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EDUCATION IN BLACKBURN, 1870 - 1914.

M.Ed. Thesis, 1961

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## I N T R O D U C T I O N .

Although the Parish of Blackburn can claim a Saxon origin it did not become important until the nineteenth century. Like so many other towns in the county, it owes its development and wealth to the growth of the cotton industry. Cotton goods were made in and around Blackburn by hand for over a hundred years before the industrial revolution which has its traditional beginnings in the eighteenth century, but these early "cotton goods" were composed partly of wool or linen, except for a limited range of small articles which were entirely made of cotton.

The change came between 1760 and 1780 when the revolutionary machines of Hargreaves (himself a native of the Blackburn area), Arkwright and Crompton made it possible for large pieces of cloth to be manufactured completely of cotton. The new machines demanded capital resources beyond the means of most independent domestic workers, and also needed water or steam power to drive them, and consequently factories were built. This led to a concentration of large numbers of operatives in the vicinity of the mills, and new towns were born. Blackburn was one of them.

Parliament soon recognised the changing times, and an Act was passed in 1774 which materially assisted progress in the industry. The duty of sixpence a yard on pure cotton cloth was halved in view of the fact that "a new manufacture of stuffs wholly made of cotton wool hath been set up within this Kingdom!" A further concession in the Act was that "it shall be lawful for any person to wear any new manufacture made wholly of cotton". This Act may almost be regarded as Blackburn's birthright, for the former tax had been prohibitive.

Before the end of the century, the first spinning mills in Blackburn, those at Wensley Fold and Spring Hill, were in production, and others soon followed. The use of machinery was not at first universally popular, and mobs of unemployed workers occasionally ventured out on machine-wrecking expeditions. Memories of these activities, together with the technical difficulties connected with the operation of Cartwright's power-loom and its successors, delayed the extension of the factory system on any scale to the weaving processes until about 1830, but thereafter the cotton-weaving industry, and with it the town, quickly grew to maturity. In 1851 Blackburn was granted a Charter of Incorporation. The population at that time was 46,000 and within a generation it had more than doubled. At the turn of the century it had grown to 129,000 and the peak of 133,000 was recorded in 1911 when the town boasted of being the largest cotton weaving centre in the world. Much of this increase resulted from an expanding cotton trade, although engineering was an important secondary industry.

During the nineteenth century England was experiencing a process of urbanisation which changed the way of life of the average Englishman. By the census of 1851 he lived in a town rather than a village, and he had to learn how to adjust himself to life in a new sort of community. At the same time technical and industrial progress brought opportunities of a higher material standard of comfort and convenience. The Municipal Reform Act of 1835 gave a much needed overhaul to the machinery of urban government, but in the following generation it was often ad hoc public bodies or private companies that were the pioneers of social enterprise. In the last quarter of the century there was a tendency for the municipal corporations to take over a widening variety of public services. This was illustrated in Blackburn where the Waterworks were purchased from a private company in 1875, where the Gas Light Company was absorbed by the Corporation in 1878,

where the Voluntary Fire Brigade was incorporated into the Borough Police Force in 1882, where the Burial Board handed over its responsibilities to the Town Council in 1893 and where the Tramways were taken over (and electrified) by the Corporation from a London syndicate in 1898.

The School Board was later in the field, but this was because the churches had already been making some provision for education, and because there was a natural reluctance to intervene in such a controversial field. However, boards were established throughout England after 1870, and retained their independence until 1903, when they too renounced their rights and responsibilities to county and borough councils. But in educational matters, unlike so many other public concerns, voluntary powers and privileges were never completely yielded to public authority. By the terms of the 1902 Act a council only assumed full control of the former board schools, although it became responsible for the maintenance of all elementary schools and could assist secondary schools. In practice, the meaning of the Act, as indeed that of the 1870 Act before it, depended very much upon local circumstances. We might illustrate this by comparing average attendance figures for May 1902 in three similar industrial towns in the same part of Lancashire. In Bolton 14,540 children were educated in voluntary elementary schools compared with 10,056 in board schools; for Blackburn about ten miles away, the figures were 18,258 and 996; Preston about another ten miles away, had no school board at all, and all its children were accommodated in voluntary schools. In many other parts of the country the majority of children were in board schools and, after 1903, had their elementary education, and sometimes their secondary education too, provided in council schools.

From the nature of the organisation of Blackburn's labour force into comparatively large units, some over 1,000 strong, and the concentration of wealth into the hands of a small number of employers, the great bulk of the townsfolk belonged to the working class. Life in the mill was hard for man, woman and child

and extreme poverty was common right into the present century. The vagaries of the cotton trade sometimes brought acute unemployment, and this in turn occasionally led to mob violence particularly in 1826, 1842 and 1878. On the first of these occasions the handloom weavers went on a machine-breaking spree. On the second, when the Chartist "Plug Plot" spread to Blackburn, attempts were made to close the mills by withdrawing the plugs from boilers and so direct public attention to political grievances. The arson outrages of 1878 resulted from a decision of mill-owners in East Lancashire to reduce workers' wages by 10% during a period of bad trade. About 20,000 operatives, mostly weavers, were soon out on strike in Blackburn. After negotiations for a settlement broke down on May 11th, a large mob began breaking factory windows and ended by burning down Clayton Grange, the home of Colonel Jackson, a cotton spinner and chairman at the recent wages conference. Troops had to be called in from Preston.

Events of this nature, and there were other, but milder, strikes after 1878, affected the local elementary schools. Attendances tended to drop, probably because parents were at home "on holiday" and their children wanted to follow suit, and because half-timers naturally thought that if they were at home for the working half of the day, it was only fair that they should also miss the schooling half. Indeed, at least one school had a half-holiday during the troubles of 1878 because strikers were using the premises for a meeting. An absence of wages also forced many parents to keep their children at home because they could not afford the school pence.

Blackburn's rapid expansion between 1870 and 1914 led to a new demand for school accommodation. This problem became more acute not only because of an increase in the overall number of inhabitants but also because of a general movement from the centre of the Town to the outskirts. This was encouraged by the clearance of some of the worst slum property whenever opportunities were presented. An early instance of

this was afforded by the building of the Technical School on a site specially cleared at Blakey Moor in 1888 and a later one occurred in 1912 when in another part of the same area building operations for King George's Hall, the Police Station and the Law Courts were begun. Blackburn grew steadily in all directions until just after the turn of the century, and there were shortages of accommodation in the Intack, Cemetery, Mill Hill, Preston New Road and Ewood districts. It is indicative of the strength of local churches that the School Board only supplied one of these new deficiencies, although it had previously provided two schools that were already necessary at the beginning of our period. Before 1914 the Education Committee built one more school where a general shortage of school places was accentuated by the necessity of closing down old church premises.

An oft-neglected facet of educational, and indeed social history, is public health, but it was certainly an important part of the educational background of Blackburn. A noticeable feature of the old school log books is the number of epidemics recorded. Some of them caused whole schools to close down for weeks at a time. In addition to the usual illnesses such as measles, there were diseases such as smallpox and typhoid suggestive of defective sanitation. Numerous references show that personal cleanliness could not be taken for granted. The earliest Borough health records date from 1881, and some indication of the standard of public health at that time is given by the infantile mortality rate of 181 per thousand, and this had passed the 200 mark a decade later. Today it is nearer 40.

A great deal of national legislation only has a local meaning, and this study will endeavour to trace the impact of the great education acts of 1870 and 1902, together with a series of minor ones, upon one community. As we shall see, Blackburn was not always typical of all parts of the country, but this only serves to illustrate the complexity of English



life, and in particular English education. Our story will reveal more than the development of local education, for education is a window into social history, and the story of Blackburn's schools between 1870 and 1914 throws a great deal of light upon the progress of a great manufacturing town during an age of social revolution.

SECTION ONE :      ELEMENTARY EDUCATION.

I.      The Age of the School Board 1870 - 1903.

Election of the Blackburn School Board.

"Scarcely second in importance to any other public question in this country is the question of National Education..... Experience has conclusively proved that sectarian education, however sharply watched and freely subsidised by the State, must fail to absorb the entire mass of our juvenile population...."      In these terms the leader in the Blackburn Times of September 25th 1869 stated the problem.      The following January it was echoed in the House of Commons by John Bright when he complained that "myriads of children are totally neglected."      He went on to point out the urgency of the situation:

"While the English workman's child is being drilled in catechisms and suckled on cant, the offspring of the American or the German are imbibing the elements of the sciences and the arts, which will enable them to outstrip their rivals in the prosecution of all manner of industrial occupations..."

For the rest of the century Englishmen were increasingly aware of the threat of foreign competition and its connection with education.      Most of the Royal Commissions and Government Committees that were appointed to investigate English educational questions also made surveys of foreign methods of education.

A domestic reason for educational reform was the passing of the 1867 Reform Act which virtually enfranchised working men in the towns, and by then the bulk of the population lived in towns.      It was inconceivable that a parliamentary democracy should be controlled by an ignorant electorate.

Most of the educational controversy was over the method not the need for reform. The two main opinions in the country were represented by the Educational Union, supported largely by the Church of England and the Church of Rome, that advocated an extension of the voluntary system, and the Educational League, which included some Liberal Churchmen, and most Nonconformists and Unsectarians, and which was in favour of free, compulsory education in public elementary schools with a gradual dissociation of education from the Churches. Although no branches were formed in Blackburn, townsfolk watched with interest those in nearby Darwen.

When the Education Bill was first presented to the House in February 1870, opinions in England and Blackburn varied considerably. Conservatives naturally opposed it at first because it was the work of a Liberal Government, and later many Liberal Nonconformists opposed parts of it too. Loyal acceptance was the first reaction of Blackburn's Liberal Press, but as details were unfolded and considered, there was an element of doubt, especially over the clause permitting the majority of a school board to choose denominational religious instruction. By the time this and other disputed provisions were amended and the Bill passed in August, local opinion was reasonably satisfied.

A division within the Liberal Party at a national level was also manifest, and the debates dragged on in Parliament from February to August, and the Bill needed the strenuous support of Forster, Bruce and Gladstone to become law at all in any recognizable form. Perhaps the Bill, in a modified form, owed part of its final success to the preoccupation of Parliament at that time with urgent legislation for Ireland, the reform of the Civil Service and the Franco-Prussian War. These other questions, and the recent cotton depression, succeeded in diverting the attention of local editors for considerable periods of the debate.

Despite changes along the way, the Act managed to keep fairly close to the original basic principles stated so simply by Forster in the House of Commons in February:

"First, that we should fill the country with good schools, and secondly, that we should get the parents to send their children to them".

Unfortunately the decision regarding compulsory attendance was left to local discretion. By 1876 only about half the total population lived in areas of compulsion; Blackburn, like 84% of the towns, had appropriate bye-laws by then. Mundella's Act of 1880 introduced universal compulsory education everywhere.

In general terms the Act was a compromise designed to satisfy the main demands of most groups. One of the most controversial clauses of the original Bill was amended so that board schools were forbidden to give sectarian instruction, and so that parents could keep their children away from Scripture lessons in any public elementary school. This was of particular importance in Blackburn where the majority of the voters in 1870 were Conservative but where there was a large and lively Liberal opposition, and where the political balance was repeated in the relative strengths of the Anglican and Free Churches.

That the compromise worked for a generation was as much the result of a variety of different opinions expressed by the opposition that knew no strict party lines, as any intrinsic merit that it possessed. Some evidence of its weaknesses is suggested by the number of supplementary acts that was passed by both Parties before the end of the century.

A Blackburn press article in 1869 had suggested that the Government would have to put "new patches on old garments", and locally elected school boards were to be the "new patches". In Blackburn the religious denominations had already woven a fairly complete garment, and the patches provided by the Board were small.

The first Blackburn School Board was elected, without a contest, on January 9th 1871, only a few months after the passing of Forster's Bill through Parliament. It must have been one of the first in the County because the Education Department Report for 1871-2 shows that by June 1872 there were 11 boards in Lancashire including Bolton, Burnley, Wigan, Oldham and Rochdale. An obvious omission was Preston, which in fact was never to have a school board. Yorkshire had 12 boards. Although there was no official contest on election day, there was before it. At first there were 29 candidates for 13 seats, but 16 men were persuaded to withdraw in the preliminary stages of the campaign. However, when it was decided to adopt a form of proportional representation in which voters were permitted to distribute their 13 votes amongst the candidates in whatever manner they pleased, a number of "Independents" came forward so that there were 26 nominations. Another conference of Churchmen, Unsectarians and Roman Catholics met and again reduced the field to 13 on the eve of election day. Private agreements were reached by the three main groups until 1892 when there was the first contested election.

The Church Party's six members were all laymen and consisted of four manufacturers, an ironfounder and an architect. In the Unsectarian group there were a Congregationalist Brough Librarian, a Methodist Cotton-Waste Dealer, a United Presbyterian Salesman, a Liberal Churchman Manufacturer and a Secular Agent. The Roman Catholics were represented by two priests. This ratio between the parties, except that the Church gained a seat later on from the Unsectarians, remained throughout the whole period of the Board's history until 1901. The social composition of the Board was also similar except that clerical members sometimes represented the Church and Sectarian groups, as well as the Roman Catholics. A new Board was elected every three years.

Most of the first meeting was taken up with the election of a chairman and vice-chairman, fixing provisional rules for conducting Board meetings and a discussion about the employment of a Clerk. One member voiced the opinion that it was their duty "to educate the children from the gutters of the town".

At subsequent meetings the Board began to organise itself. Routine business was placed in the hands of four committees, Bye-Laws, Finance, Statistical and General Purposes. A Clerk, Mr. William Ditchfield was selected from 22 applicants and employed on a part-time basis for the first year at £75, on finding security in the sum of £100. From April 1872 his salary was doubled on condition that he attended to his duties from 10.0 a.m. to 1.0 p.m. and 2.30 p.m. to 6.0 p.m. Mr. Ditchfield served in this capacity until his death over twenty years later. His duties were to summon the meetings, keep the minutes, accounts and attendance register, conduct the official correspondence and prepare reports as required.

At a meeting held in the Board's temporary home, the Mayor's Parlour, in April 1871 54 items were embodied in a code of regulations for the conduct of the Board's business. Most of them dealt with the normal routine of meetings. One or two examples are quoted.

Ordinary motions for discussion had to be in the hands of the Chairman six hours before a meeting, but important items required one week's notice. "5. No business involving the appointment or dismissal of a Teacher, any new expense, or any payment (except the ordinary periodical payments), or any business which under the Education Act requires the consent of the Education Department, shall be transacted unless notice in writing of such business has been sent to every Member of the Board seven days at least before the meeting (see par.1.(g) 3rd Schedule to Education Act)".

Meetings were held at monthly intervals, although a minimum of three Members could call a special meeting when the occasion arose.

"11. - The representatives of the Press shall be admitted to the Meetings of the Board; the Board, however, reserving the power, by a majority of votes, to exclude them when and as occasion may require".

Various other items of business occupied the Board in these early months. It was approached by the Science and Art Department in South Kensington with a view to helping with local arrangements for the annual examination, but it declined on the grounds that it was "already fully engaged with the preparation of the machinery for general Educational purposes". In subsequent years the Board, like many others, did assist by appointing a local secretary.

It decided to remit the fees in public elementary schools of needy children. At this early stage the Board considered about 500 applications every half year and granted about half of them. The average weekly income per head after the deduction of rent in these families was 1/11 $\frac{1}{4}$ d.

#### The School Board Survey of 1871.

In February 1871 the Lords of the Committee of Council on Education issued a circular to the new School Board seeking information as to "the requirements of the Borough in respect of public school accommodation" and "the amount and character of existing school provision". The matter was referred to the Statistical Committee who decided to carry out a private investigation into the town's schools and child population instead of waiting for the information to be supplied after a considerable delay, and in less detail, by the Registrar General. The year was a propitious one for the project because the decennial General Census of population was due, and eighty two enumerators had already been appointed by the local registration authorities for that purpose, and

arrangements were made whereby the same staff undertook both tasks at approximately the same time. This appealed to Lancashire business sense, especially when it was agreed that the enumerators would complete the survey by the middle of April - and for a flat rate of 12/6d a head.

The form which was deposited with each householder asked for details of the names of children, their sex, age last birthday, whether in full attendance at school or "half-timer" under the Factory Act, name of day school attended (if any) and reasons (if any) for not attending a day school.

The enumerators met with little difficulty from householders. Less than a dozen citizens refused to complete the circulated form, and they were "persons belonging to the respectable class, who conceived that there was no need to ask for such information from persons in their position".

When all the forms were returned, the Clerk to the Board and the Statistical Committee produced a digest of the facts in tabulated form. First of all the figures were set out in six charts based on the Borough's six election wards. The seventh table in the Report summarised the results, and an abbreviated form of the summary appears in Appendix 1.

In April 1871 the Borough's population of 76,339 included 3,507 children in the age group 3 - 5 years, and 13,946 aged between 5 and 13, making a total of 17,453 of elementary school age. A comparison of this total with that for the Town's population reveals a proportion of 229 aged 3 - 13 years per thousand of the whole population.

The second part of the Survey was concerned with an examination of schools either in existence or planned. Below is a chart giving an outline of the findings.

DENOMINATION.	EXISTING APPROVED ACCOMMODATION.	ACCOMMODATION IN PREPARATION.	TOTAL.
Church of England	6,969	1,650	8619
Nonconformist	7,282	245	7527
Roman Catholic	2,657	130	2787
TOTAL	16,908	2,025	18933



(These calculations were based on 8 sq.ft. per child as recommended by the Education Department).

In addition to this accommodation there was room for 135 girls in the Girls' Charity School in Town Hall Street, although the pupils there would have to be taught according to the charity fund regulations. A school-room in Paradise Street belonging to the Blackburn Science Class, which met in the evening, would provide space for 112 children, if used as a day-school.

The Board felt itself unqualified to judge the efficiency or otherwise of the Town's schools, and its observations upon this particular question are very cautious and guarded. At this time the Education Department would only pay grants to schools which had been successfully visited by their inspectors, and this, of course, would be one way of arriving at the minimum number of schools in Blackburn which were efficient by the State's own standards. The Report lists nineteen schools as being under government inspection, two awaiting the results of an application to be included, and six which were neither under inspection by the Education Department nor conducted by certificated teachers.

Ten of these twenty-seven schools had an excess of nominal attendances above proper accommodation, but any hasty conclusion about overcrowding is precluded by a comparison of nominal attendances with average attendances. The latter were frequently well below the former, and in one of the schools which seemed to be overcrowded because it had 203 children on its register for 183 places, had in fact an average attendance of only 77. That is an extreme example, but in only one of the schools listed in this part of the Report was there genuine overcrowding. The low proportion of pupils in average attendance serves as a reminder to us of the rather casual approach to education by the working class in a Lancashire industrial town of less than a hundred years ago, and is also a pointer to one of the initial problems of

its School Board. Mass education was still a novelty, and not yet compulsory, and many of the children going to school in 1871 were members of a first generation that had the opportunity of a cheap elementary education. A rather similar problem, relating to attitude in school and to early leaving, has appeared more recently in the age of "secondary education for all". There was, of course, in the nineteenth century economic pressure in a cotton town where both employers and parents wanted children in the mills as soon as possible. The half-time system was one of the main results.

The great majority of children who went to school at all attended inspected schools and the Report suggests that this was because those schools were better equipped than private ventures which lacked the support of government finance, and the incentive, such as it was, provided by external examinations. Statistics reveal that out of 12,807 pupils on the registers at elementary schools, 11,289 belonged to establishments receiving aid from the Education Department, and 797 others were in schools which had applied for it; whereas a mere 721 attended schools which neither received nor sought such assistance. Nearly 94 $\frac{1}{2}$ % of the children, in fact, in public elementary schools were connected with the state system.

During the course of the investigation the proportion of the young population attending school actually increased. The increase was 1,715 between November 1870 and May 1871 and new schools opened within that period accounted for only 346 of them. The Board itself believed that this resulted from "the establishment of a School Board in Blackburn, and the subsequent scrutiny of the Board into the state of the town in regard to school matters, and especially the resolution to compel attendance at school in cases where compulsion is found necessary".

Reference has been made earlier to the half-time system which was prevalent in the town. The Blackburn Board claimed that no other town in the country depended so much upon the

labour of boys and girls between the ages of 8 and 13. About 35% of the school population (and many of the remainder were too young) worked both in classroom and in mill. The evils of the practice were many and have been rightly condemned both during its lifetime and since. Children could not give their full time and energy to a normal, healthy, educational development, and were exposed to physical discomfort and moral danger in the mills and workshops in which they toiled for long hours and small reward during some of their most sensitive years. But the practice did have another side to it which may easily be overlooked. Children were permitted to work in mills on a part-time basis on condition that they attended school for the rest of the time. There was, in fact, compulsory attendance for this section of the young community, and until the School Board took advantage of the clause in the 1870 Education Act which permitted it to enforce attendance, only for this section. The half-timers were the most regular attenders at school, and their regularity provided them with some compensation for their limited school hours. It is also probable that their presence considerably inflated the general statistics for attendance in the Borough. The system produced a curious anomaly whereby those who went to work had to go to school, whilst the rest need do neither; you were given the choice of being industrious and "educated" or unemployed and ignorant!

The problem of enforcing attendance was obvious to the School Board. Although they were in no position to abolish half-timers as permitted by the Factory Acts, they were determined to improve the number of attendances recorded by those who were nominally full-time scholars. It is difficult to calculate the proportion of full-time pupils who were absent on any given day, but the Board, by a rather devious process, arrived at an estimate of nearly 30%. No causes of absence are given in the Report, but we might speculate upon some. Illness is the most obvious, and sickness, including a considerable number of epidemic diseases, was much

more rife than it is today. The great mass of the population in 1870 had little or no educational tradition, and school was not regarded as being so important then as now. Many of the jobs open in the mills to school-leavers were simple and repetitive and required little more than native intelligence and manual skill. Elementary school life at that period must have had little intrinsic attraction with its gloomy rooms, its drill methods and its frequently harsh discipline. Children would hardly go unless they had to - and we should not blame them! They could only be made to attend by law or parents; the law had not yet introduced compulsion, and in a town where both parents were out at work for long hours and ready to welcome the extra income afforded by working children, there was often a lack of compulsion in the home.

Some discussion is necessary on schools which were not classed as public elementary schools. 925 children were returned as being attached to private educational institutions, but it must not be assumed that these were all from middle and upper class homes. Blackburn was very largely a working class town, and comparatively few of its children attended satisfactory private schools such as the Town's own Grammar School or boarding schools in other districts. The term "private school" in the census really included schools of two very distinct categories; genuine middle class schools of good repute and small private working class schools held in cottages and hired rooms, and in the hands of unqualified staff. The schedules show that about half of the children at private schools were mill operatives' children, and many of them worked half-time at the mills. For example the returns of Trinity Ward indicate that 100 out of 147 children in private schools were the sons and daughters of workpeople who were "in elementary dames' schools taught in cottages, which it would be a stretch of courtesy to pronounce efficient". The Board had not actually visited any of the private schools by the Spring of 1871, but it anticipated that the inferior cottage schools

would be closed and that it would itself become responsible for providing alternative accommodation. The wealthier families who sent their children away to boarding schools or who had their sons educated locally in the Grammar School would not be affected by the Board's administration at all. It appears that the tradesman and shopkeeper class was already patronising what were locally regarded as the cream of the public elementary schools - St. John's Church Schools, Chapel Street Congregational Schools and Peter Street Wesleyan Schools (No Roman Catholic establishment was officially accorded the honour).

Well over 4,000 children between the ages of 3 and 13 were not even nominal attenders at any school. 1,878 of them who were under 5 were not the responsibility of the School Board unless, of course, the parents chose to send them to a school under that body's supervision. By the terms of the Elementary Education Act, however, School Boards were empowered, under certain conditions, to enforce attendance of children aged 5 - 13 years, and the Blackburn Board made use of the privilege in 1871. Section 74 of the Act stated:-

"Every school board may from time to time, with the approval of the Education Department, make bye-laws for all or any of the following purposes.

(1) Requiring the parents of children of such age, not less than five years nor more than thirteen years, as may be fixed by the bye-laws, to cause such children (unless there is some reasonable excuse) to attend school...

(2) Determining the time during which children are so to attend school; provided that no such bye-law shall prevent the withdrawal of any child from any religious observance or instruction in religious subjects, or shall require any child to attend school on any day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which his parent belongs, or shall be contrary to anything contained in any Act for regulating the education of children employed in labour...

Blackburn contained 916 boys and 1,586 girls, a total of 2,502 in the 5 - 13 age group not attending school. The larger proportion of girls was due to the custom in some families of keeping older girls at home to assist with the housework and the management of younger children, in some cases, no doubt because the mother herself was out at work. Compulsory attendance at school for some of these would have entailed hardship for the family, but the Board hoped that a reasoned appeal to parents would bring a favourable response. Seven classes of absentees were listed and are shown below:-

1. Children helping in the home.
2. Those employed as errand boys, nurse-girls and factory operatives.
3. Physically or mentally handicapped children.
4. Children whose parents could not afford school fees.
5. Those educated by their parents at home.
6. Children living too far from a school.
7. The children of neglectful and careless parents.

Numbers 1, 4 and 7 were reckoned by the Board to be the most common reasons.

The last part of the School Board's Report of May 1871. was concerned with a survey of the requirements and the availability of places for children of school age, with some allowance being made for an estimated 250 under 3 years and 170 over 13 years of age who were already occupying places. Some of the figures reached in the following results were estimates rather than exact calculations. At first sight the statistics would lead us to the conclusion that in the Borough as a whole there was a deficiency of places in existing or projected infant schools of about 1,000 and a surplus of places in boys', girls' and mixed schools (for children aged 7 and above) of about 1,200. After allowing a deduction of 5% from the juvenile population for those attending efficient private schools, and a further 5% for those with other legitimate excuses, the final total suggested adequate provision for the Town.

There was, however, the problem of achieving an even distribution of schools throughout the Town, according to the density of the population, so that no child need travel an unreasonable distance. The provision of accommodation varied considerably. The proportion of school places available or soon to be available to the total population in each of the six wards ranged from 1 in 3 in St. Mary's to 1 in  $6\frac{1}{2}$  in Trinity.

There was a large deficiency of both infants' and boys' and girls' places in St. John's and Trinity Wards. The cause of this was the fact that many of the Protestant Nonconformist and Roman Catholic schools were concentrated on the western side of the Borough, whereas the parish system made the distribution of Anglican churches and schools more balanced, although they provided considerably less accommodation in the eastern districts than elsewhere; indeed, the new schools about to be erected by St. Peter's Church were to be in a district already very well provided for by all denominations. At the other extreme, in Trinity Ward with a total deficiency of 880 places, the Roman Catholics could accommodate more scholars than the Church of England and the Free Churches put together.

