work, and only a few isolated voices had urged their abolition before the 1902 Act; they had also in general achieved a good relationship with the voluntary schools and the rating and technical instruction authorities (with the exception of Stockton School Board and Durham County Council). Some of the most influential local men had stood for election to the Boards, and had spent much time, energy and even money in their service.

But there were also some flaws in their record. If their provision of elementary education had been adequate, it had been proved necessary for the Education Department to regularly egg on the School Boards to provide a sufficient number of school places and to ensure that all their schools were of a satisfactory condition. The provision of an adequate system of evening education had come late, and even by the late 1890's, this was largely confined to the School Boards of the three industrial towns, and even there, was failing to attract a reasonable number of students. But the greatest failing of the School Boards lay in the sphere of secondary education. Even in the towns little provision had been made for working class children to benefit from secondary education, and the School Boards, with the exception of Stockton's, had tended to leave the provision of secondary and technical education to voluntary efforts and the Technical Instruction Authorities, with the result that it was far from adequate for the needs of the area by 1902.

The School Boards had accomplished much in the thirty years of their existence, but they had also left to their successors a great educational task to tackle.

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APPENDIX II POPULATION OF MIDDLESBROUGH AND NORTH TEES-SIDE 1861-1901

<u>School Districts</u> (civil parishes)	<u>1871</u>	<u>1901</u>	<u>Increase 1861-1901:</u>	
			<u>Total</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
<u>Middlesbrough</u>	39,544	100,849	81,325	417%
Barnard Castle	4,278	4,421	-	-
<u>Billingham</u>	1,022	3,729	2,798	301%
Bishopton	409	322	-	-
Blackwell	343	372	36	11%
Bolam	111	141	28	25%
Brafferton	236	129	-	-
Cockerton ⁺	2,669	1,469	-	-
Cockfield	1,030	1,833	827	82%
<u>Cowpen Bewley</u>	970	1,026	578	129%
<u>Darlington</u>	27,729	44,511	28,722	182%
Denton ⁺	513	412	-	-
Eaglescliffe	729	1,426	728	104%
East Hartburn	208	559	396	243%
Egglestone	756	546	-	-
Evenwood and Barony	3,060	4,428	1,754	66%
Gainford ⁺	925	956	119	14%
Great Aycliffe ⁺	974	914	-	-
Great Stainton ⁺	399	354	-	-
Grindon	348	391	88	29%
Haughton-le-Skerne ⁺	970	869	43	5%
Heighington ⁺	1,135	1,178	52	5%
High Coniscliffe	192	302	68	29%
Hurworth	1,357	1,377	185	16%
Ingleton ⁺	663	677	-	-
Langleydale-with-Shotton	178	238	18	8%
Long Newton ⁺	403	499	38	8%
Low Coniscliffe	264	113	-	-
Low Dinsdale	243	238	30	14%
<u>Middleton-in-Teesdale</u>	2,386	1,987	-	-
<u>Middleton St. George</u>	826	1,157	863	294%

<u>School Districts</u>	<u>1871</u>	<u>1901</u>	<u>Increase 1861-1901:</u>	
			<u>Total</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Neasham	365	384	51	15%
Newbiggin	645	406	-	-
<u>Norton</u>	2,824	4,532	2,215	96%
Piercebridge	253	207	-	-
Redmarshall ⁺	260	309	71	30%
Sadberge	348	396	41	10%
Staindrop ⁺	1,504	1,553	-	-
Stainton-with-Streatlam	387	292	-	-
<u>Stockton</u>	28,021	51,478	37,991	282%
<u>Whitton</u> ⁺	202	1,179	1,099	1,374%
Whorlton ⁺	370	285	-	-
Winston	336	344	2	1%
<u>Wolviston</u> ⁺	757	728	-	-

⁺ combined with neighbouring parishes.