In conclusion, the Report enumerated the School Board's suggested remedies for the shortage of places in the wards concerned. St. Mary's and St. Peter's Wards had large surpluses of accommodation, and would be able to supply the needs of their population for years to come. St. Paul's possessed sufficient places, if two uninspected schools were included, and the probable rapid rise in population which was expected in that area could be counterbalanced by the occupation, at a "nominal rent", by the Board, of vacant school buildings attached to the Baptist Church, the Primitive Methodist Church and the United Presbyterian Church (the last named being new, spacious and "in all respects eligible"). There was a deficiency in St. John's Ward which, it was hoped, might be met "by hiring at a small rent" the Sunday School

premises at Four Lane Ends which belonged to the James Street Congregational Church. Even after a due allowance had been made for new school buildings still under construction, and two uninspected schools, Trinity Ward had a shortage of between 500 and 600 places. There were no suitable premises which could be hired as a day school, so the Board planned to hire and adapt temporary buildings in the vicinity of Daisyfield Railway Station where the shortage was most acute until a board school for about 500 children could be built. Park Ward was faced with a distribution problem, but had approximately the total number of places likely to be required, and the newly elected Blackburn worthies did not "propose for the present to start any additional school under the auspices of the Board".

Similar surveys were being carried out all over England and Wales in 1871, although not all used the same machinery. The basic administrative unit was the parish, and in about 40% of those investigated there was no deficiency of accommodation.

#### The Girls' Charity School.

We will conclude our summary of Blackburn's elementary schools in 1871 by a brief mention of the Town's educational charities beginning with the Girls' Charity School. According to the Charity Commissioners' Special Report of 1826, the School was opened in 1764 with an endowment of £200 from the estate of William Leyland who had died the previous year. To his legacy was added a further sum of £262/10/-d raised by public subscription. Other donations were handed over to the fund in subsequent years and by 1796 the charity was worth £1,130. Thanks to some shrewd speculation in the Stock Market this was raised to £2,416/13/7d by 1825. In that year there were about 90 girls under instruction in reading, writing and sewing in the charge of a mistress who was paid £30 per annum



with an allowance of £4 "for firing". The girls were provided with books and clothes as well as an elementary education and instruction in the Church Catechism. By 1870 the school was well past its best and had an attendance of about 50. It did not come under the jurisdiction of the School Board, but was controlled by a moribund trust. The School was closed in 1884 and its premises in Town Hall Street sold.

#### Livesey's Charity.

A second charity that might be conveniently mentioned at this point was the one associated with Sarah Livesey who left £100 on trust by the terms of her will. The date of the foundation is apparently unknown but it was certainly before 1818. The testator intended the interest realized by her legacy to cover the cost of apprenticeship of deserving children in Livesey, Blackburn and Pleasington.

In 1886 the Charity Commissioners redirected the endowment to educational purposes of a wider nature. New trustees were to be the Vicar and Warden of Blackburn Parish Church, two representatives appointed by the School Board, Sir W.L. and Lieutenant-General Feilden. The fund was to be devoted to non-sectarian causes only with a bias towards post-elementary work. The commissioners went on to explain that "The income of the foundation shall be applied in maintaining exhibitions, to be called Livesey Exhibitions, tenable at any of the schools in the school district of Blackburn known as the Higher Grade Public Elementary Schools, or at any school or at any place of education higher than elementary approved by the governors....".

The grants were to cover tuition fees of boys or girls over nine years of age who had spent at least two years in a public elementary school in Blackburn, Livesey or Pleasington and who had passed a qualifying examination in reading, writing and arithmetic.

## The Provision of Elementary Schools.

### (A) Voluntary Schools.

One effect of the 1870 Act was the stimulating of the Churches into building many new schools throughout England and Wales, and of the million and a half additional school places that were provided in the six years following the Act, about two-thirds were the product of voluntary effort. Subscriptions for the Church of England schools alone trebled to about £750,000 during the same period. By the time the Cross Commission reported in 1888 on the working of the elementary education acts 56% of the pupils were in denominational schools, but this marked a drop in the percentage previously supplied, chiefly owing to growing financial difficulties.

Throughout the whole of our period the great majority of public elementary schools in Blackburn were provided by the Churches. In 1871 the Church of England had 15 schools (excluding the Girls' Charity School) accommodating nearly 7,300 children; the Protestant Nonconformists controlled 18 sets of premises with about 7,500 places; and the Roman Catholics possessed six schools with room for about 2,600 scholars.

The pattern steadily changed, however, during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. It was the avowed policy of the Anglicans and Catholics to extend their educational systems and resist, whenever possible, the intrusion of public authorities. The Free Churches, on the other hand, were generally advocates of the public control of education at the expense of the old denominational system. The older Churches were so strong in Blackburn that sometimes the Nonconformists were driven to strengthen, almost reluctantly, their own share in the provision of schools.

Perhaps the best illustration was presented during the eighties when higher grade schools were being founded, as we shall see later. When the School Board finally refused to build such a school, the Free Churches virtually had to open one in opposition to those of the Anglican and Roman Churches.

A clue to the policies of the different denominations can be found as early as 1871. Of the 18 Nonconformist schools mentioned above, five were not used as day schools. One of them was taken over by the School Board a year later, and two more which were in use were offered to that authority the same year, only to find that the Church party majority was not interested. Two new extensions, both for infants, were being built. The Anglicans had five new building projects for all ages, and the Roman Catholics one. All the school premises of the last two denominations were in use.

The next available detailed list dates from 1888 when we can detect a marked change compared with 1871. The Church of England then had 23 elementary schools (including one higher grade) and the real increase is greater than the apparent because in the first list, we noted two of the infant schools were counted separately, and in the second list they were combined with the mixed departments. There were now just over 13,500 places.

At this period the Roman Catholics were responsible for seven schools (including one higher grade) with more than 4,000 places.

The British and Nonconformist schools (including Lower Darwen Factory School) numbered 14 in use, and provided accommodation for about 8,300 pupils. Their higher grade school was opened the following year.

It should be noted in passing that the School Board maintained only two schools with room for fewer than 900 scholars.

At this point we might look at the provision of schools at the national and county level. The Education Department Report for 1887-8 returns 19,267 public elementary schools in

England and Wales. Of these approximately 61% were Church of England, 10% Protestant Nonconformist, 5% Roman Catholic and 24% Board Schools. In Lancashire the figures were 51% Church of England, 25% Protestant Nonconformist, 14% Roman Catholic and 10% Board schools. Blackburn provided 50% through the Church of England, just over 30% through the Free Churches, just over 15% through the Roman Catholics and rather less than 5% through the School Board. It will be seen both in Blackburn and its county that the religious extremes, Protestant and Roman, were stronger than in the country as a whole, and that consequently the Boards, and to a less extent the Established Church, were responsible for fewer schools. Even by Lancashire standards the Blackburn Board was weak. We get a further illustration by looking at the expenses of maintaining elementary schools by boards in a number of Lancashire towns at this time. Bolton paid about £20,000, Oldham £9,000, Rochdale £7,000 and Blackburn £1,500. No comparable town paid out less than Blackburn, except Preston which had no board.

Within the next half dozen years the Nonconformists in Blackburn had closed five of their own schools, and sold (in 1894) the premises at Four Lane Ends to the Board. They had built one new school (Cedar Street Primitive Methodist), and opened a higher grade school in old church premises. Their total number of school places had dropped by about 1,000.

Turning to the more enterprising denominations, we find that the Church of England had extended the classroom space in its existing schools to accommodate a further 2,000 scholars, and the Roman Catholics, having closed their Witton (Sacred Heart) School and opened a large one attached to St. Peter's, had space to educate 5,200 boys and girls.

In addition to its schools at Four Lane Ends and Moss Street the Board had leased the old Lower Darwen Factory School as a temporary measure.

There was little change by the end of the School Board period in voluntary schools except that the Church of England provided 16,000 places but the Board, with its Accrington Road and Higher Primary Schools, newly opened, now offered 15,000 places. During this period new suburbs were developing and consequently old schools had to be enlarged. The Anglicans tackled the problem in the Mill Hill area with a new school, in the Ewood district with a new school (St. Bartholomew's), and in the Cemetery Area with a new school (St. Gabriel's). In Lower Darwen where the Board's old factory school was closed in 1897, the deficiency was met by a new Congregational School. It was left for the School Board to remedy the situation in the Intack area by building a new school on Accrington Road. Quite a number of existing schools belonging to all authorities were enlarged at the same time.

In the last years of this period there were approximately 22,000 children of school age in a Town of 125,000 inhabitants and there was an average total excess of some 7,000 places. The problem was entirely one of distribution; there were too many schools in the older and more central parts of the Town and barely sufficient in new residential districts.

As we have shown above, children in average attendance in Blackburn's elementary schools amounted to about 15% of the Town's population. It was almost exactly the same in Bolton, Oldham, Sunderland, Norwich and Cardiff. In the other two towns of similar population, but of a different nature, Croydon and Brighton, the proportion was about 12%. The comparable industrial towns, with quickly growing populations, were faced with a similar accommodation problem to Blackburn's.

Despite the obvious temptation for the voluntary organisations to leave the provision of new places to a public body, local religious enterprise, as far as Anglicans and Roman Catholics were concerned, never flagged. The School Board was always subordinate in the provision of public

elementary schools, but it must be remembered that the Church of England, usually supported by the Roman Catholics, always controlled the Board and effectively prevented the latter from being first in the field, unless the Church so desired.

In this respect Blackburn was very different from every comparable town in 1902. The following statistics published in the School Board Chronicle of May 24th, 1902 give (a) the average attendance in voluntary schools, and (b) the average attendance in board schools.

Bolton	(a)	14,540	(b)	10,056	(pop.168,000)
Oldham	(a)	8,236	(b)	11,099	( " 137,000)
Sunderland	(a)	6,529	(b)	16,995	( " 147,000)
Norwich	(a)	5,270	(b)	12,589	( " 112,000)
Cardiff	(a)	6,777	(b)	18,857	( " 164,000)
Croydon	(a)	5,976	(b)	9,243	( " 134,000)
Brighton	(a)	5,863	(b)	9,596	( " 123,000)
Blackburn	(a)	18,258	(b)	996	( " 128,000)

In Bolton alone, apart from Blackburn, did the churches educate more children than the board, and even in Bolton the situation was unlike that in its neighbouring town.

Voluntary schools in Blackburn were financed by government grants (based on "Payment by Results" until 1895), school pence, subscriptions and bazaars. Finance was always a problem, but fortunately these schools, unlike many in other areas, had comparatively little competition from Board Schools with rate aid (only three before 1900). In 1888 the Cross Commission noted with grave concern the worsening financial position of voluntary schools in England and Wales, and the Majority Report recommended rate aid. The problem was caused basically by a steady rise in the cost of educating a child in an elementary school. Government grants often provided barely half the amount, and the remainder had to be raised by subscriptions and fees. Board schools could turn to the rates. In 1896 the Conservative Government proposed a new Education Bill which, in addition to extensive

administrative reforms, would provide voluntary schools with extra financial assistance.

Blackburn Nonconformists guessed that the Bill was in the offing and that, if it became law, it would boost the strength of their religious, educational and (in many cases) political rivals in the Borough. A great rally was held in St. George's Presbyterian School. The main practical result was the formation of the Blackburn Nonconformist Council which was intended to be the guardian of local Nonconformist interests, especially education. It is interesting to note that two of its three vice-presidents were current members of the School Board, as was also its secretary. Two other ex-members of the Board were on the Council's executive committee. The Council was, in one respect at least, an expression of frustration on the part of a Nonconformist minority both on the School Board and in the town.

A brief review of the principal speeches will give us a useful indication of the local differences of educational opinion during that generation. The chairman drew the audience's attention to the great educational crisis which confronted the national. There was a danger that the compromise of 1870 would be abandoned and that Anglican and Roman Catholic schools would receive larger grants from public funds whilst retaining full rights of private management. He was of the opinion that further grants ought to entail public control of the schools which benefited. Another grievance was that many Nonconformist students were unable to enter the teaching profession because "they would not pronounce the shibboleths of the priests". He accused the School Board of favouring sectarian interests and quoted the Lower Darwen and Ewood districts as examples.

Easily the most impressive speech of the evening was delivered by the guest speaker, Viscount Morpeth, who gave a cogent exposition of the Nonconformist case against the

proposed, or more strictly speaking rumoured, educational changes. The Church of England wanted a large measure of control of elementary education in order to teach its tenets to the people, but she could not afford to compete with Board schools on equal terms. She had two ways out of the dilemma; either she must raise more money, or she must attack Board schools - or both.

At this point we may digress from the speech in order to consider the attitude of the Established Church to the School Board in Blackburn. Charges were made from time to time that Board schools were "godless" - in order to encourage a greater generosity on the part of congregations. The accusation was as strange as it was unjust, because throughout its history the Board had a majority of Churchmen, its schools provided an approved course of religious instruction, and one of the most prominent men involved in drawing up the syllabus was a clergyman of the Church of England.

To return to Viscount Morpeth's speech, the eminent visitor began to examine many of the commonest arguments of his opponents and then <sup>to</sup> try and demolish them. There is room to mention two of them only. To the argument that it was unfair for the supporters of voluntary schools to have to subscribe to Board schools as well, he replied that if he chose to support a "philanthropic institution", he still had to pay the poor rates, and if he was a volunteer, he still had to pay taxes to help maintain the armed forces. His answer to the point that voluntary schools saved public expense and that the saving should be returned from the rates, was that Blackburn had lower subscriptions and higher fees than almost any Lancashire town, and that Lancashire on the average subscribed less and charged more than any county in England.



His final argument was based on the ideals of self-government. School Boards were as much a part of the state as Parliament or County Councils. Attacks on them were attacks on progress in self-government and should be resisted on political as well as religious grounds. One sure way was to prevent the increase of grants to voluntary schools.

An Education Bill, as feared by the Non-conformists, was presented in Parliament a few weeks later. As expected it was received gratefully by local Churchmen and bitterly opposed by the Nonconformists. After long debates in Parliament the bill was dropped. In the following February Balfour introduced a much less comprehensive Voluntary Schools Bill, but which still offered financial assistance to voluntary schools. Its main proposals were a special aid grant at the rate of 5/-d a head, the abolition of the 17/6d a head limit imposed in 1876, and the exemption of voluntary schools from rates unless the premises were let for other purposes. Necessitous school boards as well as necessitous voluntary schools would benefit. The proposals became law in April 1897 through two Acts of Parliament.

As far as Blackburn's voluntary schools were concerned, there would be an additional benefit of £5,250 a year. The School Board was not adjudged "necessitous" and received no extra grant.

Before the Bill became law the "Westminster Gazette" published a number of comparisons of similar towns in order to illustrate what it described as the "statutory inequality" of the Bill. It is interesting to see the relevant statistics for Blackburn and Cardiff.

	<u>BLACKBURN.</u>	<u>CARDIFF.</u>
Average Attendance	18,741	20,670
Voluntary Subscription for each Voluntary School pupil	3/10 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> d	3/3d
Rates for each Board school pupil	10/10 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> d	19/4d
Probable amount of new 5/-d grant	£4478/15/-d	£1638/15/-d

It will be seen that with its large proportion of voluntary schools, and an economical School Board, Blackburn would do very well out of the new legislation, at least compared with Cardiff.

Unfortunately the Act reopened old wounds in many parts of the country, including Blackburn. An editorial in the School Board Chronicle of March 20th 1897 summed up the attitude of a strong body of opinion:-

"So far from being a little measure, and one of limited effect, the Voluntary Schools Relief Bill has made changes in the position of the Voluntary Schools, the full extent of which is even now only just coming to be perceived. It practically destroys the element of voluntary contribution, the condition, as the late Archbishop of Canterbury clearly perceived, of their very existence, and it completes at a stroke that vital change in their nature as a distinctive element in the dual system which has been coming over them by degrees almost from the passing of Mr. Forster's Act"....

Its effect on the people of Blackburn can be studied by looking at the School Board election campaign and poll of 1898. There was one of the liveliest campaigns ever, and public interest was reflected in a poll of 80%, compared with 65% in 1895. Although the Church Party retained its seven seats and a majority of members, it attracted only 45% of the votes cast, instead of the 51% in the previous contest. The Progressives won the other four seats, and if there had not been two Socialists and a Trades' Council candidate in the field with some similar aims - more board schools and free education - the Progressives might have gained control of the Board for the first time ever. Their support actually rose from 21% to 28% of the votes cast. The position of the Roman Catholics remained unchanged with two seats. In the next, and last, election the Church of England lost one of its seats to a Socialist, but it was then too late to matter.

The new Act helped ease the burden of maintenance but not that of capital expenditure. It was a costly business to build a new school and most churches began in a modest way, possibly with a dual-purpose building to serve as church on Sundays and day school in the week, and then extended the premises as funds became available. As an example, we may consider the beginnings of St. Silas Church of England School, Billinge which was opened in 1885 about half-way through the School Board era. The full plans were for a school of 750 pupils, but the first stage, a dual-purpose building, would have room for only 288. It was in the Early English Gothic style and consisted of a single storey surmounted by a bell-turret.

The main classroom measured 50 x 22 x 21 $\frac{3}{4}$  ft. with a gallery recess 16 x 11 ft., and at one end there was a classroom 20 x 22 ft. behind a moving partition which could be rolled aside on Sundays, if necessary. There was a second classroom slightly smaller. At the front there was an entrance leading into a cloakroom, and at the back a porch and lavatories. Daylight was admitted through a three-light window with tracery head in the schoolroom and through lancet windows. Artificial lighting was by means of albo-carbon gaslights. Heating was provided by a hot-water pipe system supplemented by open fireplaces.

The cost was about £2,500 but this included the boundary walls and railings for the complete scheme. When the school was opened about £900 had been raised. St. Silas' School was erected when it was and where it was to forestall a possible Board school. This kind of school existed all over the Town.

Grants, subscriptions and fees brought in a steady income for the maintenance of a voluntary school, but large scale capital expenditure was always a problem unless a wealthy manufacturer could be induced to dig deeply into his pocket. The usual alternative was a bazaar.

What sort of elementary schools were provided by the Churches? We can perhaps best answer that by looking briefly at the history of a typical voluntary school in Blackburn as revealed in its log book. We have selected All Saints' Mixed School for the period 1874 - 1912.

It was opened on January 5th 1874 when 132 scholars assembled under Mr. T. Cook. By the autumn of the following year there was an average attendance of over 200. This total continued to grow until 1882 when Emmanuel School was opened in the same parish with the result that there was an average attendance of about 180. The actual number on the register was often nearer 300 but attendance was always much lower owing to the large number of half-timers who lived in this working class parish. When Novas School closed in 1893 All Saints' gained another 70 children in average attendance. There were 357 on the rolls in February 1896 in the following classes and standards:-

Standard VII	=	14	}	Class 1 =	88	
" VI	=	21				
" V	=	53				
" IV	=	64				" 2
" III	=	71				" 3
" II	=	69				" 4
" I	=	65	" 5			

The number in class 1 is artificially large on paper because most of the children in that age group worked in the mills during the mornings or afternoons (alternate weeks) according to their "set" and so the teacher would only be confronted by about half of them in any one lesson. The school was affected by the drop in the Town's birth rate in the early years of the present century, and by 1904 the average attendance was down to 200.

Staffing was always a problem and it became more acute as the nineteenth century drew to its close. For the first year or two the master was assisted by two or three pupil teachers

of varying degrees of usefulness. The first of these youngsters came to All Saints' straight from a job in a mill. Unpunctuality ineffective class discipline, and failure to learn homework were frequent complaints against these early pupil teachers. As far as the first charge is concerned we should remember that they had to arrive at school at 7.45 a.m. for an hour's instruction from the master - although they would have had to start their day much earlier in a mill. One of them resigned on the grounds that "teaching was too hard work". Various women, some of them school managers' wives, served as part time sewing mistresses. The first master's wife was infant mistress. By 1878 the adult staff included the headmaster, two assistant masters and one assistant mistress, all uncertificated, and the junior staff consisted of a pupil teacher and a monitor. Later, owing to financial considerations there were two female assistants and only one male assistant, together with one or two pupil teachers. From time to time one or more of the assistants would be certificated, but these rarely stayed long. The first headmaster served for 13 years but within the next 16 years there were no fewer than five different heads. It seems likely that one of the main reasons for this was a low salary scale, although some may have been deterred from a long stay by the type of the children who were poor and often dirty, and by premises that were criticised on a number of occasions by the Inspectors for being in a state of disrepair, insufficiently decorated, and unclean. The assistant teachers petitioned the managers for an increase in salary in 1898, but unfortunately the immediate outcome is unrecorded. Within a very short time, however, salaries were improved by means of the special aid grant. When one of the female assistants resigned soon after the petition was presented it is perhaps significant that only one application was received for the vacancy. In 1903 the school was understaffed as the Inspector pointed out. The following year there was a grave but temporary crisis when only two teachers were available

for an average attendance of 160 pupils.

When the number of staff was improved shortly afterwards, the quality was not, and the master bravely tried to raise the standard of teaching by insisting, for example, that all object lessons should be based on prepared notes approved by him, but his efforts were so fruitless that he sadly recorded in 1908 that "Mrs. S----- continues inefficient and ineffective Miss F----- fails to adapt herself to the requirements in a teacher".

On one autumn day in 1911 only two teachers were present again, so that the master had to cope with 63 children in three classes whilst an assistant mistress was faced by 82 children in two classes. Not surprisingly perhaps, when similar conditions prevailed the following morning, the young woman fainted and was unfit for further duty, leaving the headmaster singlehanded!

In addition to the usual basic subjects, grammar and geography were taught in the years after 1874 as class subjects together with sewing for the girls in order to earn extra grants. Scripture lessons were taken either by the master or the vicar. Singing was later introduced when it became eligible for a grant. When Mr. Brindle became headmaster in 1891 he substituted history for grammar, and soon afterwards Standards I - III began lessons in elementary science.

Some details of the science curriculum of this period may be of interest. Standard 1 made a survey of common substances and objects such as putty, clay, glass, iron, a rope, a match and a fire, and of simple actions such as evaporation and filtration. In the next standard simple processes such as melting, freezing, moulding and casting were studied as well as the weather, and one or two elementary machines. Standard 111 progressed to the human senses, the classification of substances, various chemical actions, and such devices as the balloon and the diving bell. The children in these classes were mostly aged from about 7 - 9 years.

By the last decade of the century drawing had become a part of the curriculum following, no doubt, the advice of the Cross Commission. Groups of girls began going to cookery classes at the Technical School early in the new century, and boys received manual instruction at the same institution. Swimming lessons were also started at the public baths. A visiting lecturer annually pointed out the dangers of strong drink, another visitor demonstrated pottery-making, and a third spoke on British snakes, attracting the class's attention, if not horror, with the aid of preserved and live specimens. Excursions were sometimes arranged into the countryside to study plants and trees, and an occasional visit was made to the museum or a local firm. Organised games did not begin until 1912. The widening of school activities was encouraged throughout the country by the Board of Education.

The school was dominated by two outside forces, the church and the mill. The chairman of the managers, the correspondent and sometimes the teacher of Scripture, was the vicar; and visits from various other clergymen, including the Diocesan Inspector were frequent. On a number of occasions half a day was granted in order to allow time for the preparation of a parish meeting, tea or bazaar.

The half-time system meant that the teacher in charge of the upper standards would find different faces in front of him in the afternoon from those of the mornings, and this lack of continuity may have been one cause of staffing difficulties. Those few children who did not work in a mill had the regular prospect of doing the same lessons twice in one day, unless the teacher found them jobs and errands to do. Within weeks of the school's opening we find reference to a poor attendance due to Thompson's Mill being blown up by the bursting of two boilers. A strike or a lock-out also tended to keep children from school because their parents could not afford fees. There was a half-holiday one morning in 1878 because there was a strike and the operatives used the school for a shop-meeting. On the

other hand school numbers were increased in 1879 by a rule at Boothman's "Punch-noggin Mill" that their Anglican operatives should attend All Saints' School. It was a characteristic of the school (and others) that attendances on Monday mornings and Friday afternoons were noticeably below those of other sessions as though the pupils thought that four half-days at school were quite sufficient, along with their other responsibilities; indeed, in 1911 five boys decided that these were excessive and went "on strike". Their protest was short-lived, however, thanks to the speedy co-operation of the parents and the headmaster's strong right arm. After the first year or two there was comparatively little blatant truancy. The time-book system made it extremely difficult for pupils to work beyond the stipulated hours in the factory; and many of the homes from which that class of child came were unattractive not only because of their material limitations but because both parents were frequently at work. The most spectacular case of "truancy" occurred when a performing bear in the streets caused nearly a hundred children to be late for school. One boy was sometimes absent because he was helping in his aunt's beer-shop.

All Saints' School stands in what was a poor, working class district and there are many references to poverty, dirt and disease. A strike usually meant a drop in attendances, partly because of parents' financial difficulties, and a period of bad trade (such as that in 1888) usually entailed children being sent home for their school pence and not coming back again for some time. In 1882 fees in Standards III and above were raised to 4d a week, and so it is probable that before then children in the lower standards paid 2d a week and the rest 3d. Towards the end of the last century free meal-tickets were available for necessitous parents, and quite a number of those with children at All Saints' took advantage of the scheme. Only one child, it would appear, entered the workhouse in 1903 with her mother, but they came out again as soon as they discovered they would have to be vaccinated. Occasionally pupils were sent home owing to



their dirty condition. In 1891 the whole school had to be closed down for a day and fumigated. Thirteen years later the headmaster wrote: "For many months now an endeavour has been made to induce every child to come punctually with clean clogs, hands, faces and heads; and complete success has attended this endeavour except in the matter of vermin in the girls' hair".

Despite all its problems the school never had a really bad report from the Inspector, and had its fair share of very good ones.

There was a night school attached from 1874 onwards largely concerned with continuing the elementary education of children who had left at a tender age, at least on a half-time basis.

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The kind of elementary school described above was quite adequate for the children of most of Blackburn's parents, but there were families which were prepared to give their offspring an extra year or two at school. The limitations of the education in basic subjects were soon exposed and all over England a demand sprang up for a cheap but more advanced type of course for able children who soon worked their way through the standards and who could afford to stay at school. Grammar schools were too class-conscious and too expensive for many of the more ambitious working people and tradesmen. In any case Blackburn's Grammar School did not enjoy a very high reputation at this time, and did not accept girls. The solution adopted in many parts of the country, including Blackburn, was the foundation of higher grade schools which, although officially regarded as public elementary schools, did in fact include secondary school courses at the upper end. They frequently had classes for the usual standards, and possibly an infants' department as well.

They were encouraged by changes in the Code of 1882 which introduced a Standard VII and made it possible for pupils to take specific subjects, such as mathematics, science and modern languages, in their last three years, so that it became more feasible to organize a school specially to earn extra grants from the Education Department for these subjects and at the same time to qualify for other grants from the Science and Art Department. It was no coincidence that serious discussion on the question of a higher grade school began in Blackburn - and elsewhere - in 1883 and the first one opened two years later. When the Borough provided its fourth and last in 1894 there were 63 similar schools in the country as a whole.

Higher grade schools produced some confusion because their work overlapped into the field of secondary education. The Minority Report of the Cross Commission suggested that one way out would be the establishment of higher elementary schools with a function limited to a thorough education on defined lines that would supply the needs of children who would take up employment at the age of 14 or 15, leaving secondary schools to teach pupils who intended to stay until the age of 16 or 18, possibly with a view to university entrance. The Cockerton decision twelve years later and the Minute of the Board of Education at about the same time were moves in that direction. Blackburn, where all the higher grade schools in 1900 were voluntary, was unaffected by these events of national importance until 1911 when the Education Committee built its new school at Blakey Moor.

When a section of opinion in Blackburn began to clamour for a higher grade school the matter was brought before the School Board and, as we shall see later, the majority was converted to the principle of building one at the public expense as early as 1883. Meanwhile, Anglican officials began to form plans of their own in order to steal a march on the Board. This was easy because they had control over it.

A letter reached the Board in August 1884 from the Vicar of Blackburn stating that local Churchmen had decided to convert the Parish Church Schools into a higher grade school and that they would like the Board to renounce its scheme. The new institution would be conducted according to the tenets of the Church of England but, of course, the conscience clause would apply. As might be expected, the Anglican members of the Board, supported by the Roman Catholics who already had plans of their own, supported the proposal in the letter, but the Nonconformists, afraid of the Established Church controlling higher grade education for all the Protestant population, suggested that an offer be made to the Parish Church with regard to the Board hiring the premises for an undenominational school. Owing to the absence of several Anglicans from the meeting of the Board and the abstention of another, the voting ended in a tie and the acting chairman, J. A. Watson gave his casting vote in favour of his Nonconformist colleagues.

As more than one correspondent mentioned in the local press in the public controversy that followed, all the votes for a denominational school were cast by clergy, and those for a Board school by laymen, whilst the only Anglican layman present abstained. It was alleged by one writer that the clergy cared for the welfare of the schools and the laymen for the welfare of the scholars. Another letter included an interesting comment on the working of the 1870 Act:-

"----- I should like to ask whether the School Board has any right to make the offer to the Parish Church School Managers. We have been assured again and again by politicians of both parties that the purpose of the Education Act of 1870 was to supplement and not to supplant voluntary schools, so that if the Managers of the Parish Church Schools are able and willing to settle this vexed question by opening a Higher Grade School, it would seem that the Board has no further say in the matter ----".

On the other side, an "ex-schoolmaster" had considerable doubts about the conscience clause being sufficient to protect

Nonconformist children if the Church controlled the school, for it did not "prevent a clergyman from ordering boys to be punished for attending a dissenting place of worship. With parsons it is a question of cash and influence:-

Money's my creed, I'll not pray without it;

My heaven is closed against all those that doubt it;

For this is the essence of parsons' religion -

Come regular to church, and be plucked like a pigeon".

Despite the recent decision of the Board and all the literary fireworks the Archdeacon and his friends went ahead and the Church of England Higher Grade School, situated in the Parish Church School premises, was opened in 1885. It was organized into three departments, boys', girls' and infants'. The average attendance the first week was 92, 49 and 75 respectively and by the end of the first year these numbers had risen to 164, 80 and 152. It is noteworthy that a higher grade education was in demand much more for boys than for girls. During this year the fees accounted for less than half the expenditure and the guarantors had to pay up their subscriptions with the result that some of them may have had second thoughts about a Board higher grade school.

The following extract from the prospectus as published in the press gives a clear idea of the new higher grade school.

"----- The boys' and girls' schools will contain Standard III to VI, Standards I and II with the infants, being placed in the junior department.

The Religious Instruction will be in accordance with the principles of the Church of England.

The course of secular instruction will be as follows:-

First:- The subjects included in the seven standards of the New Code viz:- Reading, recitation, writing, arithmetic, dictation, grammar, composition, geography, history, object lessons, drill, vocal music and (for girls) needlework.

Second:- Drawing, English literature, social economy and the specific subjects of the New Code viz:- Latin, French, algebra, euclid, physical geography, mechanics, animal physiology, domestic economy, shorthand.

The Kindergarten System will be held in the Junior Department.

Fees:- Infants 4d; Standards 1 and 11 6d; Standards 111 to V11 9d per week. If paid quarterly in advance the Fees will be:- Infants 3/-d; Standards 1 and 11 5/-d; Standards 111 to V11 7/6d.

For Special Subjects as follows:- Latin and French 3d per week or 2/6d per quarter. Pianoforte (one lesson per week) 7/6d per quarter.

Cookery 1d a lesson. Arrangements will also be made at a small charge for warming the dinners of the scholars who come from a distance -----".

There were, however, a number of free places for children recommended by the headmasters of ordinary elementary schools and six more for members of the choir at the Parish Church.

Senior scholars spent rather more than one third of the week on higher subjects. Art and science were taught for the examinations of South Kensington. The average age of the pupils was 13 years, but unfortunately many left soon afterwards when they had reached Standard V11 or the age of full employment.

There were fifteen members on the permanent staff, excluding a visiting French master. Of this number seven were certificated and three were qualified teachers of science and art subjects. The headmaster, Mr. Nicholas Taylor, became the second and last Clerk to the School Board when Mr. William Ditchfield died in 1894.

The school progressed very well indeed and its three departments were soon classed "excellent" by the H.M.I. In 1895 the original buildings had to be enlarged.

Strictly speaking the Church higher grade school was not the first in Blackburn for one had been founded by the Roman

Catholics at the end of 1884, although it did not begin as a fully recognized school until the following January. It was never anything like so successful as its Anglican and Nonconformist counterparts. At first it was housed in the rooms of a large house (now the presbytery) in a corner of St. Alban's Place which was only temporarily approved by the Education Department. The 29 boys on the first register were taught by two certificated masters.

In the first Inspector's Report the new school was classed as "good" and considered to be full of promise, but unfortunately the promise was never really fulfilled in the School Board period. The premises were criticized severely until a new school was built at right angles to the old one and opened in May 1889 after the Education Department had suspended its grant for the previous year pending the erection of a new building.

By this date there was an average attendance of about 50 and this had dropped to 34 by 1897. It had grown to just over 60 by 1903. There was recognized accommodation for 101 boys.

The early curriculum covered the usual elementary subjects the class subjects, English and geography and music and military drill. Within a year or two history, Latin and French had appeared together with drawing according to the syllabus of the Science and Art Department. Elementary science was not taught until just before the turn of the century, and soon after this boys began to attend swimming baths.

Staffing was always a serious problem. Between 1884 and 1902 there were four different headmasters. For most of this period there were two teachers on the staff, although occasionally the second teacher was a pupil teacher or monitor, and for a short time a woman under Article 68 of the Code.

In 1891 fees were lowered to a maximum of 6d a week so that the managers could take advantage of the fee grant under the terms of the recent Act of Parliament. It is probable that

fees in the top standards had been 9d a week, in line with the Church of England School. St. Alban's Higher Grade School also availed itself of the provisions of the Voluntary Schools Act which authorized an aid grant (usually for teachers' salaries).

During the first twenty years of its existence the school was never classed higher than "good" by the Inspector, and was sometimes regarded as only being "fair". Once, as we have seen, the grant was suspended.

Despite the earlier resolutions the Board failed to carry out its intention of building an unsectarian higher grade school and the Nonconformists were forced to open their own. Any lingering hopes that the Church of England might reveal a liberal spirit in its Parish School were destroyed finally when that school's secretary declared in 1888 that the managers were "gradually weeding out" the Nonconformist teachers. In retaliation a circular was issued by the four unsectarian members of the School Board inviting citizens who were interested in "the establishment, on an undenominational basis, of a first-class Higher Grade Elementary School" to attend a public meeting at St. George's Presbyterian School. The chair was taken by Mr. R. Bowdler in front of a crowd of about 200 citizens. Mr. Bowdler claimed that "The Board School scheme of a Higher Grade School would have been an accomplished fact long ago had it not been for the determined opposition of the clerical party in the town", and his seven years experience on the Board had convinced him that it would take no action in the future on the matter. (We should add in passing that a rate-payers' meeting had also been held recently to protest at the cost of a new Board School).

Eventually an organizing Committee consisting of all the Free Church Ministers in the Town together with 33 elected representatives from the meeting was appointed with the object of going ahead with a new higher grade school.

This was the occasion for a fresh outbreak of journalistic polemics and two paragraphs are selected to give some impression

of the controversial spirit of the age when it came to education.

The Conservative "Blackburn Express" referred, in its report of the public meeting, to one or two members of the audience who had supported a remark which was unpalatable to the majority:-

"It is true a few also cried "Here, here," but they were of a piebald variety of Nonconformists, hardly in any way of the "elect", and would probably be looked down upon by the regenerate as "children of wrath", or as apostates who were on a worse than 'downward grade'".

In reply to this the "Northern Daily Telegraph" observed:-

"In spite of the affectation of tolerance in which the progress of the Democracy has forced modern Conservatives to clothe themselves, the cloven foot of old Tory exclusiveness and bigotry now and then shows itself through the disguise.... (Their attitude) shows that the trail of the serpent of medieval bigotry and injustice is over the Tories still".

The Nonconformists opened their Public Higher Grade School in June 1889 in premises in Montague Street belonging to the Wesleyan Church. At first there were 104 boys and girls under the control of Mr. J. W. Caithness B.A., and Miss L. Walker. It was fortunate to have for the whole of its history an outstanding headmaster in Mr. Caithness.

Ten days after the school was opened by the Chairman of the Managers, Eli Heyworth J.P., the numbers on the register had risen to 149. The average attendance was well past the 400 mark when, in 1894, the girls were removed to form a separate department at St. George's Presbyterian School in New Park St. As a result of this change the numbers on the boys' roll dropped, but a recovery soon began and within three years the total became 300 in average attendance, a figure which remained fairly constant for the rest of the school's life.

By 1891 there was a staff of six including a pupil teacher and eight years later this had grown to nine including three



trained certificated teachers (one of them a graduate), four untrained certificated teachers, one ex-pupil teacher, and one fourth year pupil teacher. This composition changed little thereafter except for the addition of a manual instruction specialist. Part-time services were received from a cookery teacher, a drill instructor and a native French teacher. References to absence of leave to take public examinations up to inter-B.Sc., standard indicate that a number of the staff were ambitious to improve their qualification.

No new building was ever erected owing to the availability of premises attached to Nonconformist Churches. Neither set of buildings was particularly suitable: complaints about inadequate ventilation were made by the Inspector in 1898 with regard to both, and three years later the annual report on the Boys' Department declared that "It would be a considerable gain to the efficient and convenient carrying on of the teaching if better adapted premises could be provided".

There was a comprehensive organisation with an infant class, the seven standards, and a class for ex-standard VII pupils. At first the curriculum, besides the elementary subjects, included English and geography as class subjects together with French and algebra as specific subjects for the boys, and French and domestic economy for the girls. Science and drawing were next added. In 1891 a special class began to meet for half an hour before school two mornings a week to follow the syllabus of the Cambridge Local Examination. A year later a class spent one afternoon a week at the Technical School studying chemistry. Shortly after this history was taught in the upper standards, and an elementary Latin class attracted 50 volunteers at 8.30 a.m. A manual instruction class commenced lessons at the Technical School in 1893, but later on a room (not a very satisfactory one) was used on the premises.

A chemistry laboratory and gymnasium were opened in 1896. At about the same time an Organized Science School was begun for most of the boys in Standards VII and ex-VII. Twelve

months after this a physics laboratory was provided. The Science School had a different time-table and grant, and attendances were no longer reckoned under the Education Department. A small number of girls came down from their department to use the chemistry laboratory.

Apart from the usual fees and grant, the school benefited to the tune of about £140 a year aid grant under the terms of the Voluntary School Act of 1897. There are no signs of financial difficulty.

The fourth and last higher grade school in Blackburn was the one associated with the Convent of Notre Dame and opened as the Whalley New Road Roman Catholic Higher Grade School in September 1894. It was exclusively for girls.

The Sisters of Notre Dame of Namur had first come to Blackburn in 1850 when they were attached to a new convent at St. Anne's Church. From there they taught in the elementary schools at St. Anne's and St. Alban's. A rich benefactress enabled the Sisters to buy Brookhouse Lodge in Whalley New Road as a convent in 1859 and to build a boarding school next to it three years later. Five years after this a teachers' house was added and from here members of the order went out daily to teach in elementary schools or in their private boarding establishment. New branches of the convent embraced a pupil teachers' centre and a higher grade school.

The latter had attracted an average attendance of about 80 within two years, and this had risen to about 100 by 1903. These were organized into an infants' class and the seven standards, but there never appear to have been many infants.

At first the staff consisted of a headmistress (a nun), a certificated assistant and a woman serving under Article 51. All had left by the end of the first term. No reason is known. There were, in fact, three headmistresses in the first thirteen months, but Sisters of the Order are moved without warning or reason given. The fourth stayed for ten years.

In addition to reading, writing and arithmetic, English,

history, and geography were taught as class subjects and French and botany as specific subjects on the first time-table, together with the usual subsidiaries, singing and drill. Cookery was begun a year later together with needlework, elementary science, and drawing (for the Science and Art Department). By the turn of the century courses were being followed in accordance with the regulations of the Oxford Local Examination, the College of Preceptors, and the Royal Academy of Music.

This School also took advantage of the 1897 Act and was in receipt of aid grants for apparatus and staff.

Whilst never making the same sort of impact on the Town as the Protestant Higher Grade Schools, Whalley New Road was evidently a compact, well-run establishment that adequately supplied the needs of Roman Catholic girls. The first Inspector's Report classed it as "good" and in the ensuing years it was termed "excellent".

### The Provisions of Elementary Schools.

#### (B) Board Schools.

From the Survey of 1871 it was clear that there were deficiencies of school accomodation in St. John's and Trinity Wards, and that in its first burst of enthusiasm - an enthusiasm which was never repeated - the Board resolved to make itself responsible for providing new schools. We shall see that later on the Board did everything within its power to encourage the churches to keep pace with an expanding population rather than do so itself. By the end of the School Board period the Blackburn Board was still providing places for a very small

percentage of children. In the country as a whole the balance was fairly even between churches and boards by about 1890. In 1900, however, voluntary schools absorbed less than half the elementary school population, and continued to lose ground in the next period.

The Blackburn Board proposed to try and hire premises at Four Lane Ends in St. John's Ward and build a school at Daisyfield in Trinity Ward. The former school was opened in 1872, but the opening of the latter, Moss Street Board School, was delayed until 1881.

Before either could be opened, however, the Board had to draw up a scheme of education and regulations for for any schools that it might control. It is indicative of religious feeling on the Board, and in the Town it represented, that the regulations for religious instruction were rushed through in April 1871, a month before the Survey itself was published, and nearly a full year before the general regulations and a scheme of secular subjects were passed. For our purposes it will be more convenient to review them in reverse order.

All schools maintained by the School Board were to accommodate 600 scholars each in three departments; a mixed Infants' School for children under 7; a Boys' School for boys over 7; and a Girls' School for girls over 7. Each department would have separate class-rooms for at least one third of the total number of children in that department. The Girls' and Infants' Schools were to be under mistresses and the Boys' Department under a master. Each department was to have one certificated teacher, and for every 40 scholars after the first 20 in average attendance there was to be one pupil teacher. One certificated assistant might replace two pupil teachers.

Schools were to be open for a minimum of five hours a day for five days a week. Four weeks holiday, excluding "incidental holidays", would be granted annually.

Religious instruction would be given in accordance with the Board's regulations, and each day would begin and end with a hymn

and a prayer.

Infants were to be taught reading, writing, arithmetic, object lessons, singing, drill and needlework (for girls).

For the other departments the curriculum was divided into "essential subjects" and "discretionary subjects". The former included reading, writing, arithmetic, English grammar and composition, dictation, history, geography, systematised object lessons, elementary physical science, music and drill with needlework and domestic economy for girls. Social economy, book-keeping, mensuration, geometry, algebra, drawing, physiology and more advanced physical science were rated as "discretionary subjects".

Maps and general apparatus were provided by the Board, but scholars (except free scholars) purchased their own lesson books, copy books and slates at cost price.

Corporal punishment could only be used in special cases and then it was to be administered by the principal teacher who also recorded it in a special book.

Evening schools would be connected to the day schools and provide similar courses for pupils above the age of 12 in normal circumstances, and younger if wholly or partially exempt from day attendance. The sexes would be segregated.

In April 1871 the Board produced its own Religious Instruction Handbook complete with sections on Bible Readings, Hymns and Moral Songs. The Authorized Version of the Bible was to be used, all instruction was to be given by the principal teacher for no longer than 20 minutes at the opening of morning school, and the letter and spirit of the 1870 Act were to be strictly observed. Every school day was to begin and end with a hymn and a prayer selected from the Handbook.

Four Lane Ends Board School opened in 1872. According to Professor Barnard (Short History of English Education 1947 Page 138 Note) "the first 'board school' was opened at St. Austell Cornwall in December 1872". Four Lane Ends School had been functioning for three months then and, therefore, may have been the first, or one of the first, in the country.

The premises had been taken the previous September on a five-year lease at £10 per annum from James Street Congregational Church. The building which could seat just over 300 pupils, was controlled by the Board during the week, but the trustees had the use of it on Sundays, and on "such nights in the week as may suit the convenience of the Board".

The same year the Board was offered two more schools on lease but it was not the Board's policy at this time to take over voluntary schools as "going concerns". Four Lane Ends had been a vacant school in an area where there was a shortage of places. Within a year or two further discouragement was offered by the fact that Four Lane Ends, a comparatively small school, showed an annual loss of £30 - £50 a year. The Board's next school, built to its own specifications and nearly twice as large, made a steady profit (e.g. in 1883 over £70), but not sufficient to reduce the rates.

The story of Moss Street School, the only elementary school that the Blackburn Board built before 1900 affords a valuable insight into the position occupied by the Board in the local educational world.

There was apparently no serious opposition to the construction of a new Board School in the eighteen-seventies, probably because there was a large and immediate deficiency which voluntary efforts at that time could not meet. At first a school with 1000 places was suggested, but the Education Department cut the plans down to allow for between 600 and 700 in 1877. A site to serve the Daisyfield district was found in Moss Street.

When it was opened in July 1881 by the Mayor there were 49 children on the register but within a fortnight there were 122, and two months after that over 200. In the following April the school was reorganized into three departments. A few months later all the departments were full and new children were coming every week until no more could be taken. Moss Street was bursting at the seams throughout the whole of our period, despite extentions, and in different circumstances could have developed

into a really large school.

The premises were soon proved to be deficient in extent and quality. When they had been open only a few months the floors needed considerable adjustment, and four years later the roof of the Infants' Department let wet with the result that pools of water formed in the gallery. The ventilators were no match for Lancashire rain and children sitting near them were soaked. In contrast the lighting seems to have been too good, for in 1883 a sub-committee of the Board came on a visit to consider reducing the gas jets.

The average attendance permitted by government regulations was exceeded in 1883 and a year later there were 200 pupils too many. At first the Board was content to sit back and refer to the error of the Education Department which had prevented them from building a bigger school; its subsequent attitude reveals two of its fundamental principles, economy and an unwillingness to cross the path of the Established Church.

Under strong pressure from the Inspector an extension was planned and approved in November 1884. A proposed new building at the back of the existing one was to incorporate both boys and girls of standards 1 and 11 into a mixed department. At a cost of a little under £2,000 360 more children would be accommodated. However, a letter reached the Board at the end of the following month in which the Vicar of St. Michael's explained his intention of building an additional school for 400 pupils, later 1,200 only a short distance away from Moss Street, and there would no longer be any necessity for extending the Board school.

The ensuing debate in the Board's next meeting revealed once again that the right wing bloc was prepared to ignore its earlier resolutions and yield to external influence. Mr. J. A. Watson, in disgust, reminded his colleagues that they had already abandoned their earlier scheme to build an industrial school and had refused to act upon their resolutions to provide a higher grade school. Now they were in danger of

being outmanoeuvred again. Eventually the matter was referred to the Bye-laws Committee.

In the January 1885 meeting, after a very heated debate, the Church majority voted to abandon the Board's plans for Moss Street in view of the letter from the vicar and despite a plea from the opposition that there was such a deficiency of accommodation that both extentions were necessary. The highlight of the discussion - although perhaps not for the members present - was an unusually lengthy speech, which the Chairman failed to curtail, from one of the Roman Catholic priests. His case was a curious mixture of religious pride, political toryism, and educational reaction. He claimed that the scheme of education recommended by some members of the Board "tended to make the humble classes of society dissatisfied with the position God assigned to them". "He hoped that" no ministers would degrade themselves by giving up their children to be taught by a body of lay gentlemen! To him the duty of the school Board was neither to build schools nor teach, but simply to help the Church do her duty.

A letter of complaint was despatched to the Education Department by the Nonconformist minority, and in reply the Department declared that the site chosen by St. Michael's was unsuitable because it was near an open sewer. Finally, when it was agreed to cover the sewer, the Department approved St. Michael's plans.

As far as the immediate needs of Moss Street were concerned the boys' cloakroom was converted into a room for the top class. In 1888 it was necessary to open a new classroom for the boys, but the problem was still unsolved, for five years later Mr. Brewer, the H.M.I., remarked on a class of 53 boys being taught in the converted cloakroom which should hold a maximum of 27. A month or two later, in June fortunately, standard IV had lessons in the playground because its room was so overcrowded that it was "unadvisable to occupy the classroom more than every alternate hour" owing to the shortage of oxygen. New extentions, including a manual instruction room, were



commenced in 1900. Anglican feeling in the Town was again aroused but this time the Board had grown more liberal in its outlook and expressed its resentment at this outside interference although it did take the precaution to say that the aim of the alterations was the improvement of the school for the benefit of the present pupils and not to provide an opportunity to recruit more children at the possible expense of neighbouring schools.

As mentioned earlier the school was fully organized into the three usual departments except that standard 1 boys remained in the Infants' Department until 1905. Classes were large. An entry dated 1900 in one of the log books is a masterpiece of understatement:

"In the First Class (Standards V, VI, VII) there are 82 on the books and as this is the Head Teacher's class, supervision of the work in other classes is rendered very difficult, particularly in the early part of the year".

Three years before this the first class in the Girls' Department had had no fewer than 99 scholars.

When the school was well-established pupil teachers were employed, and these enabled the head to divide a class into sections, a valuable device when more than one standard was in the same class. This arrangement did not work, of course, when pupil teachers had to attend the Central Classes. In 1903 these attendances were doubled to four half days a week and this caused temporary embarrassment at Moss Street.

When the "Free Education" Act came into operation in 1892 there were quite a number of applications for free places at Moss Street but a circular from the Board the same month intimated that none was to be granted, and that admission was to be refused to those who would not pay. Despite this, various defiant parents attempted to send their offspring without payment, but met no success. Some concession was made in 1893 when the Board slightly lowered the fees so that 2d a week was not charged until standard VI was reached, instead of at standard IV. In the lower standards the cost remained at 1d,

The two senior departments were staffed by four or five teachers most of the time. In the earlier years especially most of them were certificated. Some indication of the reputation of the school and its staff is reflected in the large number of promotions to headship from the assistants. Five men, for example, before the end of the century were given headships from a department that at that time never exceeded three assistants and that, promotions apart, had a small turnover of staff. Another man was appointed as an assistant at the Public Higher Grade School.

As usual, the subjects taught were reading, writing and arithmetic with English, history, geography, needlework and elementary science added at various times. Cookery and manual instruction were later available, and drawing was examined by South Kensington. Singing and drill provided a change from the other studies.

Moss Street soon established a reputation for its drill thanks to the efforts of the visiting instructor, Sergeant-Major Pollard, late of the Royal Artillery, and the first headmaster, Mr. Smithies who evidently had a special interest in the subject. "Drill" was a term that covered marching in squads ( a request was once made for a drum to help with time-keeping) and physical exercises, outdoors whenever possible. For the latter, clubs and dumb-bells were acquired. Visitors from other schools came to watch the Moss Street boys "on parade". Less was heard of this accomplishment after the retirement of Messrs. Pollard and Smithies in 1890 and 1891 respectively. Visits to the swimming baths were started in 1897, but there were no organized games before the present century when the boys soon established a name for themselves at football.

An early feature of school life was a Savings Bank which helped to foster habits of thrift. Less utilitarian, but by no means useless, was the inauguration of a scheme in 1893 for the loan of pictures, to be changed periodically, from the "Blackburn Art for Schools Association".

From all accounts Moss Street was a highly successful school. Its departments were usually classed "good" or "excellent" by the inspector and were regarded as among the best in the district.

The Blackburn School Board did not build another elementary school for nearly twenty years after the opening of Moss Street but this was by no means through lack of opportunity. Even while the first Board school was under construction, the Education Department was complaining of a shortage of school places in other areas, particularly Duke's Brow. Consequently the Board approached local clergymen asking if they intended to build. Some of the correspondence exchanged between the Board, who had still failed to secure any promise of a school, and an increasingly impatient Department towards the end of 1880 quoted:-

"... My lords would be glad if your Board would furnish them with grounds upon which they differ from the opinion of Her Majesty's Inspector as to the necessity of immediately providing a school at Duke's Brow.....".

The Bye-Laws committee replied "That the Committee consider that the proportion of infants of the industrial classes in the Duke's Brow suburb, who would attend a public elementary school, is not at present sufficiently large to warrant the erection of a new infant school there by the Board, in default of any existing premises which can be hired for the purpose; the resident population there being in great part of the tradesman class, and there being three or four private schools of the better grade situate in that suburb...".

A further reply from the Department which was received just before the Board's meeting in January 1881 stated:-

"My lords can only repeat that the opinion of your Board is directly opposed not only to that of Her Majesty's Inspector, but to that of persons immediately interested in the district, by whom the necessity of an infants' school has been recognized for two or three years....".

In the Board's discussion of this letter, one section was still very reluctant to build and not very interested in hiring premises. Other members thought that they would have to build eventually. The question was shelved pending the new census of that year.

When no action was taken after this, the Education Department wrote letters in March, April, May and July 1882 which were all unacknowledged, and a letter received from London at the end of July gave the stern warning that unless some communication was received within a month the Blackburn Board would be declared in default under Section 95 of the Elementary Education Act of 1870.