APPENDIX III PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS IN MIDDLESBROUGH AND NORTH
TEES-SIDE: AVERAGE ATTENDANCE 1870-1900

<u>School districts and schools</u> ⁺	<u>1870:</u>		<u>1900:</u>	
	<u>denom- ina- tion</u>	<u>average attend- ance</u>	<u>denom- ina- tion</u>	<u>average attend- ance</u>
Middlesbrough:				
Denmark St.	-	-	Board	1071
Fleetham St.	-	-	Board	1083
Hugh Bell	-	-	Board	1007
Linthorpe	-	-	Board	287
Lower East St.	British	215	Board	746
Middlesbrough	Wesleyan	189	Wesleyan	618
Newport Rd.	-	-	Board	1098
St. Hilda's	Church	518	Church	576
St. John's	National	517	National	866
St. Mary's	-	-	R.Cath.	1123
St. Patrick's	-	-	R.Cath.	820
St. Paul's	National	424	National	669
South Bank	National	67	-	-
Southend	-	-	Board	1133
Stockton St.	-	-	Board	158
Victoria Rd.	-	-	Board	1101
Barnard Castle:				
Barnard Castle	National	315	National	191
Barnard Castle	Wesleyan	172	Wesleyan	157
St. Mary's	R.Catholic	69	R.Cath.	51
Barrington Victoria	British	102	British	162
Billingham:				
Billingham	-	-	Church	92
Haverton Hill: St. John's	Church	50	Church	342
Port Clarence: St. Thomas'	-	-	R.Cath.	228

⁺ in receipt of annual grants from the Committee of Council on Education.

School districts and schools

	1870:		1900:	
	denom- ina- tion	average attend- ance	denom- ina- tion	average attend- ance
Bishopton	National	49	National	72
Blackwell	-	-	British	42
Bolam	-	-	Church	57
Brafferton	-	-	National	45
Cockerton	-	-	Church	214
Cockfield	-	-	Church	340
Cowpen Bewley:				
Cowpen Bewley	-	-	National	21
Port Clarence	British	181	Bell Bros.	80
Darlington:				
Albert Rd.	British	355	Board	885
Bank Top Railway	British	182	-	-
Beaumont Rd.	-	-	Board	792
Bridge St.	British	68	-	-
Brunswick St. (St. Patrick's)	R. Catholic	80	Board	344
Corporation Rd.	-	-	Board	436
Darlington	Wesleyan	245	Wesleyan	619
Gurney Pease	-	-	Board	294
Harrowgate Hill	-	-	Board	342
Kendrew St.	British	192	Board	367
Practising	-	-	British	114
Rise Carr	British	81	Board	348
St. Augustine's	R. Catholic	174	R. Cath.	383
St. Cuthbert's	National	210	National	280
St. John's	National	240	National	648
St. Paul's	National	152	National	439
St. William's	-	-	R. Cath.	266
Skinnergate	British	133	-	-
Trinity	National	260	National	365

<u>School districts and schools</u>	<u>1870:</u>		<u>1900:</u>	
	<u>denom- ina- tion</u>	<u>average attend- ance</u>	<u>denom- ina- tion</u>	<u>average attend- ance</u>
Denton	-	-	National	65
Eaglescliffe	National	96	National	83
East Hartburn	-	-	British	73
Egglestone	National	105	National	89
Evenwood and Barony:				
Evenwood	National	84	National	395
Evenwood	British	73	-	-
Land's Bank	-	-	National	55
Morley Etherley	-	-	National	100
Ramshaw Colliery	-	-	-	120
Gainford	National	121	National	110
Great Aycliffe:				
Aycliffe Diamond Jubilee	-	-	-	110
Aycliffe	-	-	National	44
Great Stainton	-	-	National	-
Grindon:				
Grindon	-	-	Church	38
Wynyard Park	-	-	Church	49
Haughton-le-Skerne	National	89	National	130
Heighington	Church	51	Church	122
High Coniscliffe	National	54	National	42
Hurworth:				
Hurworth	National	72	National	119
Hurworth	Wesleyan	82	Wesleyan	32
Ingleton	-	-	National	105
Langleydale-with-Shotton	National	40	National	47
Long Newton	-	-	National	58
Low Coniscliffe	-	-	British	27
Low Dinsdale	-	-	Church	18
Middleton-in-Teesdale	-	-	Board	320
Middleton St. George	-	-	Board	161