The Board's hasty reply was that it was awaiting a sub-committee's report and that it would immediately prepare a new report, illustrated with a map, of the school accommodation. At the September meeting there was no intention of building, and all the eligible premises in the area were occupied by private middle class schools. One member thought that the Nonconformist churches involved were under a moral obligation to let their premises to the Board if they failed to open public elementary schools themselves.

The whole controversy involved the interpretation of the 1870 Act. It was the duty of a School Board to supply any deficiencies in accommodations, not wait for others to do it for them. Officials in Blackburn may have felt obliged to give local churches a chance, but many would consider their delays unreasonable and not founded upon the best of motives.

In February 1883 the matter still unsettled, the Board met to consider a letter from the Education Department which said that their lordships were not convinced by the Board's recent report. Subsequent discussion revealed that the two members selected by the Board to examine the problem had never met. Meanwhile a letter had come from Trinity Wesleyan Chapel offering the use of their premises. Rather surprisingly in view of the heated arguments of the previous year, the chairman,

Mr. Hornby, objected to the Board renting a school. Most of his colleagues, of course, objected even more strongly to building one. A Nonconformist member reminded the meeting very simply and clearly that the issue before them was whether they were going to rent or build a school. This simple presentation of the situation, however, was not acceptable to other members, including the chairman and there was a stubborn refusal to recognize the judgement of the Education Department. At one stage, the Rev. E. Woods, one of the Roman Catholic priests, moved that there was no need for additional accommodation, and went on to say:-

"We provide for our children; the Church of England do the same; and other denominations will do so, perhaps; and, therefore, I think there is no need for further accommodation".

Soon after this Mr. Ditchfield, the Clerk to the Board, felt bound to remind the meeting that the problem had been under consideration since 1880, that the Education Department judged there was a deficiency, and that if something was not done quickly the Board would be declared in default. Immediately the chairman advised that negotiations be opened with the Wesleyans, and there the matter rested.

Rescue came the same year from the Church of England. The curate-in-charge of St. Silas launched an appeal for funds to build a new church school. St. Silas' was a mission at Billinge attached to St. Paul's and already had an old school but no proper church. Although the parish had made little progress in raising money for a church, it proposed to build a second school. This naturally did not command anything like the unanimous support of the parish, and some of the Churchmen themselves would have preferred a Board School.

Needless to say the Board seized upon the project with open arms because it promised to relieve them of the responsibility of providing a school. In view of the choice of a rather isolated site, a series of delays in the preparation of plans, and the known financial difficulties of the parish, the Non-conformists on the Board moved that the negotiations with the

Wesleyans be continued so that a school would be immediately available. This was swamped by the Anglican and Catholic majority who resolved to inform the Education Department that St. Silas' would solve the problem. Their lordships did accept this solution, but had to keep up their pressure to make sure that a school was actually erected in the near future. St. Silas' School, or at least the preliminary stage of it, was opened in 1885, more than five years after the problem had first been brought to the Board's notice.

This rather tedious story has been followed in some detail because it clearly illustrates the spirit of the Blackburn School Board. We have earlier touched upon another case, that of a proposed higher grade school which was discussed for six years and never materialized despite the fact that a site had been specially purchased in Regent Street.

It has already been shown that the primary cause of this was the strength of denominational feeling. A secondary cause which emerges from a study of the Board's affairs is economy. One or two examples of this may be given.

When Mr. Ditchfield, the Clerk, first assumed duties on a full-time basis in 1872 he was paid a salary of £150. After ten years loyal and able service (his Minute Books are a delight to the eye) he resigned. After some discussion he was persuaded to remain, and in 1883 his salary was increased by £50, a possible pointer to his resignation. On this occasion the Board was careful to publish the fact that he was still a bargain, for the average salary for 17 large towns was over £400 and Brighton and Bolton with similar populations were paying £400 and £300 respectively. No other Board in the list, which included smaller industrial towns such as Rochdale, Halifax and Huddersfield, expended less than £250 for this purpose.

Looking ahead ten years to the time when the "Free Education" Act had been passed and "Payment by Results" still not abolished we can find some interesting statistics in the Education Blue Book.

	Income per pupil in average attendance.		Expenditure per pupil in average attendance.		Grant.
	<u>FEES.</u>	<u>RATES.</u>	<u>SALARIES.</u>	<u>TOTAL.</u>	
Blackburn	4. 1½d	14. 1¼d	£1. 12. 1d	£2. 7. 7½d	£1.0.11¼
Bolton	2. 4¾d	16. 4d	£1. 16. 8¼d	£2.10. 5½d	£1.1. 1½
Oldham	4. 5d	17. 9¼d	£1. 15. 8¾d	£2.10. 6¼d	19.10¾
Eng. & Wales (average)	8½d	19. 9¾d	£1. 17. 0½d	£2. 8. 1½d	18.11¼

It will be seen that the Board spent less on its schools from the rates than comparable towns in the county and less than the national average. It was able to do this by charging comparatively high fees (when it need have charged none) and by paying low salaries to its staff. At a time when most areas had reduced or abolished fees, Blackburn maintained its own at the same level. Most pupils paid from 1d to 4d a week in the main grades and this was to prevent any rivalry for church schools. Even in 1902 the average fees in the Borough, for all types of public elementary schools, were 4/5 per week. In no other town of Blackburn's population, except Croydon, did they exceed 2/-d, and in Bolton they averaged 10d. Despite a low cost of maintenance the efficiency of the Board schools - as measured by the system of "Payment of Results" - remained unimpaired, because good grants were earned from the Education Department. The causes of the economy are closely allied to religion, because the Church party on the Board was afraid of the effects that low fees and high salaries in Board Schools would have on voluntary schools. Actually the figures for fees and salaries in Blackburn's voluntary schools at that time were 4/11½d and £1/6/3d, but the former would have been slightly higher than the comparable figure for Board schools on account of the fact that all three higher grade schools with their higher scale of fees were voluntary; and the average salary in church schools was probably lower because they employed a smaller proportion of certificated teachers. The grant paid to Blackburn's voluntary schools was 19/3¼d compared with a national average of 18/1½d, and so there was a good average efficiency

for that type of school, but less than that for Board schools.

During the last decade of the nineteenth century the rapidly expanding population necessitated an adjustment of school accommodation. Fortunately for the Board enterprising churches were ready to meet the challenge in most areas. Some temporary embarrassment was caused in Lower Darwen in 1893 when Messrs. T. & R. Eccles finally decided to close their factory school (the only one in our period). As far as the Board was concerned the cheapest and easiest solution was to lease the old factory premises, and it did so for an annual rent of £25, inclusive of heating and lighting. The Education Department would only sanction the use of the existing buildings for two years, but the Board managed to stall their lordships for another year until the new Lower Darwen Congregational School was opened in January 1897. The scholars and some of the staff transferred to the new voluntary school and the Board was able to sell much of its equipment to the Congregationalists.

An acute shortage of school places in the Intack district, and the failure of the churches to make provision for it, induced the Board to build its second and last new elementary school building. By now a much more liberal and progressive spirit had developed amongst members of the Church of England group and there was little serious opposition to the scheme. A site was secured on Accrington Road in 1897 and plans drawn up for a school accommodating about 250 boys, 250 girls and 300 infants. As a first stage, however, there would only be buildings for a mixed department of 280 and an infants' department of 310.

The original estimated cost was £5,649 but after objections had been lodged by the Highway and General Drainage Committee about the proposed ventilation, the Board decided to show a rare burst of extravagance and have the latest electrically-powered fans for an air extraction system. The novelty of it all so intrigued the Board that a detailed description of it



was included in its triennial Report. Perhaps the most noteworthy point was a series of air inlet openings of 8 square inches per child instead of the  $2\frac{1}{2}$  laid down by the new Board of Education. Electric lighting was installed in the whole building. The final cost of the project, including site, buildings, fittings, and fees amounted to £8,580/17/2d, and this time the Board was able to raise a loan for most of it from the Public Works Loan Board. It was officially opened in April 1900 by the Chairman of the School Board, and by the end of the first week had attracted 70 children to its Infants' Department and 218 in the Mixed Department under a total staff of ten.

The curriculum followed the usual pattern. Senior pupils attended the Technical School for cookery and manual instruction until the new facilities for these subjects were available.

Education at Accrington Road was free. When this was proposed to the Board by the School Management Committee an attempt was made by an Anglican to amend it so as to charge one penny per standard, but he only received support from one of the Roman Catholic members, and free education was achieved. Books and stationery were also free. This met with wide approval in the Town, although one press article pointed out that "the freeing of the new school is not due to any spontaneous generosity on the part of the Board, but to the hard fact that the authorities in London will not now permit the managers of new elementary schools to charge fees....". At this time about five-sixths of the elementary school population of England and Wales were receiving free education.

Although elementary education in the Borough was not generally free the Board had, in 1898, discontinued charging fees to the Poor Law Guardians in respect of children attending Board schools, and in the same year it sent round a circular to voluntary schools inquiring about the distribution of free places so that it could award a similar proportion in its own schools.

The opening of Accrington Road school, closely following the Board's Higher Primary School, was regarded by many townfolk

as a promising sign of a most enlightened and progressive policy. Not everyone agreed, as some members of the Board ruefully discovered. In the summer of 1900 a meeting of representatives of the various parish churches assembled under the chairmanship of Bishop Cramer-Roberts and decided to replace all their members on the Board, except the Revs. Rushton and Coe, at the next election. The offenders were not officially called to account and no formal reason for their dismissal was given, but it was generally believed to be the result of their action with regard to free education at Accrington Road, the establishment of the Higher Primary School, and the recent extensions at Moss Street. Rev. G. Coe was "spared" because, generally speaking, he had been a keen protagonist of Church interests, but it was strange that Rev. J. Rushton did not share the fate of the five laymen because he was as liberal-minded as any of them, and indeed was chairman of the offending body. The spirit of the victims' opposition is illustrated by the remark of one prosecuting cleric who avowed that he would sooner have an epidemic in his parish than a Board School!

We have earlier seen how the School Board abandoned its project to build a higher grade school. In 1898 with its more progressive members, it decided to provide something very similar. It wanted "to provide an education for children who had reached the highest class in the ordinary schools and who were practically marking time educationally, and secondly in the School of Science portion to provide a better prepared class of students for technical instruction". The Higher Primary School and School of Science was to be housed in the Technical School, which was largely vacant during the daytime, at £250 a year rent. Management was in the hands of the Board combined with five representatives of the Technical Instruction Committee.

The only serious division of opinion on the Board concerned the question of fees. Most of the Churchmen were afraid of competition for the Parish Higher Grade School, but the managers of both the Public Higher Grade School and the Roman Catholic Higher Grade Schools made it clear that they were not opposed to

free places at the new school. The Anglicans won the vote as usual, but with a majority of only one. Pupils coming from ordinary elementary schools were to be admitted free, but entrants from higher grade schools were to pay 6d a week.

Sir Harry Hornby, Bart., M.P. (the first Chairman of the Board) opened the school in January 1899. It was really an institution with a dual personality because one part of it was designed for standard VII work under the Elementary Code and the other was an organized science school inspected by the Science and Art Department. Both parts, under the same headmaster, seem to have co-operated harmoniously. Most of the pupils were aged 12 - 18 years.

On the first day there were only 35 scholars but this number had trebled by the end of the month. By April the average attendance was about 20 in the Higher Primary Department and 60 in the Science School. At the beginning of the second year there were 33 children in standard 7, with 33 pupils in the first year and 43 in the second year of the Science School. The sexes were equally represented. For the rest of its history the whole institution had about 90 on its rolls, mostly aged 12 - 14 but with perhaps a dozen or more over 14 years of age.

Mr. W. Lewis, B.Sc., F.C.S., was appointed headmaster at a salary of £300 per annum. For the last few months of its brief existence Mr. J. T. Corkill, formerly senior assistant, occupied the position when Mr. Lewis was promoted to Inspector under the new Education Committee. The main part of the teaching was in the hands of the head and three assistants with help from part-time instructors in cookery and manual instruction and from members of the Technical School Staff. In 1901 the Inspector drew attention to the smallness of the salaries being paid and this probably explains the considerable number of staff changes.

The elementary section of the school taught the usual basic subjects of the Code together with the class subjects, needlework,

drawing and singing, and the specific subjects, algebra and French. When the numbers warranted it, standard 7 was divided into two basic classes but these were re-arranged for some subjects. Geography, cookery and manual instruction were also taught most of the time.

Pupils in this section were promoted to the Organized Science School when they passed the standard VII examination and attained the age of 12, although the Inspector could waive the last condition at his discretion. Sometimes children were relegated to standard VII if they failed to settle down in the senior department. Most students remained in the Science School for two or three years before leaving at the age of 14 or 15, or occasionally stayed on for another year. In the summer of 1901 the headmaster undertook a survey of his pupils in this part of the school and of their social background. The vast majority of parents were placed in the "manufacturing" and "commercial" categories with two described as "agricultural" and nine as "miscellaneous". Two thirds of the old students had become pupil teachers, whilst the remainder entered the Civil Service, solicitors' offices, engineering works, or chemists' shops.

Subjects taught in the upper section included mathematics, chemistry, physics, electricity, English, French, hygiene and swimming. In 1903 the Inspector complained about the lack of outdoor games. Educational visits were paid to local iron works a brick yard, sewage works, breweries, chemical works and the Town Museum.

In 1900 application was made to the new Board of Education for the school to be conducted as a higher elementary school, but as it failed to comply with all the necessary conditions, permission was refused. Despite good Reports the school was closed by the Borough Education Committee in 1904, so that the Technical School building could be used for an enlarged Pupil Teacher Centre to replace the one in St. Peter Street.

At the end of March 1903 the Blackburn School Board was abolished under the terms of the Education Act of 1902. Its

schools, including several that were transferred by the Free Churches during the last few weeks of its existence, were handed over to the new Borough Education Committee.

### School Attendance.

It has already been shown that the provision of elementary schools was largely the responsibility of the churches in Blackburn. The main task of the School Board was the enforcement of attendance. This was always a difficult problem.

Life in the middle of the nineteenth century for mill workers was rough, and those in Blackburn, as in similar towns, were notorious for riotous and violent behaviour. "Punch" referred to it as "Blackguardburn". Sometimes troops were called in from Preston to help the police restore order at election time or during a big strike. It was this generation which was ordered to send its children to school in 1871 when the Board made attendance compulsory! Those children who were finally forced to go turned out, in many cases, to be dirty, crude-mannered and unruly. An eye-witness records that the constant complaint of parents was that "Childer were wasting their time in school when they might be warking in't factory".

Various causes were behind the problem. In the first place there was no tradition of education and culture for the mass of workers in a town where the bulk of the population belonged to one class. Long hours in the mill meant little leisure for self-improvement and there were, in any case, few suitable facilities in the Borough. In the District Education Returns for 1885-6 Mr. H. E. Oakeley, Chief Inspector for the North-Western Division wrote:-

"... Released from his former degraded, overworked and unhappy life, the modern half-timer early emancipates himself from parental control; and healthy influences, agencies for his improvement during that critical period of his working life when good local organizations for his education and culture would be of such lasting benefit, are nearly wholly wanting... It seems surprising to me, knowing the active benevolence and power of organization of Lancashire mill owners, that so little has been done for these children by local effort. I mean by providing reading-rooms, amusing entertainments, interesting lectures adapted (which is important) for children, not for scientific people, and so on. Do we encourage them as far as our power under the Education Acts admits?.....".

An important contribution to this tradition was made by the half-time system which enabled children, at the beginning of our period, to end full-time education at the age of eight. From then onwards the boy or girl had one foot in the factory or workshop and became as much concerned with earning a living as receiving an education. As Mr. Oakeley pointed out in the District Return quoted above, "... it is too much to expect of human nature that such a child has often a desire for learning; and he frequently comes to school dull and overtired....".

If we look at the statistics for 1872, the first complete year of School Board responsibility, we find that of 4,631 boys (excluding infants) on the rolls of public elementary schools 2,784 were half-timers, and the corresponding figures for girls were 2,844 out of 4,599. When we allow for the fact that many of the children in this group were too young for part-time employment, we can see that a very large proportion of the eligible children were at work for half the week.

Even the system, bad as it was from an educational point of view, was subject to irregularities. One or two instances may be cited from cases referred to the Board at its meeting in April 1881. A boy had been marked present 25 times in 10 weeks according to the school register, whereas the half-time book recorded 42 school attendances for the same period. Another child

had attended two schools in oneweek and had been marked present seven times at one and four at the other! At another school the teacher had given a pupil a certificate of proficiency saying that he had passed at standard 11 (the minimum for partial exemption at that time) when in fact the child had never even been presented for examination.

Some of the blame for this sort of slackness should be placed upon the shoulders of the Board itself which had only just fixed a standard, under considerable pressure from the Education Department, for partial exemption. The standard chosen was only standard 11, a low one indeed when it is remembered that the statutory minimum age for half-time employment was by then ten years. Previously the Board had failed to fix any standard because, as its Minutes clearly show, it feared a reduced grant for children who could definitely be classed as half-timers, and it had been deliberately stalling the officials in London for some time.

It was not until 1884 that every half-timer was properly certified by the Board. Previously - contrary to the law - every child who worked in a factory was automatically judged to be beneficially employed. It is worth noting that at least two prominent members of the School Board, including the Chairman, were strong adherents of the half-time system, one of them thinking that a more complete proficiency was attained by an operative who started at ten instead of thirteen years of age, and that in any case the ten-year old was able to make a gradual adjustment to working conditions without the strain imposed by a sudden change. These arguments, of course, are essentially industrial, not educational. Perhaps it was no coincidence that both these gentlemen were themselves cotton spinners and manufacturers. A section of working class opinion also supported the system. The "School Grievance Committee" declared that parental income should not be examined before half-time certificates were granted, and complained that doctors were failing too many children on medical grounds.

A third cause of poor attendance was poverty. Let us look at the sort of thing that happened. In 1883 Nancy Fazackerley was sent home from St. Thomas' School because she was in arrears with her school pence. This was quite a common occurrence, but this time Nancy did not return, was placed on the list of absentees, and told an Inspector later that she had been sent home from school. The evidence of parents and teacher conflicted on this point, but it was later proved that she was sent home by a junior assistant without the knowledge of the headmistress, not only then but on subsequent occasions because she still owed the money. On the poverty of the parents being proved, the Poor Law Guardians paid the fees.

Nancy was comparatively lucky because the Guardians had become increasingly slack in paying the fees of poor children and often cases waited several months after being recommended by the Board's Officers before being settled. The amount expended was not large - £70 in 1883 - and the Board made persistent efforts to gain more generous support from the Guardians. Meanwhile the School Attendance Officers were powerless to deal with them.

The Guardians appointed an additional officer and promised to discontinue their practice of double-checking every case which the Board's officers had already recommended, unless there were grounds for doubt.

Inside a year, however, the Guardians were failing to co-operate, still causing their officers to investigate every case, and insisting that applicants put in a personal appearance, a degrading experience. There was also the lowering of the income allowance for beneficiaries to £1 a week with no allowance for dependants. In one refused case, for example, there were eight children, so that the parents were expected to keep themselves and their family at 2/-d a head, or 1/8d after the rent was deducted - and pay school fees. According to the official scale there should have been a minimum allowance of 2/6d a head. This sort of obstruction made it difficult for the School Attendance Officers to discharge their duties



efficiently, and as the Clerk to the Board pointed out in one meeting, a larger number of children than necessary were sent away to residential industrial schools.

Other evidence of poverty and its effect on attendance is supplied by references to various donations being spent by the School Board on clogs and small articles of clothing. At a meeting in 1886 it was reported that many children were absent from school because of a lack of these necessities. Free breakfasts were given at some elementary schools. Strikes and lockouts occasioned even greater hardship, and in 1884, for example, the Guardians refused help during a period of industrial unrest even to those who normally received it anyway. The whole problem was intensified by the fact that fees in both voluntary and Board schools were higher than average.

A special problem that beset the Board's Attendance Committee was that of securing some sort of regular instruction for the children of bargees who lived on the Leeds to Liverpool Canal. Owing to the migratory nature of the parents' employment, it proved to be a most exasperating task.

The problem of attendance now being outlined, it remains for us to review the Board's policy, and estimate its success.

Two Attendance Officers, chosen from 64 applicants, were appointed by the Board at 30/- a week in 1871. Next year three more were added to the list. When the Education Code was amended in 1882 so as to base grants partly on average attendance, local schools were anxious to keep their level as high as possible, and a sixth Attendance Officer was appointed the following year. At the same time a clerk was employed to copy out the registers, as now required. An average taken of 22 towns reveals a ratio of one officer to 2,739 pupils, whereas in Blackburn it was one officer to 4,199 pupils, further evidence of the Board's economy. With the growth of the Town the staff had to increase, and by 1903 there were nine Attendance Officers, and three clerks in the office under a Superintendent.

Much of their work consisted of checking registers and time-books. Attendance Orders and prosecutions in a magistrate's

court were their "teeth". Their routine varied little from year to year and we may take the year 1888 as an example. The six officers made over 22,500 visits to homes. Their business included non-attendance at school, application for the remission of fees, and requests for partial exemption from attendance because of employment not under the terms of the Factory and Workshop Acts. Nearly 1,000 breaches of the bye-laws were reported and about one third of them went to court.

Prosecutions resulted in the payment of fines ranging from half a crown to ten shillings, committal to Industrial or Truant Schools, or the making of School Attendance Orders. Many cases were withdrawn, with or without the payment of costs, on the promise to comply with the bye-laws. From 1890 onwards the Board could commit persistent truants to its own day industrial school in Mayson Street.

By the end of the century there was a noticeable improvement in the number of children who habitually took one or two half-days a week, but truancy was by no means uncommon as the following extract from the School Board Report of 1898-1900 illustrates:-

"Special attention has been given to the children who may be found on the streets in a neglected condition during school hours, and organized raids have been made on the Market Place, Railway Station, Boulevard, and near the newspaper offices, but more especially at the coal depot in Stout Street and near No.2 Gas Works, where children are to be found picking up coal or coke which has fallen from the carts. The majority of school children found coal picking are not bad attenders, and appear only to take a half-day occasionally. The most regrettable feature in connection with this class is the large number met with who, under the Act of 1876, are exempt from attendance at school and have no regular employment. These frequently lead the younger ones wrong and get them into dishonest ways of obtaining fuel, as may be noticed from reports of police cases".

Towards the end of the century the School Board invested its Clerk with special powers enabling him to take immediate action

against recalcitrant parents on canal boats. He did not find his task easy. Despite the parents' complaints of "hard times and of their inability to provide homes apart from the boats, and of the mothers having to take the places of mates on the boats," as the School Board put it, most of the children were removed into houses and made to attend school. In some cases prosecution was necessary. Most of the children belonged to boats registered in other towns, and in these cases were reported to the appropriate authorities. Owing to the constant movement of families a lasting solution was never discovered by the Board, but fortunately the numbers involved by the end of this period were very small.

Similarly the Attendance Officers found it very difficult to deal satisfactorily with wandering labourers who drifted from one town to another without establishing roots anywhere, sometimes to avoid conflict with school authorities. In one case at the very end of the century there were three children over the age of thirteen who one day appeared in the Town and were unfit for standard I. Another family with four sons aged 5 - 14 had had no regular education. When discovered, the eldest boy was selling firewood and the youngest was begging with the mother. The family had been on the move for nine years.

An attack was made on the half-time system from time to time both by Parliament and by the Blackburn School Board. This was largely done by raising the requirements of age, attendance and standard for partial exemption.

The Factory Act of 1874 raised the minimum age from eight to ten years, and for normal employment from thirteen to fourteen. Lord Sandon's Education Act of 1876 confirmed the same principle by forbidding the employment of children under ten, and of above ten unless they had first gained a certificate of proficiency or of previous due attendance at an efficient school.

The effect of these acts in Blackburn was to reduce the proportion rather than the number of half-timers because the Town's population was growing at the same time. This natural

growth was given an artificial stimulus in 1877 when the Borough's boundaries were widened to include the districts of Little Harwood, Witton and Livesey. In 1876 and 1886 there were rather more than 5,000 half-timers but the total population had risen in that decade from about 90,000 to about 112,000.

Nearly twenty years elapsed before the minimum age was raised by law to eleven years. Six years later, in 1899, it was raised to twelve years. In 1900 the normal school leaving age was moved from thirteen to fourteen. This national legislation was really intended to establish a framework within which local bodies could work out their own detailed schemes. It was noticed above that the Blackburn Board refused to set up any minimum standard of proficiency until forced by the Education Department in 1880 and that it was not until four years after that that it began to issue labour certificates to those pupils who reached standard 11.

A comparison of 19 school districts in Lancashire and Yorkshire was made by the Clerk to the Board in 1886 and he reported that five had standard 11, eleven standard 111 and three standard 1V for partial exemption. One of the Non-conformists suggested that if Blackburn followed the example of such similar districts as Salford and Oldham and raised the standard to 111 a more regular attendance would be achieved. The Board finally decided to make the change from April 1st 1887.

Although this new bye-law and the national legislation of six years later lowered the proportion of children who enjoyed the privilege of an abbreviated school career, it had only a temporary effect as far as numbers were concerned in Blackburn owing to an expanding population. Between 1895 and 1897 there was an increase of 64% in the number of candidates for qualifying examinations compared with the previous triennium and the number of passes (including those for total exemption at standard V) increased from 1,836 in 1895 to 2,180 the following year. It was only prompt and effective action by the Board in 1896 that reversed the process. The minimum standard for partial exemption then became standard 1V (standard

V1 for total exemption). By this measure the number of passes in 1897 was reduced to 1,603. The whole system was a paradox because on the one hand it provided an incentive for scholars to study hard in order to reach the required standard as soon as possible, and at the same time it robbed the elementary schools of some of their brightest pupils.

A final reform was introduced by the Board in 1901 when the fifth standard was required of half-timers.

Poverty is a problem that is not easily solved by law or regulation. As far as education was concerned Parliament passed an Act in 1891 to help poor children and others in 1897 to help poor voluntary schools and school boards. The first of these enabled a free education to be given in elementary schools where fees did not previously exceed ten shillings a year for each pupil in average attendance and for which an annual parliamentary grant had not fallen due. This did not help the Blackburn schools. A possible increase in fees was prevented in 1897 when many of the Borough's voluntary schools benefited from the new aid grants. At this time most of the elementary schools had a few free places, and the Board was careful to allocate no more than the same proportion in its own schools.

It did undertake in 1898 to be responsible for the fees of poor children which were normally paid by the Guardians on behalf of pupils in Board schools as well as in voluntary schools. This was largely a matter of administrative convenience for the amount involved was very slight - less than £2 the previous year. An amendment by the "Progressives" (largely the Nonconformists in a new guise) to extend the measure to all elementary schools was defeated. During this debate one of the Progressives observed that it was time that education in Blackburn Board schools was completely free as it was in 93% of the country's Board schools (and 67% of the country's voluntary schools). When the Board opened its next school, the Higher Primary School and School of Science, a year later most of the places were free, and it had no choice a year

after that in making its new elementary school at Accrington Road completely free.

Poor children were assisted to prolong their school life by the Peel Scholarship Fund. This scheme was established at the end of 1898 by local Conservatives to honour the memory of Sir Robert Peel. Their motives may have been partly political, in view of a recent Liberal proposal to erect a statue of Mr. Gladstone, who had just died, but the result helped education. Scholarships were offered in three categories; primary, secondary and technical. In the primary section there were six minor scholarships tenable for two years in any higher grade or higher primary school in Blackburn by pupils under 11 years of age and to the annual value of £2/10/-d each; and six intermediate scholarships tenable for two years in any of Blackburn's schools of science by pupils under 13 years of age and worth £5 each per year.

Financial hardship itself sometimes led to improved attendances. Many working mothers realized that even schools had their "practical" uses. For a copper a week three and four year olds could be entrusted to a teacher, and mothers sometimes supplied milk and bread for the staff to give the infants at play-time.

As a result of all these efforts together with the gradual development of a new tradition by the end of the nineteenth century, a great improvement in school attendance was effected. Perhaps the only great enemy of regular attendance that was comparatively untouched by 1903 was epidemic disease.

The table below indicates the progress of average attendance compared with the numbers on the rolls.

<u>DATE.</u>	<u>1871</u>	<u>1873</u>	<u>1876</u>	<u>1879</u>	<u>1882</u>	<u>1885</u>	<u>1888</u>
<u>POPULATION.</u>	76000			(in '81) 104000			
<u>NO.ON ROLLS.</u>	12226	14429	16039	18715	20996	22113	24385
<u>AV.ATTENDANCE.</u>	7705	9425	10382	12715	15234	16029	17174
<u>DATE.</u>	<u>1891</u>	<u>1894</u>	<u>1897</u>	<u>1900</u>	<u>1902</u>		
<u>POPULATION.</u>	120000			('01) 129000			
<u>NO.ON ROLLS.</u>	24920	24793	24812	24631	24660		
<u>AV.ATTENDANCE.</u>	17589	19129	19876	19748	20623		

As far as attendance was concerned Blackburn was able to hold its own with other Lancashire towns, although it lagged slightly behind the national average for industrial towns. In 1888, for example, Blackburn and Lancashire both returned average attendance figures of 78% when due allowance was made for half-timers, whereas the national average was approximately 82%. In 1871 it had been 60%.

As the average attendance increased, the proportion of half-timers of the total school population decreased. It dropped from about 40% at the beginning of our period to less than 10% in 1903. A comparison was made in 1882 between Blackburn and ten other large manufacturing towns in Lancashire and Yorkshire, when it was found that the average number of half-timers in the total average attendance in the other towns was 10%, whereas Blackburn at that time had 25%. It was another twenty years before Blackburn had reduced its numbers to the average level of that year.

The Government was aware of the half-time problem, but failed to solve it until 1918. In the meantime it contented itself with raising the minimum age of exemption. The Report of the Departmental Committee on School Attendance and Child Labour 1893 revealed two important factors: the complete lack of reliable statistics and the limitation of the half-time system on any noteworthy scale to five towns.

According to the attendance returns of the factories and workshops there were 18,618 half-timers in the five main centres. The equivalent figure published by the Education Department and based on the returns from schools was 32,518! The Committee was unable to supply any convincing explanation of this discrepancy and frankly admitted it. It could "only conclude that children are entered on the school returns who are not necessarily and beneficially employed. In any case it would appear from our inquiries that the usual estimates of the number of half-timers are very considerably exaggerated".

The five main centres of the system by 1893 were Bradford, Blackburn, Bolton, Oldham and Leicester. The largest number

was in Bradford with Blackburn a close second, and the others some way behind.

It was the Committee's opinion that special regard be given to the phrase "necessarily and beneficially employed", particularly in the textile districts where the practice was most extensive. The great industrial cities of Birmingham, Sheffield and Bristol all had well under 250 half-timers each, and London with a population of four millions and exemption at only standard 111 had fewer than 700.

Public prejudice in favour of the system was too strong for any sweeping reform in Blackburn, but the School Board, and later the Education Committee, steadily tightened the regulations.



Special Children: (a) Truants.

Blackburn, towards the end of the nineteenth century, was the largest cotton-weaving centre in England and the bulk of its population was dependent on textiles for a living. Mill operatives were both male and female and this produced a strain on the normal domestic relationships; especially those between parents and children. Frequently both parents would be away in the factory from 6. 0 am. to 5.30 p.m. with short intervals for meals, and the children were either left to their own devices or put in the charge of people who made a living by looking after other people's children. Truancy and delinquency were a natural result of the system. As well as these members of what were normally regarded as respectable working-class homes, there were, as the Board's Report of 1886-88 put it, "the children of dissolute parents, to be found in all large towns, who have little or no regard for their children's education, and upon whom repeated convictions and penalties have little effect".

It was extremely difficult for the School Board to enforce attendance in these circumstances. There was the possibility of School Attendance Orders or fines after conviction in a court, but Attendance Orders were often ignored and fines could entail hardship without achieving the desired result. There was also the course open of sending offenders or victims - whichever point of view we adopt - away to residential industrial schools until the age of 16, but this was an expensive remedy, particularly when the Board did not normally have to be responsible for the education of young citizens beyond the age of 13. However, the Board did make use of residential schools for the first twenty years of its existence for most cases of truancy and delinquency. In 1875 it had unsuccessfully sought a cheaper expedient by supporting a resolution of the Salford School Board that such children should be sent to the workhouse.

The Elementary Education Act of 1876 provided another alternative. School Boards were empowered to establish day

industrial schools, if the consent of the Home Office was first secured. Upon the complaint of a board, magistrates could, following a previous warning, commit habitual offenders to these new institutions. Parents could be ordered to subscribe two shillings a week towards the cost of maintenance and the Treasury paid a grant of half that sum. The remainder of the expenses were charged upon the rates.

After the satisfactory completion of a period in a day industrial school, a child might be given a licence to attend an ordinary public elementary school. Some authorities who had tried the scheme had discovered that children out on licence kept up a 96% attendance record for the rest of their school life.

A deputation was sent by the Blackburn Board in 1887 to look at the day industrial schools in Wolverhampton and Nottingham and came back full of enthusiasm. This feeling was shared by the local press. One newspaper was glad that "Mr. Bowdler (a prominent Nonconformist member of the Board) has been much exercised by what he has seen, and now feels out of patience with the Blackburn Board for its do-nothing policy all round.... The dry bones of our local educationists need shaking up, and perhaps a few excursions at the ratepayers' expense might be made to pay if they resulted in something practical being done for the benefit of the town".

At one time the Board considered building a residential school, but after an examination of Liverpool's Truant School and others, decided that it would be too expensive; and economy pointed to a day institution where a meal might be provided, but no lodging. This latter remedy would cost about 3/-d per child per week compared with about 7/6d for a residential school. A further recommendation for a cash-conscious body was "that in the latter case the expenditure continues until the child is 16 years of age, and that the amount paid by the parent goes to the Home Office; whereas in the former case the payment is for a limited time and the contribution of the parent is paid to the local authorities....".

In 1888 the Board decided to go ahead and build its own day industrial school in Mayson Street. It was designed for 120 boys and 30 girls. By the time it was opened in 1890 it had cost about £4,600.

At the time these plans were laid, there were 98 Blackburn children in residential industrial schools and they cost the Board about £500 a year to maintain. In addition, the Board had expended nearly the same amount again in capital grants for building extensions to these schools. About 30 children a year were committed, but the number was on the increase. Nine different establishments, mostly denominational, received the offenders. These included the Bolton and County of Lancaster Industrial School, Liverpool Girls' Industrial School, Hightown Industrial School near Southport, and training ships. When Mayson Street was established the number of children committed to residential schools dropped to a half and later a third of the total of 1888.

A comparison of the cost of maintaining a child in an elementary school, a day industrial school, and a residential industrial school is not without interest. The amounts in the last decade of the century were approximately £2/10/-d, £10 and £20 a year.

Mayson Street Industrial School was opened on September 29th 1890. The first register contained twelve names, eleven male and one female, of children whose average age was about eleven years. A month later the total had risen to 39, only 3 of them being girls. Throughout the history of the school there were always many more boys than girls, and the paucity of girls was to prove an embarrassment with regard to curriculum arrangements later on. The number on the rolls had reached 75 in less than twelve months and this was to remain the approximate total for a number of years, although it topped 100 in 1898. It soon returned to the old average before beginning a steady decline in the present century, so that it was 48 in 1901, 38 in 1902, 28 in 1905 and 19 in 1907 when the school was closed.

The obvious conclusion from the evidence is that the problem of truancy had largely been solved by 1907 and it was no longer economical to run a special establishment beyond that date. The school had rarely been used for other classes of offenders: delinquents were usually sent to residential schools.

Reports on Mayson Street were usually good, although Inspectors occasionally suggested improvements. The Inspector in 1900 doubted "whether the Board as a whole is fully alive to the possibilities of a Day Industrial School managed with vigour, on its social as well as educational side," and pointed out that "it is quite possible to do as much in the way of after-care for children who leave Day Industrial Schools as for those who leave ordinary Industrial Schools....". Those comments have a modern ring about them.

It was also thought that it could profitably extend its scope, but this advice, like that above, was never taken.

A Superintendent, a Protestant assistant, a Roman Catholic assistant, a caretaker-cum-labour master, and a cook made up the staff for most of the time. In view of the nature of the school and the preponderance of boys, it is surprising to find that the staff was entirely female except for the labour master. In the early months it was difficult to find a suitable man for the latter office. One man deserted his wife and his job without warning and was later traced in London. One of the assistant mistresses was Roman Catholic because a large proportion of the children were of that religion, usually with Irish surnames. A Visitor was also employed by the Board to round up the truants - sometimes after a hectic chase - but he was not directly attached to the school's staff.

The school was open from 6. 0 a.m. to 6. 0 p.m. and holidays were restricted to three days each at Christmas, Easter and Whitsuntide, and four days for the mill holidays. A bank holiday week was often completed by morning attendances only. Special occasions such as the arrival in town of Barnum and Bailey's Show or the annual trip to the sea organized by the

Blackburn Ragged School for those who could obtain a ticket were worth an extra day. In later years the practice of having one Saturday morning a month free was begun.

There were really two sorts of curricula: the elementary and the industrial. The former consisted of the basic subjects with geography and recitation, sometimes combined with history and singing, and after 1899, drawing. In the extra hours available on the time-table, including Saturday mornings, occupations of a practical nature were taught. Sack-making appeared the first week for boys, and later mat-making and clog-making were taught. This provoked trouble with at least one trade union, for in 1897 representatives of the cloggers complained that the Board was adding to the evils of an overcrowded trade. Sack-making seems to have been the main industrial activity, and when business was slack a member of the staff would call on local coal merchants looking for orders. By the turn of the century a pleasanter range of occupation was envisaged by some of the higher authorities, and in the Mayson Street Report for 1901 we find the opinion that "None of them (is) very attractive or educative.... This class of boy is found in other towns to profit considerably from Manual Instruction, and it would be as well for a dozen or more from this school to attend one of the centres in the town". This advice was immediately taken and a class began to visit the Technical School.

For the girls the industrial instruction was restricted to domestic subjects. From time to time there were classes in cookery, sewing simple garments such as aprons, mending clothes and knitting such articles as stockings and mops. Much of their time, and when their number became very small, the whole of their time, for practical work, was devoted to preparing school meals, washing school towels and aprons, and cleaning the premises. When their number was very low, some of the boys had to take a turn with bucket and brush.

Drill and drawing were the only subjects which some children might have enjoyed doing. There were no organized games, but

there are one or two references in the log-book to football matches. Swimming began in 1901, despite protests in the Town about such children using the public baths, and the school quickly established a reputation at the schools' annual swimming galas out of all proportion to its small numbers.

Some break in the routine of school life was afforded by the occasional lantern lecture, by the monthly "pleasant afternoon" that the staff arranged, the annual temperance talks, and such novelties as the installation of a telephone in 1891. Reference must also be made to the benevolent interest of Mr. J. A. Watson, doyen of the School Board. It was he who provided the lantern show and it was he who sent the children fruit, and sometimes a card each, every Christmas.

Considering the type of school there was generally little disciplinary trouble and the Inspectors often praised the order. Truancy was the commonest weakness in the pupils, as would be expected in an institution which, despite its name, was principally a school for truants. This, with the aid of some hard running on the part of the School Visitor and dexterous use of the birch, was considerably reduced within a few years, and very difficult boys were despatched to residential schools. No doubt the growing reputation of the school, as much as its actual treatment of culprits, contributed to a decline in truancy in Blackburn.

Boys sometimes failed to turn up for school, and others escaped during the day. The following entry in the log shows that the general public in 1890 were not necessarily on the side of authority.

"James Ainsworth has truanted all week. I have sent boys for him but he always succeeds in escaping or arousing the sympathy of passers-by who interfere and so prevent his being caught...."

Out-breaks of theft occurred from time to time. Money was the chief temptation for young fingers, but two boys from Mayson Street were imprisoned for stealing 35 lbs. of lead from house roofs, two more were found guilty of stealing pigeons, and

four lads broke into a house and helped themselves to some pies and a canary. The Superintendent once entrusted 7/6d to a boy for an errand; it was a number of days before he and a companion were apprehended in Bolton where they had journeyed to spend the loot.

The background to the school was one of poverty, dirt and disease. The children were often badly clad and badly shod, and if it had not been for the fact that they had their main meals at school they would probably have been badly fed. Most of them qualified for the occasional free breakfast that was provided in the Town and were partly dependent upon the school's own clothing fund. Money from the latter was used to buy clogs or the materials for making clogs, and to provide wool so that boys and girls could knit themselves mufflers.

A curious accident in 1891 reveals the poverty of dress of one child. A girl was standing in front of the washhouse boiler fire one morning when her dress caught fire. The flames were extinguished almost immediately but "she had so little clothing on that she was very extensively burnt". This was in December, and another entry in the log the same month records that "one little girl has nothing on but a poor jacket". A number of children were barefooted and the clogless ones suffered severely in bad weather and were frequently absent if it snowed.

Dirty bodies and dirty clothes were problems that beset the staff. The former were combatted by hot baths at school and the latter by fumigation. In an extreme case a child had to be kept apart from the others. The teachers were at times forced to shave and wash heads, and at least once had to burn a towel after use.

Disease is the common offspring of poverty and dirt and Mayson Street had its full share. The chief complaint was sore eyes, thought to result from wet feet. There were occasional cases of ringworm, epileptic fits, "the itch", and "a loathsome skin disease". With the exception of epilepsy, the diseases are those usually associated with the social background of the

pupils, but it is interesting to see that by way of compensation these children largely seemed to avoid the more obvious illnesses, such as measles and scarlet fever, which during this same period plagued so many other schools in the Town.

A hint of expansion or closure was contained in the Report for 1904:-

"It is no small credit to the staff that with falling numbers and declining interest they maintain the efficiency of the school. As at present worked the school scarcely justifies its cost, and if it is to be continued the Education Committee will have to consider whether the policy hitherto followed is in all respects the most far-sighted.

To ensure a high average of attendance is no doubt of the first importance, particularly in a district where (as in Blackburn) the half-time system is so intensively worked, and it may thus have come about that the school's only aim was considered to cure truancy. The act would seem capable of a wider application and to anyone acquainted with the valuable social work being performed by this class of school in London, Liverpool, Manchester, Glasgow and other centres there appears a danger of a valuable opportunity being lost in this important town.....".

The Education Committee had no intention of broadening the basis of the school, and seizing the opportunity referred to by the Inspector, and as the number of truants dropped drastically at this time, Mayson Street Industrial School was closed in 1907.

#### Special Children: (b) Handicapped Children.

No special school for physically or mentally handicapped children was ever provided by the School Board. It was only in the second half of this period that there was any real national



concern for children in these categories and few authorities made special provision for them before the present century. It was natural, of course, that the problem of an elementary education for the majority should come first. In Blackburn there were only a few children involved in each of the main groups of defectives and it was not practicable to build special institutions for them. The Board's attitude was probably justified although if there had not been a suitable school in nearby Preston it might have erected one for the district. Most of the 91 schools for the blind and deaf open in England and Wales in 1897 were regional or served large cities such as Manchester and Liverpool, but some towns similar in size to Blackburn - Brighton, Preston and Norwich - had their own.

A letter was received in January 1886 by the Board from the Manchester Adult Deaf and Dumb Society asking for help on behalf of Blackburn's deaf and dumb children who were receiving no education. The Chairman expressed his sympathy but could think of no practical solution except that of remitting the fees of children who wanted to attend a Board school. One member said that if they helped the deaf and dumb, the blind would be applying for assistance too. A sub-committee was finally appointed to investigate the whole question. It later reported that it had found 10 blind and 7 deaf-mutes whose educational welfare was being neglected. It was suggested that the Blind Society establish a hostel near a Board school and provide an attendant, while the Board would give free school places. No practical solution was found for the deaf and dumb. In the case of the blind, it seems to have been assumed that they would benefit from the instruction given in a large class of normal children.

The Government began to take a hand in 1893 when it passed the Elementary Education (Blind and Deaf Children) Act which made parents and the local education authority responsible for the provision of suitable training for blind and deaf children up to the age of 16 years. This act came into operation on

January 1st 1894 and by the end of that year the Blackburn Board had sent ten children to schools specially adapted for these disabilities. In 1895 and 1896 eight more were sent, followed by three in 1897. During this same period six were discharged. The total cost to the Board had reached about £400 a year by 1897. Most of the children were visited by members of the Board and were usually found to be in good health and spirits. However, experience was already showing that although blind children were kept at school until they reached the age of 16, few were well enough equipped when they left to earn a living.

The number of these children stabilized at about 20 and the cost was between £400 and £500 a year, of which less than £200 was covered by parental contributions.

New classes of children were cared for by the Elementary Education (Defective and Epileptic Children) Act of 1899. This was in broad outline similar to the Blind and Deaf Children Act but was permissive rather than obligatory. An education authority was empowered to make special provision for these types of handicapped children up to the age of 16 by means of special classes, special schools, or boarding out in appropriate institutions. There was a division of opinion in the country about the value of special schools for mentally defective children. Enterprising towns such as Leicester, London, Birmingham, Nottingham and Bradford had actually provided special centres before the passing of the Act, Leicester and London as early as 1892. Other authorities, however, were against this type of school and the Leeds School Board, for example, told the Inspector that it "felt that association with other children not defective is of great importance in the education of weak children, and have not favoured the idea of special schools".

A sub-committee of the Blackburn School Board visited special schools for defective children in Bolton and Burnley, and also carried out a survey of the needs of their own town. It was found that 20 children were mentally defective, 29 were cripples, 15 suffered from fits, and 7 had a combination of these

infirmities. It was resolved to form a special class each for the west and east sides of the Borough. A year or two later, as we shall see, the Education Committee built a special school for defectives.

### Evening Classes.

Government grants for evening classes began on a very modest scale in 1851. Until 1890 these classes were intended almost exclusively to provide instruction in the elementary subjects, and under the terms of the 1870 Act elementary education was to be the principal part of the instruction given. Following the publication of the Report of the Cross Commission in 1888, the Government decided to free evening schools from their obligation to specialize in elementary subjects, and this was done by the Education Code (1890) Act. An even more varied and progressive policy became possible three years later when the Evening School Regulations were separated from the Day School Code, and no fewer than 38 subjects became available for students of any age.

No comprehensive system of evening classes existed in Blackburn before 1893. That is not to say that such classes never met before that date. There are occasional references to evening classes, evidently of a transient nature, in some of the day elementary school log books. It was to be expected that in a town where pupils were excused full-time education at the age of 10 or 11, some extra classes in the evening would be necessary.

The School Board had optimistically sketched out general regulations for its evening schools as far back as 1872 but had never implemented them. In 1893, following the changes in the law mentioned above, it decided to open evening continuation schools at two of its own schools, Moss Street and Mayson Street and three voluntary schools, St. Thomas', St. John's, and Bank Top. These schools enrolled 652 students for the first session (September 1893 - March 1894), but there was only an average attendance of 230. Despite the disappointing attendances, the experiment, which had earned £181 in grants, was adjudged a success, and new evening schools were opened in the next session at Lower Darwen, St. Silas', and Mill Hill, in addition to the five old ones.

Ordinary elementary subjects were taught, as might be expected in a community where compulsory education was little more than twenty years old and where the half-time system was so strong. Extra subjects - cookery, dressmaking, and ambulance work - were also provided. No doubt some of the most popular lessons were those, such as geography, which made use of that Victorian novelty, the magic lantern.

Within three years the average attendance had just trebled to 690, and eleven different schools employing 45 teachers were open. An imposing selection of subjects now included reading, writing, composition, arithmetic, geography, history, the life and duties of the citizen, mensuration, the science of common things, human physiology, book-keeping, ambulance work, shorthand, domestic economy, cookery, laundry work, needlework, dresscutting, and millinery. The list bears a close resemblance to the courses offered by many modern evening schools.

Fifteen centres were open by the turn of the century and the average attendance was well past 1,000. One result was an increased demand on the rates, and in the session 1899-1900 this exceeded £100 for the first time.

As an incentive to regular attendance the School Board decided that from 1899 onwards all fees would be returned to students who had a 90% attendance record and half the fees to those with a 75% record. In the first year of the scheme the Board had to pay £199/1/3d back out of £266/17/8d which had been received, and a similar amount the following year. The most marked improvement in attendance was for the latter half of each session when students' interest had often tended to flag.

To provide yet another stimulus, the evening schools joined the Union of Lancashire and Cheshire Institutes in 1899, and that year 183 candidates from Blackburn entered examinations in writing, arithmetic, book-keeping, shorthand, domestic economy, and sick nursing. The best results were obtained in the last two subjects on the list.

A further increase in the Board's responsibilities for evening instruction was brought about in 1900 by the transfer of classes from the Technical School Committee.

The pattern of instruction remained much the same except for the addition of commercial correspondence and office routine, vocal music, sick nursing, algebra and euclid.

A rather different series of classes was arranged between 1883 and 1889 in connection with Cambridge University. The university extension movement began in London and other large cities in the second half of the nineteenth century and was a means of bringing lower middle and working class people into contact with university teachers by means of extra-mural lectures and tutorials.

The scheme never became very popular in Blackburn and always faced financial difficulties despite the keen efforts of its local secretary, W. H. Brewer, H.M.I. for the Blackburn District. At first the annual subscription was one pound, and it proved difficult to raise the £60 needed to cover expenses. At the same time workers were excluded on the grounds of cost. Some revision was effected and it became possible for pupil teachers and artisans to buy a shilling ticket for a complete course. About 40 people were taking advantage of this concession by 1888. Despite a total membership of 130 there was still an annual loss, and it was not surprising that classes were merged into the Technical School the following year.

There were two terms during the winter session and scientific and literary courses were offered in turn. Subjects varied from drama to astronomy.

During the Michaelmas Term 1883 Cambridge University sponsored 30 local centres. Three years later this number reached a peak of 45, and then a decline set in. At this time Blackburn was the only Lancashire town working in co-operation with the Syndicate, but Southport appeared on the list for Lent 1889.

Evening classes played an important part in the development of elementary education. The courses provided in Blackburn's

elementary schools not only enabled students to consolidate and extend their grasp of the basic subjects, but also offered an opportunity, for ten shillings a week (or less if a previous good attendance record was shown), for a widening of knowledge that would be of value both in the home and at work. The university extension classes offered an excursion into the field of secondary education.

Other evening classes will be examined later in connection with the work of the Technical School and the Pupil Teacher Centre.

### The Teachers.

Elementary school teachers were divided into three main categories: certificated teachers, uncertificated assistants, and pupil teachers. Certificated teachers had successfully completed their apprenticeship, passed the Scholarship Examination, and then either gone to a training college for two years or undertaken a course of part-time study for the Certificate. Only teachers with a first or second class - there were three classes - were eligible for promotion to a headship.

Uncertificated assistants were normally employed under Articles 50 or 68 of the Education Code. Those serving under the former had finished their training as pupil teachers and taken their Scholarship Examination but had not passed their Certificate. In some cases they had not even completed the course of instruction. Teachers under Article 68 lacked even these elementary qualifications. On condition that she had attained the age of 18 years, had been vaccinated, and was approved by Her Majesty's Inspector, a young woman could take classes in an infants' or girls' school up to standard II.

At the age of 14 a boy or girl could begin a four-year apprenticeship as a pupil teacher. Previously, at the age of 12 they might have been probationers, or at the age of 13 candidates. During their apprenticeship they divided their time between teaching in the classrooms and studying for the Scholarship. Instruction was given daily by a certificated teacher, usually the head, for an hour before morning school, and facilities for study were also provided in evening and Saturday morning classes. When the pupil teacher centres were opened in Blackburn, students would be given leave of absence from school to attend for a number of half-days a week, and indulgent head teachers would sometimes grant extra half-days at irregular intervals, especially before examinations (held annually), for private study.



The value of the early morning instruction depended very largely upon the interest and ability shown by the individual head teacher. In one of Blackburn's church schools where four mornings a week were devoted to secular instruction and the remaining one to religious knowledge, the headmaster had a partiality for an early morning glass of whisky and rarely reached his three pupil teachers before 8.30 when he would greet them by saying, "Have you read that work I set?".

Staffing, then as now, was a constant problem, and more especially when the managers of voluntary schools were looking for men and women not only prepared to teach during the week for a small salary, but also ready to give their services in the Sunday School. During the week their duties were not confined to normal teaching from 9.0 a.m. until 4.30 or 5 p.m. but included, in the case of certificated teachers, instruction to pupil teachers from 7.45 or 8.0 am. until morning school began. It was not unknown for the apprentices to spend part of their study and preparation period in tasks not really within their province. At Christ Church Infants' School in the 'eighties the mistress ordered them to black-lead the grate and white-stone the curb on Friday mornings in order to relieve the caretaker, a relative of hers, of some of his more onerous duties. The working day of a teacher could be voluntarily prolonged by night school teaching, and one wonders whether a teacher would be at his best at 8.0 p.m. if he had started teaching some twelve hours before.