School districts and schools

	<u>1870:</u>		<u>1900:</u>	
	<u>denom- ina- tion</u>	<u>average attend- ance</u>	<u>denom- ina- tion</u>	<u>average attend- ance</u>
Neasham	-	-	Church	71
Newbiggin	-	-	-	63
Norton	National	158	Board	578
Piercebridge	Church	94	Church	30
Redmarshall	-	-	Church	40
Sadberge	Church	93	Church	65
Staindrop:				
Infants	-	-	-	66
Staindrop	National	101	National	190
Stainton-with-Streatlam	National	45	National	46
Stockton:				
Bayley St.	-	-	Board	875
Bowesfield Lane	-	-	Board	1129
Higher Grade	-	-	Board	481
Hume St.	British	300	Board	344
Industrial	National	221	-	-
Mill Lane	-	-	Board	1312
Oxbridge Lane	-	-	Board	803
Portrack Lane	-	220	Board	190
Regent St.	-	-	Board	168
St. Cuthbert's	-	-	R.Catholic	233
St. James'	-	-	Church	259
St. Mary's	-	-	R.Catholic	1156
St. Thomas'	National	194	National	307
Tilery Rd.	-	-	Board	869
Trinity (Boys & Girls)	-	-	National	446
Whitton	-	-	Board	192
Whorlton	National	59	National	68
Winston	Church	19	Church	54
Wolviston	-	-	Board	107

APPENDIX IV SCHOOL BOARD INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

<u>School Board</u>	<u>Income</u>					
	<u>Grants</u>	<u>School fees & Books</u>	<u>Loans</u>	<u>Rates</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Total</u>
<u>1873-4</u>	£	£	£	£	£	£
Middlesbrough	400	521	9667	3000	-	13,588
Stockton	118	229	1388	1000	-	2,734 ⁺
Darlington ⁺⁺	412	458	-	1008	18	1,896
Norton	72	208	4496	250	-	5,026
Cowpen Bewley	-	48	-	30	-	78
<u>1883-4</u>						
Middlesbrough	3,870	2149	5115	2500	-	13,634
Stockton	2,618	1392	-	4000	37	8,047
Darlington	2,084	1581	-	1937	68	5,670
Norton	288	170	-	491	-	948
Middleton-in-Teesdale	274	169	-	260	-	703
Cowpen Bewley	-	-	-	60	-	60
Whitton	109	121	-	187	-	447
Wolviston	51	49	-	180	-	280
<u>1901-2</u>						
Middlesbrough	19,277	1319	10,000	19,535	92	50,223
Stockton	11,334	207	4,550	10,874	155	27,119
Darlington.	6,738	313	6,200	4,826	118	18,194
Norton	1,086	-	-	1,288	19	2,393
Middleton-in-Teesdale	477	3	-	346	-	826
Middleton St. George	251	-	-	363	-	615
Whitton	329	-	-	615	10	953
Wolviston	153	-	-	169	1	323

⁺ Committee of Council Report incorrectly totals this at £2806.

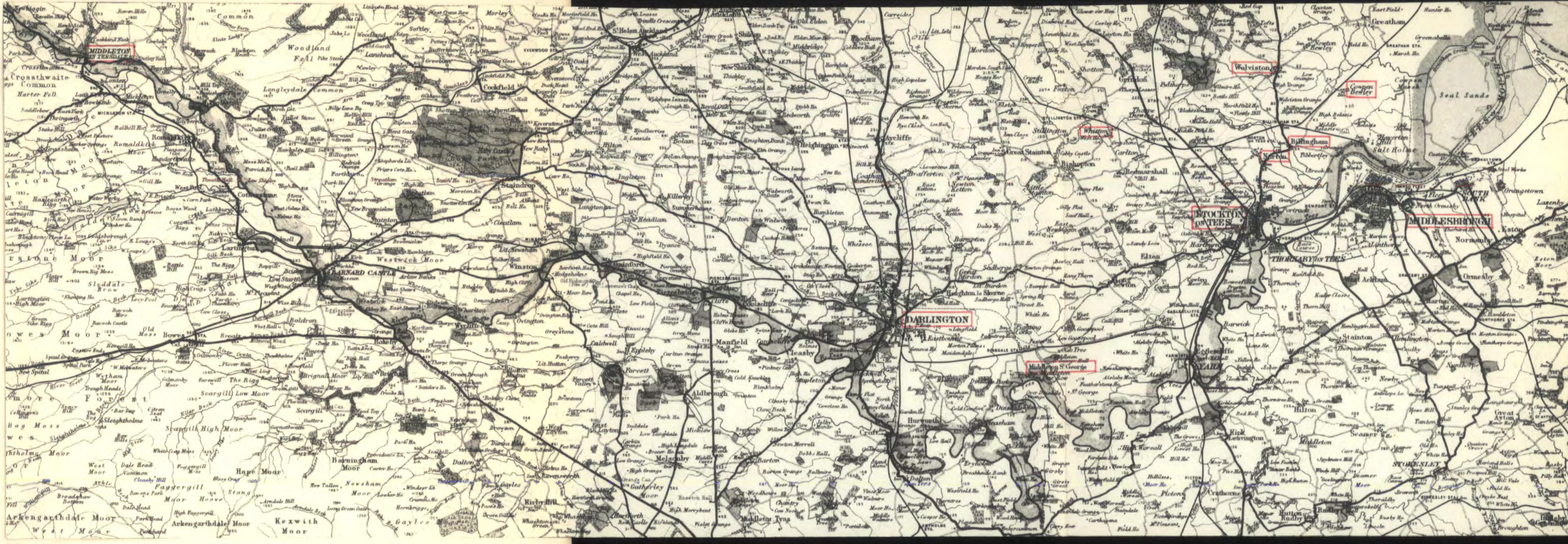
⁺⁺ income for 1874-5 given, as accounts for 1873-4 are incomplete.