In addition to teaching, the staff were also responsible for Penny Savings Banks. These were started in the Board schools, to encourage thrift. This involved a considerable amount of time as one or two figures will illustrate. In the first two years or so at Moss Street £237/11/-d was deposited, £194/9/5d withdrawn, and £7/8/1d transferred to separate accounts.

Financial difficulties forced Blackburn schools to economise on salaries. We have already seen how little the School Board paid its own Clerk, and the Board and voluntary school managers expended less on teachers' salaries per pupil

in average attendance than most districts. In Blackburn's Board schools in 1893 this last figure was £1/12/1d per pupil compared with the average for England and Wales of £1/17/-½d and with £1/16/8¼d for neighbouring Bolton. For voluntary schools the amounts were £1/6/3d, £1/8/8¼d and £1/8/9¼d respectively.

It was customary for head teachers to be paid a basic salary and given a share of the education grant. At Four Lanes End, the Board's first school, the headmaster received £80 and one third of the grant for his first year, and thereafter £70 and half the grant. Mr. John Baxter, who succeeded Mr. Cull in 1880 was paid at the same rate until 1882 when his salary was increased by £10. This brought his total emoluments to about £120, which he had increased to about £135 two years later. In 1884 he requested to be paid the whole of his salary at monthly intervals instead of receiving much of it annually, and the Board agreed to fix his total salary at £125, thus saving themselves £10 a year at the master's expense. The headmaster at Moss Street, a larger school, earned £130 a year at this time. There were evidently no great changes by the end of the century, for the headmaster of Accrington Road school was appointed in 1900 at £150 a year.

In voluntary schools the head teacher's salary depended upon a private contract but was generally less than the amounts quoted above.

Salaries of assistants varied considerably in the absence of either a national or local scale. At the beginning of our period a certificated teacher might earn about £60 a year and an uncertificated assistant about £40 - £45. Female teachers were normally paid about £10 less than their male counterparts.

The School Board published a fully comprehensive scale of salaries for its teaching staff in 1898 and it is quoted in full below.

#### I Day Schools.

Probationers .....	£10 per annum.
Candidates.... subject to approval	£12/10/-d "

Pupil Teachers.....(apprenticed before July 1st 1900)

<u>1st year</u>	<u>2nd year</u>	<u>3rd year</u>	<u>4th year</u>
£12/10/-d	£15/-/-d	£17/10/-d	£20/-/-d

(apprenticed after July 1st 1900)

<u>1st year</u>	<u>2nd year</u>	<u>3rd year</u>
£15/-/-d	£17/10/-d	£20/-/-d

Ex-Pupil Teachers & Uncertificated

		<u>Min.</u>	<u>Max.</u>	<u>Annual increments.</u>
Assistants under Arts. 50, 51, 52.	( Male	£60 -	£65	£2/10/-d
	(Female	50 -	55	£2/10/-d
Untrained Certificated Assistants	( Male	70 -	80	£2/10/-d
	(Female	60 -	70	£2/10/-d
Trained Certificated Assistants.	( Male Div. 111	75 -	95	£5/-/-d
	( " " 1 & 11	80 -	100	£5/-/-d
	(Female " 111	65 -	85	£5/-/-d
	( " " 1 & 11	70 -	90	£5/-/-d

The Board might appoint a First Assistant with a special allowance of £5 per annum and might award other allowances in cases of exceptional merit.

"The granting of the annual increment is in all cases dependent upon good conduct and satisfactory service". That, no doubt, supplied the Board with a useful whip.

### 11. Evening Schools.

Head Masters 7/6d per evening.

Head Mistresses 6/6d " "

plus 20% of the Annual Grant for the session.

Ordinary Assistants 4/-d per evening.

Special Teachers made private agreements with the School Management Committee.

It is interesting to compare these salaries with those paid in Bolton. In the latter town most male certificated assistants received between £70 and £90, and females between £54 and £90, with one or two getting more than the normal maximum. Male uncertificated assistants averaged about £48 with £60 as the maximum, and females were paid an average of £36 with £54 as the maximum. Male pupil teachers received from £18 to £26 and females from £15 to £22. It will be observed that the chief difference lies in the much larger salaries that uncertificated

assistants could command in Blackburn, and that Borough's lower rates of remuneration for pupil teachers.

Four years later the Blackburn scale was unchanged and at that time the national average for a male certificated teacher was £108/11/5d and for a female uncertificated teacher £78/13/7d. It will be noticed that although the rates of pay were low in Blackburn, the difference between men and women was much less than the average. Perhaps this is not unconnected with the fact that in a town relying to a great extent on female labour, the difference in economic status between a man and a woman was less marked than in most districts of Victorian England.

Few schools in Blackburn had more than one or two certificated teachers on the staff. Unqualified teachers were cheaper, and in any case most certificated assistants could have earned more elsewhere. Infants' schools benefited most, from a financial point of view, because staff could be employed under Article 68. Taking St. Barnabas' Infant School as an example we find that for the period 1886 to 1903 there were usually four or five teachers for an average attendance of just over 170. The headmistress was the only one with a certificate. In 1889 there were the headmistress, an assistant under Article 50, a 19 year old assistant under Article 84 who had left school after reaching only Standard IV, a fourth year pupil teacher who would probably be aged about 17, and a first year pupil teacher presumably aged about 14 or 15. Whenever the headmistress was ill, and that was frequent at St. Barnabas, the school was without any qualified or experienced teachers.

At All Saints' Mixed School, as we have seen, only one out of six teachers was normally the possessor of a certificate. Blackburn's Board schools fared better in this respect.

Impecunious teachers were sometimes driven to strange devices to augment their salary, particularly if they had large families to support. Towards the end of the nineteenth century the headmaster of St. Alban's Roman Catholic Elementary School added to his meagre income by being in business as a wines and spirit merchant, and during his free time visited licensed

premises with his pony and trap.

Some improvement in the lot of teachers came with the passing of the Elementary School Teachers' (Superannuation) Act in 1898. Certificated teachers were permitted to contribute £3 a year (£2 for women) to a Deferred Annuity Fund. At the retirement age of 65, the teacher was paid an annuity depending on the amount he had contributed, to which was added an annual allowance of 10/-d for each complete year of service. There was also a Disablement Allowance for teachers who were forced by infirmity to retire before the normal age. The teacher's contribution was deducted by the Education Department from the school grant and this in turn was deducted by the School Board or managers from the teacher's salary. Of the 17 certificated teachers in the Board's employment, 14 elected immediately to join the scheme when it came into operation in 1899. There are no comparable records for voluntary school staff, but it is reasonable to suppose that they were attracted to a similar degree. The value of the scheme was increased by the fact that there was not yet any state retirement pension.

Despite their slender financial resources and lack of well-qualified staff the schools in Blackburn acquitted themselves as well as most in examinations. One method of judging the standard of teaching, by no means infallible, is by a study of Her Majesty's Inspector's recommendations for merit grants. There were four classifications: excellent, good, fair and nil. Taking the boys' and girls' departments for a year about half-way through the period, 1887-8, we find that 28.6 were adjudged to be excellent, 60.3 good, 9.5 fair and 1.6 nil. For infants' the results were 20.9 excellent, 65.1 good, 14.0 fair and none in the bottom category.

The teachers of Blackburn had a record of which they could be justly proud. We are measuring their success, of course, by the standards of that age. It was that period of ill-fame, the era of "Payment by Results", but the staff of the schools in Blackburn, as in other districts, had to trim their teaching in accordance with the system upon which they partly relied for

financial assistance, and it is not upon their heads that the wrath of later commentators should fall.

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Most candidates for the modern teaching profession are recruited after a prolonged stay at a grammar school followed by two or three years at a residential training college. In late Victorian England, however, most elementary school teachers had served a four-year apprenticeship in an elementary school and carried on further academic study in their private time. A fortunate minority won scholarships to training college.

We have earlier described how the instruction given to pupil teachers was haphazard and dependent largely upon the whim of a head teacher, although classes in the evening and on Saturday mornings were sponsored in Blackburn by the Pupil Teachers' Association. In 1894 systematic training at a special centre began.

The establishment of Central Classes for training pupil teachers and assistants was the result of the initiative of the Blackburn Branch of the National Union of Teachers which petitioned the School Board in the autumn of 1893. After discussions by the Board, school managers and teachers' representatives it was decided to implement a scheme early in 1894.

The initial problems which confronted the Board were those of finding suitable premises and staff for the undertaking, and it is to its credit that it had surmounted both and opened a centre by April 16th 1894. The building used was the St. Peter Street School, which was rented from the Clayton Street Wesleyan Chapel. Mr. J. D. Baxter B.A.(London), Headmaster of the Four Lanes End Board School and mathematics master at the Technical School, was appointed as the first head of the pupil teachers' classes, with Miss Maude Slater as his assistant.

When the Central Classes began, the Pupil Teachers' Association relinquished its position as a teaching body but continued in an examining capacity. It also awarded prizes to encourage the more promising students.

During the first week no fewer than 171 pupil teachers and 24 certificate pupils were enrolled. The numbers thereafter varied considerably owing to the examinations which were held at frequent intervals, but the average number during the first year was about 240. We might take as a sample the last week in November 1894 when there were 186 pupil teachers, 48 certificate students, and 30 Science and Art students.

The Classes were from the beginning financially self-supporting. In the first year the expenditure was about £550 and most of this was raised from students' fees, the remainder coming from Science and Art grants. There was the capital expense of equipping the school, but no premises were built. Fees were 12/6d per quarter for pupil teachers and 7/6d per quarter for candidate pupil teachers. Admission to Certificate Classes (two evenings a week) was on payment of 15/-d per quarter. As the Board pointed out in its first report on the project, a student could be prepared for university matriculation for 12/6d per quarter.

There were three teachers for the Day Classes:-

J. D. Baxter, B.A., J. R. Higson and Miss Maude Slater. The subjects taught under Schedule V of the Code were: mensuration, arithmetic, algebra, Euclid, school management, domestic economy, needlework, history, geography, penmanship, reading and recitation. There were also two extra subjects, French and physiography.

By the end of 1897 there were 38 male pupil teachers, 175 female pupil teachers, and 20 students in the Science and Art Classes. These attendance figures were particularly pleasing, because classes had recently been started in the neighbouring towns of Darwen and Accrington, so that Blackburn lost its monopoly of the district.

The sums received in Science and Art grants had mounted

considerably and helped to make the Centre as a whole financially independent. The following figures give an idea of the growth of the scheme in terms of gross earnings.

1895	-	£96	-	10	-	6d
1896	-	£250	-	10	-	6d
1897	-	£258	-	2	-	6d

Work in Schedule V subjects continued satisfactorily and in 1897 15 First Classes were awarded in the Scholarship Examination. The suggestion of Mr. Brewer, H.M.I., that a special Preparatory Class for Candidates be formed was immediately carried out, and it attracted between 15 and 20 pupils a year.

Less popular was the comment of Mr. Pullinger, an Inspector from the Science and Art Department, that "It would, of course, be more satisfactory, if the Committee erected a special building for these well-attended Classes". They were still being held in rented rooms at St. Peter Street School. The Board was always reluctant to build, partly because its carefully balanced budget was easily upset by capital expenditure, and in any case it was at this time already planning its new elementary school at Accrington Road.

Changes governing the training of teachers were effected in the Education Code of 1899, following the publication the previous year of the Report of a Departmental Committee on the Pupil-Teacher System. This had pointed out that "there are many reasons why more strenuous efforts ... should be made to bring into this branch of what should be a solid profession, candidates who have passed through secondary schools. The traditions of primary teaching are still, through no fault of the teachers, narrower than is consistent with sound education; and we believe that better methods, greater spontaneity, a wide outlook, and social influences good for both grades, would result from the more frequent employment in primary schools of persons whose experience has not been exclusively or chiefly primary".



The ordinary period of apprenticeship was reduced from four to three years, and it became possible for pupil teachers to receive their instruction in secondary schools under conditions approved by the Education Department (which was replaced by the Board of Education a year later).

Under the new regulations candidates aged 13 - 16 years might become probationers as long as they did not serve in a school for more than half the week, and were given suitable instructions. In order to supply candidates and probationers with the requisite training the Blackburn Board arranged for them to attend classes on four half-days a week instead of two. All pupils entering the training course were examined in arithmetic, grammar, composition, and dictation at standard VI level.

Efforts were made at this time to improve the standard of the library by the purchase of reference and literary works. Further encouragement to study was provided by the award of prizes. These were presented to students who gained a First-Class in Science or Art if they had made 24 attendances in the subject, and six awards were made annually for the best students in each year of apprenticeship.

These last-mentioned improvements were the result of a very critical report from the Inspector in 1900 which had drawn attention to the lack of a library and also to the fact that the time-table was designed for the absolute minimum of attendances. Scathing remarks were also directed against the unsuitable buildings and furnishings: the main room was too large and the classrooms were too small, whilst the students were forced to use ordinary school desks and were given no lockers. There was also inadequate accommodation for Science and Art teaching. Nevertheless the School Management Committee of the School Board was sufficiently pleased with recent examination results in science to award all the staff at the Centre a bonus of £5.

Changes in accommodation were never made by the School Board which was now fast approaching the end of its existence.

The Borough Education Committee moved the Centre to the Technical School in 1904 after closing down the Higher Primary School to make room for it. Similarly the Board did not establish a system of bursaries for pupil teachers and candidates attached to secondary schools. This was effected by the Education Committee at the same time that the Pupil Teachers' Centre was moved.

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An account of the staff in Blackburn's elementary schools would be incomplete without some reference to the official whose responsibility it was to visit them at frequent intervals, offer advice and criticism to the teachers, and carry out, or arrange, the annual inspections. Her Majesty's Inspector for Blackburn was Mr. W. H. Brewer M.<sup>A.</sup>, for the whole of <sup>the</sup> period now under review. His principal assistants for much of the time were Mr. Johnson and Mr. Walsh.

W. H. Brewer had, according to a newspaper correspondent, had his origins in an elementary school. His daughter remembers that he served for a time as a lecturer at the Borough Road Training College, and for a year deputised at Manchester University on behalf of Professor Jevons. For a time he acted as assistant inspector in the very large Preston District, and when the Blackburn District was carved out of the Preston District, he was appointed as the new district's first H.M.I. He remained there until his retirement in 1907, when he was succeeded by Mr. Thornton.

Tall and distinctive in appearance, rather imperious in manner, Mr. Brewer was an energetic and efficient man who seems to have remained on good terms with most of the teachers over a long period. His cultured accent was a practical handicap to him in the classroom when he was examining pupils, especially in his early years, because few of the youngsters could understand him, and he could not follow all that they said, so that the teacher had to act as interpreter.

An article, reprinted from "The Schoolmaster" appeared in a local newspaper in January 1885 under the title of "In Clog-Land: The Troubles of the Half-Timer - Up Blackburn Way". Towards the end Mr. Brewer was described in the following terms:-

"Trained and experienced as an elementary school teacher, with much superadded culture, which bears the hall mark of the university, he has proved himself at once a faithful officer of the Department, and a sympathetic friend of the teacher".

There is a great deal of evidence to support that judgment.

### The Last Days of the School Board.

A growing dissatisfaction with English education can be detected in the last decade of the nineteenth century. The reasons were economic, educational and administrative. Britain, who had led the world in commercial and industrial enterprise for a century, was becoming increasingly concerned at the economic expansion of France and Germany in Europe, and the United States in the west. Unfavourable comparisons were made between education in this country and that in progressive states abroad.

A series of Royal Commissions investigated all aspects of education and proposed various reforms. The legislation of a generation before had largely succeeded in establishing sufficient public elementary schools, in enforcing a minimum regular attendance, and, in many areas, in providing free education. Discontent was chiefly directed against the quality and extent of the instruction. Signs of this can be seen in the growth of higher grade schools and the more ambitious evening schools, and in legislation designed to raise the minimum age of exemption and, in 1900, the school leaving age.

The time had come for reform in educational administration. At a national level the Board of Education Act of 1899 replaced the Education Department, the Science and Art Department, and the Charity Commissioners by a single responsible body. The extension of this locally came in 1902 when school boards and technical instruction committees were superseded by county education committees, which also became responsible for secondary education. Changes along these lines had been discussed at Westminster - and in Blackburn - for some years before the new act. A "paramount education authority" was proposed in the ill-fated Education Bill of 1896, although school boards were not to disappear. The Cockerton Judgment of 1900 was an indirect attack on school boards. The Blackburn Board maintained no higher grade schools, but the Cockerton Case brought alarm to the Town where educational opinion regarded it as a retrograde step. There was, however, a

considerable body of local opinion in favour of a single local authority for elementary, secondary and technical education and the suggestion was made that the Town Council would be most appropriate.

In these circumstances, therefore, it came as neither surprise nor shock when it was learned that the Blackburn School Board would cease to exist on March 31st 1903.

During the previous generation eleven different groups of men had served their terms as members of the Board. One man, Mr. J. A. Watson J.P., had belonged to them all and must have been in a very reminiscent mood in the early months of 1903. Other long-serving members were Mr. W. H. Hornby, Mr. R. Bowdler and Rev. J. A. Rushton. Throughout the period the Church of England had been the majority group, although in the election of 1901 it lost its overall majority because of the success of a Socialist candidate.

It had been the School Board's primary duty to see that all the children in the Borough were given an elementary education. Voluntary enterprise had relieved it of the responsibility of building or maintaining more than three or four public elementary schools: in 1902 the Board possessed four including the Higher Primary School, although in the last months of its life various Nonconformist schools were handed over preparatory to becoming council schools. The Board also provided the Borough with its Pupil Teachers' Centre, its evening schools and facilities for manual instruction, cookery and swimming.

The enforcement of attendance was always a chief concern, particularly in the earlier part of the period. The Town had grown from 76,000 to 130,000, its elementary school population had increased from 12,000 to double that number, and the Board's attendance staff had gone from 2 to 13. In addition, Mayson Street Industrial School was erected for truants, and delinquents were boarded out in special institutions. In its last years the School Board was also making provision for physically and mentally handicapped children.

The Blackburn School Board was an economical body considering the scope of its powers. In its first year the total expenses barely amounted to £250, and two years later when it was well-established and maintaining Four Lane Ends School it expended less than £1,000. Halfway through its existence, in 1886, when it was maintaining two schools, including one of its own construction, the budget had grown to £3,600. A more progressive policy in the last decade or so raised annual expenditure to over £16,000.

About half the income came from the rates. The remainder was received in the form of an annual grant from the Education Department, a small grant from the Science and Art Department (in later years), school fees (including those from the Pupil Teachers' Centre after 1894), and, on behalf of Mayson Street, a Parliamentary grant, parents' contributions, and the sale of work. Cash for capital expenditure was normally raised by loans, and those outstanding in 1903 amounted to over £20,000. The burden on the rates was equivalent to less than 1d in the first decade, 1½d in the second and about 4d in the third. This was well under the national average which stood, for example, at 6d in 1888. In a normal year the Board could balance its budget and have a small surplus in hand, but capital expenditure could be a problem.

The changing status of the Board was reflected in its premises. The meetings for the first few years were held in the Mayor's Parlour, and a single room for office purposes was rented at No. 14 Richmond Terrace. In March 1876 two more rooms were taken over at the same address for an annual rental of £25, and Board meetings were held there. Thirteen years later plans were approved for a new building. This was erected in the Victorian "Early Renaissance" style just round the corner from 14 Richmond Terrace in Library Street. A pleasant grey stone building, it is now the Borough Education Office.

Not every school board interpreted the 1870 Elementary Education Act in the way that the Blackburn Board did. Under the terms of the Act a progressive board, backed by the rates,

could have supplied all the deficiencies of accommodation that existed in or after 1870. Every other town of its size provided a large proportion of the new accommodation out of the rates. When the maintaining of all elementary schools became the responsibility of the local councils in 1903, Blackburn found that there would be a sudden upward leap in its rates. In 1902 the School Board Chronicle published an estimate of the increased cost to the rates for maintaining elementary schools in different areas. All the comparable towns, outside Lancashire, were faced with an increase of 1d or 2d. In Bolton it would be about 3½d, in Oldham 4½d and in Blackburn 8½d. United Anglican and Roman Catholic opinion and power successfully resisted this type of policy in Blackburn, although there were signs of a division within the Church of England before the old century yielded to the new. On the one hand we can commend the initiative of the churches; on the other we can view with disapproval the effects that it sometimes had on education in the Borough. There were times when the Education Department was obliged to point out a deficiency and when the Board replied with a policy of obstruction and delay, pending a move by a local church, and at the expense of the children who were denied satisfactory school accommodation. There was the refusal to introduce a comprehensive scheme of free elementary education in a working class town that would have derived a great benefit from it, and where fees were unusually high. Fear of the cost tempted the Board into making do with old premises - at Four Lanes End, at Lower Darwen, at its Pupil Teachers' Centre - and it tended to adopt a course of supplying the absolute minimum required, and then often under pressure from London, rather than at setting a high standard<sup>and</sup> giving the Town a lead.

## II. The New Authority, 1903 - 1914.

### The First Education Committee.

During the last decade of Victoria's reign there was a growing dissatisfaction with education in England, and many arguments were advanced for a comprehensive system of education at both national and local levels. There were also the problems of necessitous voluntary schools and school boards and of the need for the reform of secondary education. The Bryce Commission reported in 1895 that secondary education was being handicapped by three overlapping authorities, the Education Department, the Science and Art Department and the Charity Commissioners, and that these should be replaced by a single board. Local authorities for secondary education should also be established. The Board of Education was appointed as the central authority for secondary - and elementary - education by an act of 1899. The question of a local authority was left open until 1902, and there was much speculation in the country and Blackburn about its possible nature. In Blackburn representatives of local educational interests conferred together about a secondary education authority as early as 1899.

As far as elementary education was concerned, the special aid grants given to necessitous voluntary schools and school boards by the terms of the 1897 legislation were only regarded as temporary expedients, and a growing opinion, especially in the older churches and in the Conservative Party, was in favour of rate aid for voluntary schools. Nonconformists hotly opposed this idea and proposed that rate aid should entail public control. Most fear was felt for rural areas where the parish church provided the only school.

Even when the Act of 1902 giving rate aid to the churches, was finally passed through Parliament, the controversy was by no means ended. In the House of Commons the champion of the Nonconformists was Lloyd George, and Rev. Dr. Clifford led a campaign of passive resistance in many parts of the country.



As late as 1908, when England was awaiting the issue of the current Education Bill which aimed at destroying the voluntary system. Dr. Clifford wrote a long letter to the press which illustrates an important section of opinion:-

"We, who have asked for nothing whatever in State education except the rights of citizens and equality of opportunity in the civic profession of State-paid teaching, are still left to suffer the consequences of resisting the compulsion of the State to contribute directly to the propagation of that Roman Catholicism which makes an Italian, dwelling in Rome, a primary factor in our politics, and to the furthurance of that Anglo-Romanism which teaches that our Free Churches are not 'Christian Churches' at all and does it in the name and by the authority of Parliament....".

Attempts were made by the newly-elected Liberal Government in 1906 and again in 1908 to abolish rate aid to church schools but the Bills were defeated in the Conservative House of Lords. By the time the powers of that Chamber were curtailed under the provisions of the 1911 Parliament Act which followed the Budget crisis of two years before, the 1902 Act was actually working smoothly in most areas, including Blackburn, although the old wounds were not entirely healed.

The main provisions of the Act of 1902, as far as Blackburn was concerned, were that the School Board would be dissolved and replaced by the Education Committee of the Town Council, and that voluntary (now "non-provided") schools would be maintained out of the rates. The Committee was also to be responsible for secondary and technical education and teacher training. The majority of managers in a non-provided school would belong to the voluntary body which owned the premises, but secular instruction was controlled by the local authority.

In many areas, where most public elementary schools had been built by school boards, the new act simply involved the transfer of responsibility from one public body to another. In Blackburn where most schools were church schools it meant

that the general supervision of instruction, other than religious, and of teachers was vested in a public authority for the first time. It also relieved the voluntary bodies of the necessity of paying for the maintenance of their schools and staff, but not for the premises. Most of the opposition in the Borough to the Act was directed against this last clause.

Early in 1903 the Blackburn and District Passive Resistance League for Securing Justice in the Management of the People's Schools published the following manifesto:-

"1. We cannot consent by any voluntary act to the principle that persons employed by the Councils, through their Education Committees, may be subjected to religious tests, or prevented from occupying positions in the public service, owing to their religious convictions, or in any way be subjected to disabilities, or inequality of opportunity, because of their conscientious refusal to conform to the tenets of a Church. Under this new Education Act teachers become civil servants.....

2. As citizens we believe it to be an unconstitutional and unjustifiable innovation for the Councils, or their Education Committees, to finance schools over which they have not complete control. The price of public support should be public management. Under the Act the managers of denominational schools, wholly maintained with public money, have the power of appointing and dismissing teachers on sectarian grounds.

3. We cannot conscientiously pay rates for the maintenance of schools in which may legally be given teaching hostile to, and even destructive of, the Churches to which we respectively belong.....

4. We believe that the Act exploits the urgent educational needs of the country, and uses its educational machinery in the interests of denominations.....".

The treasurer of the League was a former member of the School Board, a member of the first Education Committee, and a magistrate. Needless to say, the law had to be accepted,

but the arguments advanced reveal the position and attitude of many of Blackburn's Protestant Nonconformists, not all of whom associated themselves with the League. These arguments have been appearing ever since.

On 25th March 1903 the Blackburn Education Committee held its first meeting. Councillor Henry Lewis was appointed Chairman, and Mr. J. A. Watson J.P., Vice-Chairman. The latter had sat on the first School Board, and at the time of his death in 1913 had served continuously on his Town's Education authorities for over forty years.

The Committee consisted of the Mayor, four Aldermen (including two who had served on the School Board), 12 Councillors (including one from the School Board) and 16 co-opted Members (including six who had served on the School Board). The last group, which included five clergymen and two women, was representative of the various denominations, the Grammar School, the Girls' High School, the Victoria University, the Teachers' Association and the old Technical Instruction Committee.

It will be seen that a link was maintained with the School Board by the inclusion of ex-members. Further continuity was preserved by the appointment of the former Clerk to the Board, Mr. Nicholas Taylor (an ex-headmaster of the Church of England Higher Grade School), as Secretary for elementary education. Similarly Mr. A. W. King, formerly Secretary of the Technical Instruction Committee, became the new Secretary for secondary and technical education.

The Education Committee, which held office for one year, had complete powers to act on behalf of the Town Council as the education authority except that it was unable to impose a rate or borrow money. Its proceedings did not need confirmation by the Council, but it had to present an annual report. It formed two standing Sub-Committees, one for Elementary Education, and one for Secondary (and Technical) Education, to carry on routine administration. Each Sub-Committee produced an annual report.

Generally speaking, the Elementary Education Sub-Committee assumed the duties previously exercised by the old School Board except for those connected with evening schools. During the first decade the responsibility for teacher training gradually moved from the Elementary to the Secondary Education Sub-Committee.

There were 23 members, under the Chairmanship of Councillor J. Higginson, on the first Elementary Education Sub-Committee. Five outstanding questions were referred to it during the first few months, and a brief survey of them will give us an indication of the scope of its activities.

First of all the salaries of teachers were reviewed, and a new scale suggested. Next a provisional agreement was made with the foundation managers of non-provided schools for the latter to provide heating, lighting and cleaning at a standard acceptable both to the Local Education Authority and His Majesty's Inspector, at the rate of 3/-d a unit. (A unit was calculated on the basis of one half the accommodation added to one half the total number of scholars in actual average attendance). Thirdly, a weekly rota of committee members was drawn up for the supervision of school attendance. A fourth problem was the appointment of administrative staff. A clerk was employed in the Borough Treasurer's Office to work half-time for <sup>the</sup> Elementary and half-time for the Secondary Committee. A Local Inspector was appointed to act as a liaison officer between elementary schools and the Committee. The first man to fill this office was Mr. W. Lewins B.Sc., formerly headmaster of the Higher Primary School. During the year an extra clerk was employed to relieve him of some of his routine duties. Lastly, representative members were appointed from the Committee to the management committees of non-provided schools. There was one member on each body from the authority; others were co-opted.

Much of the remainder of its attention was directed to problems arising from the provision and maintenance of schools, attendance and finance. With regard to finance two important

decisions were made. In May 1903 it was resolved "that no child attending a Public Elementary School in the Borough shall in future be compelled to purchase books, slates or other school requisites", and in January 1904 "that school fees be abolished in all Elementary Schools under the control of this Committee, except in the Church of England, Public, St. Alban's and Whalley New Road Higher Grade Schools, as from the beginning of the next financial year".

During the preceding year 659 free places had been granted in council schools, and there had been a substantial drop in the number of fee-paying pupils in the non-provided schools.

In 1905 Blackburn's first Director of Education, Mr. Gow, was appointed. He was also Principal of the Technical School and received a total salary of £500 a year.

The Provision and Maintenance of Elementary Schools.

During the last months of the School Board era a number of Nonconformist schools were transferred to the Board, and later the Education Committee, in accordance with the principles of most Free Churchmen that education should be public rather than denominational. In 1903 Mr. Nicholas Taylor, Clerk to the Committee, produced a memorandum listing the public elementary schools in the Town. The main statistics are given below.

<u>Schools.</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Depts.</u>	<u>Accomm.</u>	<u>No. on Rolls.</u>
Church of England	25	53	16,288	12,280
Roman Catholic	9	18	5,137	4,458
Nonconformist	6	12	4,326	3,635
Board (becoming Council)	9	17	4,616	3,970

The nine Board schools handed over to the Council (some on a rental basis) were Accrington Road, Audley Range, Bank Top, Cedar Street, Four Lane Ends, Lower Darwen, Mill Hill, Moss Street and the Higher Primary Schools. Almost immediately the Nonconformists transferred the Public Higher Grade School, Whalley Range, and Furthergate. If we compare the statistics for 1900 with those for 1904 we shall get a true picture of the effect of the Act of 1902 on the provision of schools in Blackburn. There was an overall accommodation for about 30,000 children, and the places were provided as the following list shows.

	<u>1900</u>	<u>1904</u>
Church of England Schools	16,106	16,255
Nonconformist "	7,346	2,021
Roman Catholic "	4,763	5,130
Board/Council "	1,578	6,887

There was no significant change in these proportions by 1914 although two new council schools replaced old ones. By the outbreak of the Great War only two Nonconformist schools survived, Maudsley Street Primitive Methodist and Park Road Congregational. All the remainder, except Princes Street British which was closed in 1909, were controlled by the Council.

In answer to a question put to him in the House of Commons in 1908, the President of the Board of Education described the provision of school places in England and Wales in 1907 compared with 1897, and they give us some idea of the national effect of the new Act although separate figures for the Free Churches were not included. The number offered by the Anglican Church had dropped by 78,000 to 2,681,000, the Roman Catholics had increased theirs by 25,000 to 406,000 and those provided by councils and others had risen by 882,000 to 3,957,000. Looking ahead a few years to 1912 we find that all voluntary schools combined accommodated about  $2\frac{3}{4}$  million pupils instead of the  $3\frac{3}{4}$  millions of ten years before, and during the same decade council school places increased from 3 to 4 millions.

During 1903-4 the Medical Officer of Health to the Blackburn Committee, who was really the Medical Officer of Health to the Borough earning an extra £100 a year, carried out an investigation into the capacity and sanitation of the elementary schools and issued a report. As a result extensive alterations were made to Mill Hill Council School and minor improvements at a number of others. In some cases partitions were placed in large schoolrooms in order to separate classes more effectively. Some rooms at this time had an average attendance of anything up to 200.

There was only a shortage of accommodation in the Cemetery district where Cedar Street Council School was quite unable to cope with the children seeking admission. Finally the Committee, in 1906 - 7, purchased Cedar Street School and planned a considerable extension at a total cost of about £8,000. On an adjoining site there was to be a new single-storey building with a central hall and six classrooms for 274 of the youngest children. The original building was to be altered so as to accommodate 300 senior mixed pupils. In the meantime temporary relief was afforded by taking a short lease on the Whalley Range Sunday School to help the overcrowding problem in the Day School. It was ironical that despite the

shortage of school places in the area served by Cedar Street and Whalley Range there was an overall surplus in the Borough of 8,000 places. The Committee was finally forced to build a new school in Bangor Street to serve the Cemetery district.

By 1907 it was also obvious that the original project for the Accrington Road School would have to be completed in order to meet the needs of a growing suburb. In the new department (the school's third) there were to be a hall and six classrooms for 280 children at an estimated cost of £4,400. It will be noticed that the basic design for an elementary school was changing; a large schoolroom and one or two classrooms were giving way to a central hall and a larger number of classrooms. The basic area allowance for each pupil was now 10 square feet instead of the 8 square feet of a generation before. Both the Cedar Street and Accrington Road extensions were open by 1910 but each had only five classrooms instead of six. A few months earlier, at the end of 1908, St. Patrick's Infants' School was closed. St. Michael's Infants' School in Union Buildings had closed in 1907.

At this time plans were under consideration for a new council school in Bangor Street partly to replace Whalley Range and partly to relieve overcrowding at Cedar Street. It would be the largest school erected by a local authority in Blackburn, with room for 540 in the Senior Department, and for 150 standard pupils and 250 infants in the Junior Department. Councillor Higginson opened a slightly amended version in January 1912. Whalley Range School, which had a total accommodation for 685 pupils of all ages, was closed the previous month. The denominations carried out a number of improvements to existing premises, the most extensive being at Lower Darwen where the Congregationalists added two new classrooms and a cookery and laundrywork centre. Holy Trinity was the only church to erect a completely new building on any scale during the first decade of the Education Committee period. Opened in December 1911 it could accommodate 240 mixed pupils in a hall and 6 classrooms on the first floor and 230 juniors and infants on the ground floor.



Owing to a restricted site the two teachers' rooms were in the basement and the boys' playground was on the roof.

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Only two of Blackburn's four higher grade elementary schools had survived by 1914. These were St. Alban's Roman Catholic Boys' and the Parish Higher Grade Schools. Whalley New Road Roman Catholic Girls' Higher Grade School was amalgamated in 1908 with the Roman Catholic Girls' Pupil Teacher Centre, which had also been attached to the Convent of Notre Dame since 1904, to form a new secondary school. The Public Higher Grade School which had become the Council Higher Grade School, and which had always been housed in unsatisfactory premises attached to Trinity Methodist and St. George's Presbyterian Churches, was finally closed in 1911 to be superseded by the new Higher Elementary School at Blakey Moor.

Higher elementary schools had been established by a Minute of the Board of Education in 1900 to fill the gap which the Board anticipated would result from the Cockerton Case which made it impossible for higher grade schools to receive rate aid. The Blackburn School Board had considered the possibility of converting its new Higher Primary School and School of Science into a higher elementary school but decided against it after consulting the Board of Education's regulations for that type of school. The chief difficulties were caused by the regulations saying that the curriculum had to be exclusively devoted to studies approved by the Education Department and grants could not be accepted from other sources such as the Science and Art Department, and that there was to be an age limit of 15 years. The Blackburn school was very

largely devoted to science and the higher primary department, working under the Code, was little more than a preparatory class. A number of pupils stayed on at school until they were past the age of 15. The school was closed in 1904 to make way for the Pupil Teacher Centre in the Technical School.

In 1911, when the Council Higher Grade School ceased to exist, it became comparatively easy for the Committee to begin a higher elementary school. It was more restricted in curriculum than higher grade schools - in accordance with government policy which feared rivals for genuine secondary schools designed for the middle classes. The Report of the Consultative Committee upon Higher Elementary Schools in 1906 clearly stated that these schools aimed at supplying the needs of elementary school pupils who would leave school at 15 and "earn a living in the lower ranks of commerce and industry".

Blackburn's higher elementary school was part of a comprehensive scheme to utilize a site at Blakey Moor just opposite the Municipal Technical School and was opened on July 27th 1911 by the Rt.Hon. Walter Runciman M.P., President of the Board of Education. The top floor of the Blakey Moor School accommodated 392 scholars in a higher elementary school, and the ground floor had room for 421 younger children. The upper floor included a central hall, 10 classrooms, a science room and centres for cookery, laundry-work and housewifery. Handicraft centres and a swimming bath were in the basement.

Fees were 4d a week in standard 11 and 6d in the upper standards and higher elementary division.

159 boys and 114 girls were on the first register and the numbers had become 147 and 133 by 1914. All the pupils were aged 12 - 15 years. The curriculum included English (with a commercial bias in the second and third year), mathematics, drawing, science, woodwork, metalwork, needlework, domestic science, shorthand and the principles of book-keeping. French was an optional extra for those who were deemed capable of benefiting by it. All the boys spent at least half a day in hand-work, and all the girls a similar period in the domestic

subjects. Specialist teachers were employed for each subject.

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Two special schools were the responsibility of the Committee during this period. Mayson Street Industrial School, which has been reviewed elsewhere and which closed in 1907, and a new venture in Regent Street. The latter was a school for defective children erected on a site that had originally been acquired by the School Board twenty years before for a proposed higher grade school. Plans were approved in 1905 for a new building to accommodate about 80 children.

When the School Board had decided to build Mayson Street it had been motivated chiefly by the cost of sending truants away to residential institutions. The situation in 1905 with regard to backward children was hardly the same because out of a total of 52 children maintained in institutions only 2 were classed as mentally defective. By the early years of the present century the problem of enforcing the attendance of children at public elementary schools was largely solved. The new difficulty was making sure that they attended a suitable elementary school. No doubt the Committee had heard many complaints from teachers, attendance officers and inspectors alike that there were some pupils in classes that would give them little benefit. The School Management Reference of the Elementary Education Sub-Committee gave the matter full consideration in the year 1905 - 6 and discovered children of vastly different ages in the same standard. There were such anomalies as a boy of over 14 in standard 1, and of half a dozen pupils over 13 in standard 11, although the majority of pupils of those ages would normally be in standard VI and VII. The problem was aggravated by the half-time system for there

were no fewer than 40 half-timers, aged 12 - 14, in only standard 11, and they obviously stood very little chance of attaining a reasonable level of education, even by contemporary standards, before they were able to leave school altogether. Their main hope was further instruction at an evening class, but children who had made little progress during day-time attendance were hardly likely to improve during lessons which came after a full day's labour.

Regent Street Special School was formally opened by Mrs. Burgwin, Superintendent of Special Schools in London, on October 18th 1906. There were 42 mentally defective children on the roll at first and 11 more were expected in the near future. A mid-day meal was provided at the school but the cost was charged to the parents. Most of the pupils travelled to school by tramcars, although a small number came alone or with "special messengers". By 1909 there were 55 children on the register with an average attendance of 50. So much progress had already been made that 4 pupils were transferred back to ordinary elementary schools. A year later, with a similar number in attendance, 3 children were transferred to ordinary schools, 5 left town, 4 were removed on the grounds that they were not suitable placed, and 4 were found employment in domestic work, millinery, gardening and reaching.

There was an emphasis in the school on practical work and the subjects included cookery, cardboard modelling, painting, chair seating and string-bag making. About three-quarters of the scholars received swimming instruction, and four pupils won awards in the local schools' Plant Growing Competition. In subsequent years, with numbers rising above 70, the curriculum was extended to embrace laundrywork, sewing, knitting, dress-making, tailoring and clogging.

It seems that Regent Street provided for all classes of backward children ranging from those whose school progress had been halted by illness and absence to those who suffered from an organic disability. The former were able to improve sufficiently to rejoin an ordinary school, but the latter stayed

at the special school until placed in employment, if that were possible. The majority were apparently mentally defective.

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The provision of centres for practical subjects was another of the Committee's responsibilities. That this was adjudged important may be deduced from the fact that a special committee was appointed as early as 1903 to consider the question of cookery centres. It recommended that new centres be opened at Mill Hill Council School and Audley Range to supplement those already functioning at the Technical and Moss Street Schools, and that classes be held at three of the higher grade schools and at St. Alban's and St. Anne's Schools. Over 3,000 girls were taught cookery during the first eighteen months. Until 1909 there were seven centres in the Town. During 1908 the premises at Mayson Street Industrial School, no longer used for truants, were converted into a centre for practical subjects with four sections for cookery and laundrywork and one for woodwork. When the new courses began there in January 1909 the centres at Audley Range and St. Peter Street were closed. At the same time the Committee planned to make practical instruction in domestic subjects compulsory for all girls in public elementary schools. Apart from Mayson Street there were cookery centres by now at Mill Hill, Moss Street, St. Alban's, Technical School and Regent Street. Mayson Street alone provided laundrywork. In 1910 a centre was opened at the Lower Darwen Council School, followed within eighteen months by centres at the new Blakey Moor and Bangor Street Schools. All these three centres, together with Mayson Street and Regent Street also offered courses in laundrywork. By the end of the period the arrangements were substantially the same with the addition of laundrywork at Moss Street and the Harrison Girls'

Institute in 1913 - 14. The latter institution had been recently built by Henry Harrison, a wealthy industrialist and former Mayor of the Borough, and was hired by Mill Hill Council School for laundrywork. The annual cost of domestic subjects in 1914 had reached £1,400 of which £432 was recoverable from the Government.

In the year 1903 - 4 only 650 boys attended the woodwork classes at Moss Street, Technical and Council Higher Grade Schools largely owing to the regulation fixing the minimum age at 12 years coupled with the custom of so many Blackburn children becoming half-timers at that age. Nearly all the boys who did become eligible for grant aid were from the higher grade schools. There was only one instructor with a City and Guilds Certificate. There was very little progress in this subject by 1914. New centres were opened at Mayson Street, Blakey Moor and Bangor Street but the total numbers involved were well below 1,000 a year. The annual cost became £1,136 with £183 returned in grants in 1914.

The Town Hall and Public Baths Committees handed over the control of swimming to the Education Committee in 1903. At this time about 1,800 boys and 600 girls visited the local baths every week. A gala was held every October. Steady progress was maintained both in the number of attendances and the number who passed proficiency tests. One boy won the Championship of Great Britain and Ireland for School Boys in 1905 and repeated the feat the next year, thus helping to establish a tradition that has never been allowed to die. The growing pressure on the Freckleton Street Baths led to a new bath being opened in Belper Street and later yet another below the Blakey Moor Schools. Proficiency was encouraged by the granting of "free mile tickets". In 1908, when the scheme began, about 150 boys and 50 girls qualified for the privilege. Another stimulus was the examination for the Royal Life Saving Association. About 4,000 children, mostly boys, were in average attendance by the beginning of the Great War.

In April 1903 the new Education Committee suddenly found itself responsible for the maintenance of 50 schools (including Mayson Street) and like many other local authorities it experienced some difficulty in facing its financial responsibilities for the first year owing to the fact that salaries and other working expenses had to be paid during the year, whereas Government grants would not normally be received until after the end of the financial year. Blackburn had a particular difficulty because it had had few board schools and the change was, therefore, more marked. Various expedients had to be adopted by the Government. Instalments of annual and fee grants were paid by the Board of Education on behalf of schools whose financial year ended in December 1903, an instalment of the aid grant under Section 10 (at the rate of 4/-d a head for the previous year's average attendance) was paid, and finally during 1903 the Education (Provision of Working Balances) Act was passed authorizing local education authorities to raise temporary loans. In Blackburn £12,000 was allowed for the first year, and this was progressively reduced by £1,500 a year. A balance of about £1,500 was transferred from the old School Board, and the rates yielded about £16,000 towards the first year's expenditure on elementary education of £54,000. By 1908 this had risen to £75,000, and by 1914 it was nearly £83,000, despite a drop in the number of schools and pupils. In this last year £71,600 was expended on the maintenance of elementary schools, £5,000 on interest repayments and a sinking fund (outstanding loans amounted to over £61,000), £3,400 on administration and £1,800 on children at special schools (including Regent Street). About £40,000 was received from the Government, and a similar amount from the rates; about £1,000 came from higher grade school fees; and some £500 resulted from letting school premises.

School maintenance involved more than finding money; it covered curriculum and staff and a variety of smaller duties, some of which will be reviewed in later chapters. One of the

most important was the general supervision of the organization of schools. Following the recommendations of His Majesty's Inspectors synchronous time-tables were adopted in public elementary schools in 1906, and lessons for infants were shortened. No more than five hours a week could be devoted to religious instruction. All schools were to teach nature study, and head teachers were empowered to buy natural objects for use as specimens. Applications for pictures and diagrams were refused on the grounds that they were inadequate substitutes for the real thing. These changes illustrate a more liberal attitude towards elementary education begun in the present century. It was heralded by Sir Robert Morant in his introduction to the 1904 Code when he suggested that a school's general purpose was to stimulate the maximum development of the child rather than instil a minimum of basic knowledge into the offspring of the classes who could afford nothing better. This changing spirit is reflected in the log books of Blackburn's elementary schools.

From August 1st 1907 school hours in Blackburn were standardised at three hours in the morning for all pupils, two and a half in the afternoon for older children, and two and a quarter in the afternoon for infants. At the same time the School Management Reference recorded its opinion that too much was being attempted and too little being achieved in its schools and that steps should be taken to simplify the curriculum. In view of that it had to reject a proposal for the inclusion of organized games in school hours, but so that physical education would not be too neglected, it agreed to arrange classes in physical culture for teachers as soon as a gymnasium was available at the Technical School.

The question of excluding children under 5 was raised by the Board of Education in 1908. Whilst agreeing as a general principle, on educational and health grounds, that it was better for children of this age-group to be kept at home, the Education Committee was not prepared to force the issue in Blackburn except where there was a local shortage of appropriate



accommodation. In a cotton community where female labour was at a premium it was natural for mothers to send their children to school at the earliest possible age in order that they themselves might return to their old jobs in the mill.

Consideration was given to the question of religious instruction - an important issue in a town where most schools were denominational. We have already noted that there was a maximum allowance of five hours a week in church schools. In 1908 the Committee ordained that in council schools there was to be half an hour's religious instruction at the beginning of each day, and detailed reports were to be returned by head teachers every quarter. In non-provided schools, attendance at church during religious instruction periods was permissible on Ash Wednesday, Ascension Day and the Patron Saint's Day.

An innovation introduced by the Education Committee in September 1903 was an annual competition and exhibition of plants grown by children. It was opened by the Mayor in Corporation Park and always attracted well over 1,000 entries. The Committee made a donation to the prize fund which purchased such luring rewards as footballs, cricket sets, fishing rods, pocket knives, scissors, handbags, thimbles, writing cases and books.

Another commendable scheme was inaugurated in 1910 when the Committee began an annual subscription of £50 to the Free Library Committee to assist in the formation of a circulating library which would send boxes of suitable books, to be changed periodically, to the elementary schools. In the first year 2,272 books were acquired and over 37,000 issues made. In 1914 these totals had grown to 3,036 and 48,000 respectively.

School Attendance.

It was no longer difficult to enforce attendance by the turn of the century for most children, thanks to the efforts of the School Board and the growth of a new tradition. Defaulters there still were, of course, but a Superintendent and nine Attendance Officers were sufficient to cope with them. In 1892 it was necessary to prosecute 362 offenders under the bye-laws; ten years later the number had dropped to 76; and from 1904 it had become about 50, until in 1913 and 1914 it was less than 40. During the decade following the election of the first Education Committee there was an average annual attendance, excluding infants under 5, of about 90%, although a severe outbreak of epidemics might reduce this percentage in any one year.

The most striking change in this period was the decrease in the population of school age. The total returned in 1904 was 23,963; in 1914 it was 21,186. The decline was gradual from year to year. It was not, surprisingly enough, a reflection of the Borough's population which rose from 129,000 in 1901 to its highest peak of 133,000 in 1911 (but decreased to 129,000 a decade later).

Several causes may be advanced for the decline in the number of children on the rolls. The most obvious was a steady drop in the birth rate. In the first decade of the School Board period it was over 40 per thousand; by the last decade of that period it was just under 30. Between 1903 and 1914 it steadily dropped from about 25 to 21. In its Report for 1910 the Committee commented that the rate for the previous year, 23.0, was 2.7 lower than the average "for the 76 great towns of England and Wales".

Not unconnected with the birth rate was the state of trade. A depression manifests itself usually in a drop in the number of births and in an increase of emigration. The Reports show that over a hundred children left most years for the United States and Canada.

Two more reasons were educational. In certain parts of the Town there was a shortage of infant accommodation and consequently children under 5 years of age were excluded. This was in accordance with the general attitude of the Education Department at the time, although the Education Committee was prepared to admit children under compulsory school age where there was room for them. In some of the newer residential suburbs there were many applicants who failed to find a place. Secondly, there was a greater promptness in removing the names of leavers from registers after the introduction of monthly attendance returns.

There was also a decline in the number of half-timers, although we must take into consideration the general drop in the school population. From just over 2,000 in 1904 the total number of half-timers had become about 1,600 in 1914. This process was aided by the raising of the qualifying standard, under the bye-laws, from IV to V on January 1st 1909. A more severe attitude was adopted with regard to application for labour certificates when it was discovered that some pupils wanted to leave simply because their friends were at work, and not because their families needed the money. Although the Committee was in no position to interfere with cases covered by the Factory and Workshops Acts, it could and did refuse applications for other jobs when no valid reason was offered. The vast majority of the half-timers were employed in cotton mills, most of the remainder being employed in the rope works, as errand boys, or in domestic service. A wide variety of occupations, ranging from toffee works to Christmas card works, absorbed the rest.

At the beginning of 1913 a Special Reference was formed to deal with applications for exemption other than for factory and workshop employment. Assisted by the newly-established Juvenile Labour Bureau, the Reference met every other Tuesday evening and during the first quarter 60 cases were considered. 20 applications were refused with the result that 11 children continued at school and 9 registered for jobs in the mills.

The criteria used by the Reference were the suitability of the proposed employment and the financial position of the parents. It will be seen that nearly half the disappointed children simply transferred their application to a job in the mills which the Reference was powerless to prohibit. In one exceptional case an applicant accepted the offer of a free place for a year in the Higher Elementary School.

A reduction in the number of children being granted full exemption was also effected in January 1909 when the qualifying standard was raised to VII. Of the 2,000 children who enjoyed the privilege thereafter nearly all qualified on the grounds of previous due attendance, and not proficiency. The standard set was as high as it could have been, and was too high for most applicants. In 1913, for example, only one boy out of nine, and nine girls out of 27 passed. A similar result was achieved for partial exemption at the age of 12 and standard V, for none of the eight boys passed and only one girl out of 15 was successful. It can clearly be seen that the Committee was doing its utmost to prolong the school career of the children under its care.

Unfortunately the same cannot be said of the Government at that time. The recommendation in 1909 of the Interdepartmental Committee on Partial Exemption from School Attendance that the half-time system should be completely abolished was not implemented until 1918, although an unsuccessful attempt was made in 1911. There were still more than 70,000 half-timers in the country in 1914.

Another device used in Blackburn to encourage pupils to stay on at school was the award of scholarships at higher grade schools. A scheme was adopted in 1906 which provided for free places at the Church of England and Council Higher Grade Schools awarded by the Education Committee on the result of an annual examination at standard VI level. Scholarships could be held by natives of the County Borough who had turned 12 by the 1st September after the examination, for two years, but could be renewable for a further year at the Committee's discretion.

In the first year 33 scholarships were awarded to each of the higher grade schools concerned, and a further two to the Girls' High School. Intending teachers were also assisted to stay at school, and in the year 1906 - 7 6 bursaries were awarded at the Girls' High School, 4 at the Grammar School, 21 at the Committee's Pupil Teachers' Centre and 5 at the Convent Pupil Teachers' Centre. By 1910 St. Albans Roman Catholic Higher Grade School had joined the free scholarship scheme, and two years later the new Higher Elementary School and the Blakey Moor School on the ground floor of the same building, were included. A total of about 60 scholarships a year was the average.

Probably the least successful part of the Committee's campaign for good attendance was that concerned with the children of migratory parents, and this was more through the intrinsic difficulties of dealing with the class concerned than through any lack of effort on the local authority's part. The numbers involved were always comparatively small, about 30 - 40, but little progress could really be claimed by the Committee in finding a solution. As one Report despairingly recorded, "The information obtained from these people is rarely reliable --- Sometimes the men are abusive and threatening, but leave the Town before any action against them can be taken". Many of them, of course, cannot be regarded as members of Blackburn's permanent population at all, but at least the Committee had a responsibility shared with similar bodies elsewhere to ensure that they had an elementary education.

In general, the Elementary Education Sub-Committee continued the tradition of enforcing attendance established by the School Board. The best evidence of that was the closing of Mayson Street School in 1907 through a shortage of truants, supported by a good percentage average attendance figure. If it had not been for forces beyond its control - disease and factory legislation in particular - its record would have been even better.

Medical and Social Aid.

An increasing concern for the physical welfare of children was a feature of the Education Committee's work. That is not to say that the School Board had shown no interest in this field. The latter began to make provision for the physically handicapped in its last years, following recent legislation, but it had had little opportunity by 1903. The Board had also supported charitable efforts for the supply of clothing and clogs for poor children.

Disease could bring a financial loss, and until 1903 annual compensation, usually amounting to about £400, was allowed by the Board of Education for the loss in attendance grants caused by epidemics. When it was stopped that year Blackburn, in common with other local authorities, protested at this loss of income without adequate notice. An outbreak of measles, starting in September 1903 and continuing into the next year, cost the Authority over £1,000 in six months.