<u>School Board</u>	<u>Expenditure</u>					
	<u>Admini- stration</u>	<u>Mainte- nance of schools</u>	<u>Land & Bldgs.</u>	<u>Debt Pay- ments</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Total</u>
<u>1873-4</u>	£	£	£	£	£	£
Middlesbrough	604	2,260	10,810	305	519	14,498
Stockton	296	902	283	209	208	1,898
Darlington ⁺	377	1,534	-	-	51	1,961
Norton	119	615	3,434	-	52	4,220
Cowpen Bewley	-	216	-	-	19	235
<u>1883-4</u>						
Middlesbrough	879	8,131	4,939	1709	-	15,658
Stockton	920	5,527	313	1151	-	7,910
Darlington	545	5,140	81	157	-	5,923
Norton	75	669	-	241	-	985
Middleton-in-Teesdale	37	645	-	-	-	682
Cowpen Bewley	48	-	-	-	-	48
Whitton	18	291	-	78	17	403
Wolviston	12	165	-	75	9	261
<u>1901-2</u>						
Middlesbrough	935	30,853	11,183	8477	128	51,576
Stockton	1258	21,800	3,604	4461	-	31,123
Darlington	750	14,236	7,568	2413	-	24,969
Norton	77	1,662	-	-	486	2,224
Middleton-in-Teesdale	31	623	-	179	-	833
Middleton St. George	44	499	-	-	-	543
Whitton	37	756	-	78	-	871
Wolviston	12	281	-	57	4	353

⁺ expenditure for 1874-5 given, as accounts for 1873-4 are incomplete.

APPENDIX V AVERAGE ATTENDANCE IN BOARD AND VOLUNTARY PUBLIC
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL 1870-1900

	<u>Board</u>	<u>Church</u>	<u>Roman Catholic</u>	<u>British</u>	<u>Wesleyan</u>	<u>Total Voluntary</u>
Middlesbrough:						
1870	-	1526	-	215	189	1930
1875	923	2101	251	799	238	3389
1880	2914	1962	1242	-	420	3624
1885	3917	2121	1584	-	668	4373
1890	5293	2166	1627	-	729	4522
1895	7339	2289	1656	-	669	4614
1900	7684	2111	1943	-	618	4672
Stockton:						
1870	-	414	-	300	-	935 ⁺
1875	659	957	365	407	-	1729
1880	1508	1293	819	410	-	2522
1885	2570	1535	1033	414	-	2982
1890	3510	1511	1083	304	-	2898
1895	5217	1070	1315	-	-	2385
1900	6171	1012	1389	-	-	2401
+ including 221 in Ragged School.						
Darlington:						
1870	-	862	254	1011	245	2372
1875	641	1368	431	661	293	2753
1880	2251	1275	536	-	360	2171
1885	2531	1819	584	-	552	2955
1890	2608	1845	506	-	567	2918
1895	3543	1936	652	156	629	3373
1900	3809	1732	649	114	619	3114



Tees-side in the late nineteenth century.