For most of this period the Medical Officer to the Education Committee held a similar post with respect to the Borough simultaneously. The Medical Officer's first major task was a survey of all the public elementary schools with special reference to ventilation and sanitation, and Dr. Greenwood's Report was published in 1904. As a result appropriate improvements were carried out.

A year later he produced another Report. This time his attention had been engaged by the extent of underfeeding among schoolchildren. Details of this are given later.

Owing to these duties it was obviously impossible to give medical inspections. An Assistant Medical Officer was appointed so as to speed up the remedy of this omission, and by April 1907, 400 children had received a medical inspection and another 2,000 had had their eyesight tested.

Some of the large cities had begun the medical inspection of their children during the last years of the nineteenth century, but the idea was not really accepted by the nation until the Boer War revealed the gravity of the country's health problem.

A special committee of enquiry advocated school inspections in 1904, and three years later these were made obligatory. By 1913 all the 317 local education authorities possessed suitable machinery. They were served by over 1,000 school doctors and 700 nurses for six million children. Local authorities, however, did not have to give treatment until 1921. Inspections in Blackburn were soon fully organized so that in 1912 no fewer than 10,000 children, about half those in average attendance, were seen. Their chief defects were of the teeth, eyes, skin and throat.

Some success in combatting disease was registered, but there could only be a limited degree of success in the absence of mass immunisation. By 1914 the loss in attendance grants had dropped to about £700. At this time it was estimated that Scarlet Fever, Measles, Mumps and Chicken Pox reduced the numbers in attendance by an average of 200. Medical inspections also caused the exclusion of children from school, sometimes for months at a time, for different reasons. For example, an average of 80 suffered from Ringworm, 42 from Eczeme<sup>e</sup> and 57 from Sore Heads.

Special provision for delicate children in need of abundant fresh air dates from 1912 and was less controversial in Blackburn than in some parts of England. Between May and October 26 children, most of them suffering from anaemia and nervous diseases, were taught in an open air class held in the playground of the new Bangor Street School. Physical education was emphasized through exercises, games, dancing and gardening. A pleasant general atmosphere was engendered, and the "play-way" was introduced; history for example was taught by means of games. Two hours a day were set apart for resting in deck chairs. One particular habit was attacked by the staff - breathing through the mouth - and considerable success was achieved.

Unfortunately the class was afforded no encouragement by the elements, for the whole "summer" was wet and cold, and yet the Committee's Report triumphantly records that only one hour

was spent indoors. It should be hastily added that part of the playground was under cover.

The numbers in the class changed little by the end of our period, but the curriculum was slightly amended. Elementary geography and nature study were taught by short excursions, and brief talks were given on health and hygiene. The main problem was that of normal school learning owing to a wide age range and a lengthy daily rest period, but the class was very small by contemporary - and some modern - standards.

A second class at Accrington Road was begun in the autumn of 1913 with 20 children, aged 6 - 12 years, meeting in two groups. Because most of the older pupils were backward owing to frequent absences, and the younger ones seemed more intelligent, the age difficulty was less than it might have been.

Another problem to be tackled by the new Authority was that of stammering children. In 1907 a class for about 20 of the worst cases was formed at the Technical School. Tuition lasted six weeks, and throughout that period case histories were recorded.

The results were promising enough for two certificated teachers to be selected for special training in the Berquand system. Before the year was out the first classes under their supervision had proved their worth and been given a favourable report by Dr. Eicholz of the Board of Education. During 1908 there were five six-weeks courses and the majority of the 48 boys and 12 girls who attended seemed to benefit to a marked degree. By November all the afflicted children of a suitable age had been given special help, and the courses were temporarily suspended. It will be noticed that the average size of the classes had dropped. The classes were not restarted by 1914.

Some types of physically handicapped children were maintained in residential institutions. In 1904 there were 14 blind and 11 deaf pupils away from home; in 1908 both these groups had increased by three; and in our last year the numbers were 12 and 11 respectively.



We have already examined the local provision of special facilities for mentally defective children at Regent Street. Between 1903 and 1914 the Committee maintained one or two in residential institutions.

If juvenile delinquency be regarded, in part at least, as a medical and social problem, it will be relevant for us to indicate that rather more than 20 children were maintained in residential industrial schools in the first half of this period, and about 15 in the second. We might have expected an increase rather than a decrease after 1907, when Mayson Street Day Industrial School ended its career, but the Education Committee does not seem to have sent truants away from Blackburn.

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Earlier mention has been made of the Medical Officer's investigation into underfeeding. The enquiry was the outcome of a variety of causes. A number of circulars of the Board of Education and the Local Government Board had added to them the Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Physical Deterioration, and the 1905 Relief (School Children) Order.

The Relief Order empowered Poor Law Guardians to give or lend money to the parents of underfed children. A special application on behalf of children under the age of 16 who attended a public elementary school could be made by school managers, a teacher acting for the managers, or an officer of the local education authority for a loan to a needy child's father. In the case of wilful neglect relief had to be in the form of a loan; in other cases it was at the discretion of the Guardians to give or lend aid. The Board of Education suggested that needy schoolchildren might conveniently be classified in three groups: those whose parents were permanently impoverished, those whose parents were the victims of sickness or unemployment, and those whose parents were neglectful despite reasonable circumstances. It was left to

charitable organizations to deal with the second group, whilst the others might be helped by special applications to the Guardians or Relieving Officer. As far as Blackburn was concerned there were five voluntary agencies to supplement the work of the Guardians: the Ragged School, Bolton Court, All Saints' Ragged School and St. Vincent de Paul all offering relief in a general way, and St. Peter's National School connected with one particular school.

Local investigations revealed 13 cases of children in the first group. One is quoted at random:-

"Four in family; mother and three children, aged 15, 10 and 4 years. Total wages 14/-d weekly. The mother earns 6/-d weekly as a charwoman, and the eldest boy earns 8/-d weekly by blacking boots. Rent 3/-d, clubs 1/-d weekly. Father died four years ago. No relief given. On many occasions last winter the children went to school without breakfast. The mother works very hard. This appears to be a case of poverty. House clean. Children clean and fairly well clothed".

There were 114 families temporarily in distress because of illness or unemployment. The latter was the more frequent cause and the most numerous victims were seasonal labourers who experienced difficulties during the winter.

49 families were reviewed under the third heading. Most of the hardship in their cases, was, according to Dr. Greenwood, due to "alcoholism, laziness, indifference and bad management".

The Medical Officer, after making a generous allowance for seasonal difficulties, and including within his statistics all children aged 3 - 14 (that is, some below compulsory school age), decided that 97 families with 313 children suffered from undernourishment. When it is borne in mind that approximately 23,000 children attended public elementary schools at that time, the problem is seen in its true proportion.

The Education Committee informed the Guardians that it was prepared to carry out the provisions of the Local Government Board (School Children) Order as far as it was concerned, but the

Guardians delayed their decision. Meanwhile the Committee made 16 applications on behalf of 45 children.

Within a few months representatives of the Committee, the Board of Guardians, and various voluntary organizations were meeting to consider the new Education (Provision of Meals) Act 1906. It was agreed that free meals should be given to necessitous children, but that rate aid would not be used unless it was found that the voluntary organizations were unable to supply the need. Again we can detect the spirit of voluntary initiative ahead of public initiative in Blackburn.

In March 1908 12 representatives of the Authority joined with representatives of charitable organizations to administer a feeding scheme. Breakfasts and dinners were served first of all in shops, restaurants, and other places, but from the following January the food was cooked at Mayson Street Centre and distributed to various centres by 12.15 p.m. The Ragged School, Mayson Street Centre, Mill Hill Salvation Army Barracks, Russell Street Ragged School, Salisbury Street Chapel, St. Alban's Cookery Centre, St. Anne's Hall and Whalley Range School.

Altogether for the year ending April 30th 1909 over 62,000 free meals were distributed from private centres and nearly 25,000 from Mayson Street to 1,358 children. During that year the Committee, despite its earlier resolution, expended £115 on this scheme. An absence of further references suggests that it was continued upon similar lines for the next few years.

The Teachers.

One of the results of a shrinking school population was a decline in the number of teachers. Between 1903 and 1914 the drop was from 689 to 599. In 1914 there were 92 head teachers, 10 fewer than there had been a dozen years before. Unfortunately the supply did not at first keep pace with the need and it was not until 1908 - 9 that the Education Committee could claim to have an adequate number, and indeed a slight surplus that was difficult to absorb. A general shortage had been inherited from the previous period and the basic reasons were low salaries and uncongenial surroundings. There was an acute national shortage at the same time which was intensified by the Board's regulations of 1903 and 1907. These had the effect of raising the minimum age of employment for pupil teachers to 16 or 17 and of offering grants to secondary school scholars of that age in order to encourage them to train for the profession. It was very difficult for working class parents to maintain their children at school for so long without any salary in return, especially during such a period of industrial unrest and rising costs, and the T.U.C. complained to the Board about this in 1908. On the other hand the salary and status of teachers were unlikely to attract many recruits from the middle class. In the country as a whole the total number of entrants was reduced by nearly two-thirds between 1906 - 7 and 1912 - 13. Blackburn fared better than many districts because the number of school children was declining and because its Pupil Teachers' Centre was not closed until the comparatively late date of 1911 when there were still 25 pupil teachers compared with only 6 Board of Education bursars and 10 student teachers.

During the years before the Great War there was a national controversy about the supply of teachers. As early as 1908 the Secretary of the National Union of Teachers was complaining in the House of Commons of a surplus. In reply, the President of the Board of Education disagreed entirely and claimed that it was a problem of distribution, and that in any case local

authorities could reduce the size of classes. As a letter to "The Times" by Lord Stanley of Alderley the same year pointed out, there was one trained teacher in England and Wales to 118 children in average attendance, and one certificated teacher to 63 scholars. Similar figures for Scotland were one to 63 and one to 48. There were about 20,000 supplementary teachers in England and Wales. It seems that there was considerable room for improvement in the profession, not only with regard to the number but also to the quality of the staff. Some of the Union's fear was probably for the unqualified teachers. Blackburn had largely solved the problem of supply and qualifications by 1914 and had also given its supplementary teachers a reasonable chance to attain qualified status.

The Blackburn Education Committee found the task of improving the quality of its teachers even greater than that of increasing the number. In 1903 only about one third of the teachers were certificated (including the head teachers) and of these only one half were college trained. Another third were uncertificated assistants, and the remainder were classed as supplementary teachers (mostly ex-Article 68). The lack of well-qualified staff was made more serious by the fact that teachers in Blackburn were faced by unusually large classes. In 1907, for example, the staffing ratio was well below the national average and more than half the classes in the Town had more than 40 pupils. In that same year, although there were now 335 certificated teachers (over half the total), fewer than one third of the total staff had been trained at college compared with a national average of over one half. Some alarm was felt at the situation, especially since the Board might require a certain proportion of trained staff in public elementary schools after July 1909. There were more supplementary teachers in Blackburn than in most Lancashire county boroughs and it was felt that this number should be kept to a minimum. However, few schools were likely to employ this class of teacher if they could avoid it. Special classes were held at the Technical School, free of charge, for their benefit, but few

availed themselves of this opportunity to qualify, and the Committee determined to replace those who were not making a reasonable effort. There were at this time 49 supplementary teachers, an average of one per school.

During the next year a special report was issued on supplementary teachers and it was found that Blackburn relied on just about double the proportion employed in other Lancashire towns. The special free training classes at the Technical School were a complete failure, producing a 2% pass list. The number of these teachers was drastically cut from 47 to 15, and the survivors, mostly long-service staff, were granted an extra year's grace in which to improve their status. No doubt the Committee was emboldened in this action by the fact that the Borough, like many more in the North of England, was producing an excessive number of pupil teachers. On the whole the teachers in council schools were more highly qualified than those in non-provided schools.

An additional qualification was required for women teachers in Blackburn after 1908. Following an investigation into the practice in other parts of the country the Education Committee adopted the resolution "That no female teacher on the staff of the public elementary schools in the Borough will be recognized or be paid a salary by the Education Committee for a longer period than three months after marriage". It did not apply to widows.

Some progress in the problem of teachers' qualifications was shown by 1910. From then onwards there were always fewer than 5 supplementary teachers, and the number of certificated assistants was steadily growing at the expense of uncertificated staff. The number of children in attendance per certificated teacher had gradually dropped from about 83 in 1903 to 52, and in the same period the number per adult teacher had changed from about 41 to 32. There was by then an overall surplus of staff caused by pupil teachers and bursars completing their training and looking for posts in the locality, and consequently the number was reduced. There were 47 pupil teachers and bursars in 1907 compared with 28 in 1910.

Despite this surplus in the total number, there was still a marked shortage of well-qualified men and women in 1914. By then there were 409 certificated teachers out of a total of 599 which included 13 student teachers, 15 teachers of practical subjects, and 3 swimming instructors, and Blackburn could justly claim that the average numbers of pupils per adult teacher and per certificated teacher were both below the average for English county boroughs, but there was still a shortage of college trained staff. 60% of the men and 39% of the women in the Borough had been to college, compared with the national averages of 73% and 52% respectively. During the period under review the number of places in English training colleges roughly doubled but the rate of increase of trained teachers, especially men, in Blackburn improved very slowly.

It seems that salaries paid by the Committee compared reasonably well with the average for the country, although it is quite impossible to obtain really reliable statistics. The scale drawn up by the Committee in 1903 and slightly modified three years later lasted until 1914. The modification abolished the old difference in salary that depended upon the class of certificate held, and also made it possible for certificated assistants to reach their maximum more quickly. The full details of the scale were not published, but the maximum for a male certificated teacher was £140 and for a female was £110. The starting rate for the latter was £65 and for men was about £95. Uncertificated assistants started at £45 or £60 according to sex, student teachers were paid £22/10/-d or £30 according to sex, pupil teachers between £17/10/-d and £26, and the surviving supplementary teachers received about £50.

In determining the national average for a certificated teacher, so that we can relate the position in Blackburn to that elsewhere, there are many difficulties as Dr. Tropp indicates in his study, "The School Teachers". The statistics of the Education Department are based on the annual returns of school managers who were by no means always efficient. It is not known how many managers included the value of a teacher's house or the amount earned out of normal school hours. Bearing these

reservations in mind, the national averages for male and female certificated assistants were in 1905 £110 and £82, in 1910 £125/10/-d and £91/10/-d and in 1914 £129 and £96. From these figures two main conclusions emerge: the first is that taking the period as a whole Blackburn teachers were paid at approximately the average rate; the second is that when the national tendency was for the salaries to rise - as indeed the cost of living was at that time - they remained static after 1906 in Blackburn.

Salaries of head teachers depended upon the average attendance of their school and department. The headmistress of a small infants' department might start at about £100, and the headmaster of a large boys' or mixed school could earn twice that amount. Unfortunately the number of children attending many of the Town's schools was diminishing with a consequent threat to head teachers' incomes. In 1910, to obviate this difficulty, the Blackburn Authority decided to arrange schools in four grades according to the average attendance, the number of places, and the normal number of pupils. No school would be downgraded whilst the same head was in charge. As we have seen, the number of headships dropped between 1903 and 1914 and with it the prospects of promotion. This was not peculiar to Blackburn. Amalgamations and reorganization throughout the country, combined with an increasing proportion of certificated teachers, meant that a large proportion of assistants would be disappointed. In 1895, 63.3% of the certificated men and 57.2% of the women in England and Wales were heads compared with 38.6% and 23.1% in 1918.

The teachers' superannuation scheme continued as before with only one modification when, in April 1905, men's contributions were raised from £3 to £3/5/-d. During that year disablement allowances were paid to two headteachers, at the rate of £28 and £24 per annum respectively.

During the early years of the present century sweeping changes were introduced into the methods of recruiting and training elementary school teachers. Some improvement had been achieved in Blackburn, as in most other areas, by the establishment of a pupil teacher centre in the last decade of the nineteenth



century. A new step forward was taken by the Board of Education in 1903 when it issued new regulations for the training of pupil teachers. The main changes were the postponement of employment in elementary schools until at least the age of 16, and a greater emphasis on the continuance of a general education during the actual apprenticeship. No more than half the time was to be spent teaching in elementary schools, whilst the rest of the time was passed either at pupil teacher centres or secondary schools. The details of any scheme were left to the local authority. Within the next three or four years many authorities closed their centres and awarded scholarships and bursaries at secondary schools.

The Blackburn Education Committee decided in 1903 that from the following January all its pupil teachers and candidates must attend the Centre on four half-days a week instead of two, and later in the year pupil teachers were to attend half-time whilst candidates were to study at the Centre, the Higher Elementary School or secondary schools full-time.

In August 1904 the Committee agreed to offer 75 bursaries every year to boys and girls who were prepared to become candidates for engagement as pupil teachers in council and voluntary schools. Awards were to be made for one or two years according to age and qualifications, on the result of an examination, and would be worth £10 for boys and £8 for girls in their first year, and £12 and £10 in their second. Free tuition was to be provided in a pupil teachers' centre or at a secondary school, but no allowance was made for books. Four of the scholarships were tenable at the Grammar School and four at the Girls' High School if the Committee could find sufficient candidates of a suitable calibre.

Candidates for a two-year bursary had to be 14 years old on August 1st in the year of selection, and those for a one-year bursary had to be 15. Their head teacher submitted a report on their character and ability, they had to pass a medical examination, and their parents had to promise that they would let them serve the Authority as pupil teachers, assuming that they

passed the Board of Education and Blackburn Education Committee examinations and were given a satisfactory report every six months by the head of the Centre or secondary school.

Compulsory subjects for the bursary examination were:- reading, dictation, arithmetic, English grammar, composition, geography of the British Isles or of the British Colonies and Possessions. English history, B.C.55 - A.D.1066, or A.D.1066 - 1485 or 1485 - 1904, needlework (for girls), Latin, French, algebra and geometry were optional.

All bursary holders who proved satisfactory during a period of probation and who passed the Board of Education's candidates' examination were apprenticed in local schools and attended the centres (the Convent opened one for girls in 1904) half-time. Salaries were £20 for boys and £17/10/-d for girls during the first year, and £26 and £20 during the second.

As a result of the first examination held in September 1904 bursaries were awarded to the first 50 out of 102 entrants. Out of the 48 who accepted the award 30 attended the Technical School Centre, 11 the Whalley New Road (Convent) Centre, 4 the Girls' High School and 3 the Grammar School. In the candidates' collective examination arranged by His Majesty's Inspector the next April all but one of the students passed and were made pupil teachers.

Owing to a large number of applicants and a limited number of places the standards of achievement of the students were high. Failures in the King's Scholarship Examination were very rare and the general results were above the national average. Some students qualified for university entrance and later took their degrees.

At about this time the training of teachers entered the province of secondary rather than elementary education, but it will be convenient for us to continue in the present section here. On qualifying, of course, most of the new teachers returned to elementary schools.

Until 1908 about 50 bursaries were awarded annually, and there was a total of about 220 pupil teachers and probationers, including 50 boys, under training.

In 1907 new regulations were introduced by the Board of Education which provided an alternative to the old system of a two-year apprenticeship during which the week was divided between a centre or secondary school and teaching practice in an elementary school. It now became possible for a student to attend a secondary school full-time as a bursar for one year, possibly with a maintenance allowance, and to follow this with one year as a student teacher, on salary, in an elementary school. Bursars, however, must have previously attended an approved secondary school for three years. In the year 1907 - 8 4 boys at the Grammar School and 3 girls at the High School were due to become student teachers. Maintenance allowances of £16 and £15 a head, according to sex, were paid for the last year. The Board of Education actually contributed £5 a head of this, together with another £5 a head to the secondary schools. In their first full year as student teachers the boys would receive a salary of £30 and the girls £22/10/-d.

This new scheme gave the Board of Education another excuse for closing down the Council's Training Centre which was still held in the Technical School. For some time it had been receiving provisional recognition for a year at a time, and in 1908 the Board refused to allow any new students to enter, and ordered it to be closed after the session 1910 - 11. Arrangements were to be altered so that all candidates would remain at a secondary school until they passed their 17th year, and then if they were successful in a qualifying examination would either enter a training college or spend one year as student teachers, attending the secondary school for two half-days a week and an elementary school for the rest of the time.

A new pupil teacher centre attached to the Convent of Notre Dame in Whalley New Road was opened in 1904. It was held in temporary premises consisting of three classrooms and a science laboratory. Art classes met in the assembly hall of the Convent's private boarding school. Some of the pupil teachers were evidently boarders. At the time of the first - and last -

full inspection, in 1906, there were 24 pupil teachers, 24 pupils in the preparatory class and 9 pupils not recognized under the Board's training regulations. It was closely connected to the Convent's higher grade school, and in 1908 the two schools united to form a new secondary school. In its new form the school still shared in the training of elementary school teachers.

Owing to the changed regulations and a growing surplus of young teachers the number of trainees was greatly reduced in the second half of our period. The last nine pupil teachers, all girls, completed their course in 1912, and in the two following years there were just over 20 trainees, about half of them bursars and half of them student teachers. A high standard of achievement was maintained. All nine student teachers in our last year passed their examinations and six of them entered a training college.

The period 1903 - 14 saw the training of elementary school teachers almost entirely separated from the elementary schools and transferred to secondary schools. This led to a raising of the general educational attainments of young teachers, but at the expense of classroom practice. Before entering college the average candidate would have had part-time teaching practice for one year only, and in some areas complaints were made that ex-bursars were less capable, especially in preserving discipline, than ex-pupil teachers. The Board's reply was that the ex-bursar would make the better teacher in the end. Since 1905 it had been making its own special contribution by publishing a handbook for teachers. The book was not a set of instructions but offered guidance and advice on such diverse topics as teaching methods, social factors in education, and physical health. There was insufficient time by 1914 to judge who was right on the question of training, and there are no signs of a controversy in Blackburn. A rather different effect was the reduction of opportunities for children of working class origin to enjoy a prolonged education with financial assistance. This was more marked in the case of girls who always formed the vast majority of pupil teachers.

SECONDARY EDUCATION.The Grammar School.

In the middle of the nineteenth century English secondary education was facing a crisis. Most grammar schools were ancient foundations that had fallen into decay and that were incapable, in their old form, of providing the type of education needed by the middle classes of a great industrial and commercial power. A Schools' Inquiry Commission was appointed in 1864 and presented its Report between 1867 and 1869.

The general picture that emerged was one of confusion, as the Commissioners indicated in their general introduction in Volume 1 of their Report (page 112).

"Viewed as a whole, the condition of school education above the primary has been called a chaos, and the condition of the endowed schools is certainly not the last chaotic portion. The founders of these 782 schools have each thrown in their contributions, and there has been no one with power to organize the mass or assign to each school its place and function.....".

Annual net incomes varied from Christ's Hospital with £42,000 to one or two with about £5. 222, including Blackburn, had £100 or more. Lancashire had more than its fair share of endowed grammar schools and there was a wide variation of income within the county. Blackburn's was £113, Bolton's was £349, and Preston's was £55. Oldham, then much larger than Blackburn had only £30, but a number of towns only half Blackburn's size, such as Wigan, Bury and Burnley had at least twice Blackburn's income.

In the whole country there were roughly equal numbers in the various categories, classical, semi-classical and non-classical. About half the schools in Lancashire towns, including Blackburn, were rated as classical and most of the remaining half were semi-classical. The great majority of the Lancashire schools, again including Blackburn, were in the second grade according to age (i.e. they taught pupils to the age of 16). Blackburn and most Lancashire grammar schools provided commercial courses too.

Only about 150 endowed grammar schools in England and Wales sent boys to Oxford and Cambridge, and only five of these were in Lancashire. All the Lancashire town schools, except Bury, had fewer than 100 day boys, and all except Lancaster Royal Grammar School, had few or no boarders. Blackburn had 83 day scholars and 13 boarders.

In Volumes 9 and 10 Mr. Bryce reported on the North-Western District. He condemned all the Lancashire buildings except those at Preston and Lancaster, and complained of inadequate equipment. He wanted the extension of town grammar schools so that they would serve their area, and he quoted Blackburn as a specific example. It was his opinion that the number could easily be "600 or 800 boys whom this swarming population would provide".

In his summing up Mr. Bryce was able to declare that "there seems reason to conclude upon the whole that the foundation schools are not open to the charge of being antiquated and unequal to the needs of the time".

Volume 17 is devoted to the special reports of schools in the North-Western Division. The chief complaints directed against Blackburn Grammar School concerned buildings, the form of government, the size of the school and the lack of university candidates; but on the other hand, "As tested by examination, the educational state of the school might be pronounced respectable". Mr. Bryce also commented on the absence of secondary education for girls.

The Commissioners, in their final Report, proposed the establishment of a central authority for secondary education, annual examinations and a register of competent teachers. Only the first of these ideas was embodied in the Endowed Schools Act of 1869, and improvements in the next generation were limited to those concerning the application of endowments and the reconstitution of governing bodies, although an outstanding headmaster might be the means of progress. Blackburn did not attract a distinguished head and made little real progress before the advent of rate aid.

Blackburn's Grammar School originally formed part of the Chantry of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the parish church and was established in 1514. The chantry was suppressed during the reign of Edward VI, but the state's action at that time was directed against what were regarded by the advanced Protestant group in power as relics of popish superstition and not against education. It is true that in some cases education did suffer by the closing of the chantries, but Blackburn was fortunate in that the former chantry priest was allowed to continue his teaching duties on an income from the Duchy of Lancaster equivalent to the old endowment.

In 1567 the inhabitants of Blackburn petitioned Queen Elizabeth I for a charter for a free grammar school. The Queen replied in the affirmative.

The school's history seems to have been relatively uneventful throughout the remainder of the sixteenth, the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries. It remained open during the difficult days of the Civil Wars, and seems to have maintained a reasonable reputation throughout the eighteenth century, although the Record Books of the Foundation suggest occasional problems of discipline.

The old building in the church-yard was sold in 1819, in view of the rebuilding of the parish church, and a room was rented for £18 a year until the new school in Freckleton Street was ready in 1825. Attached to the school was a master's house.

From 1855 - 94 Mr. T. Ainsworth was headmaster. A native of Blackburn, he had taken his M.A. degree at Dublin University and served as an assistant master in Preston Grammar School before returning to his home town at the age of 33. He had a modest, unassuming manner and was noted for his unobtrusive generosity to those in need. He formulated a fresh curriculum, taking into account elements of both a classical and a commercial education; and as soon as he had attracted some pupils he employed milder methods than his predecessors. His initial triumph over many obstacles was so marked that in less

than five years he had been presented with a watch and an illuminated address. By then he had four assistant teachers.

Success lasted for fifteen or twenty years, but after 1870 the school was adversely affected by the great development of local elementary schools. Mr. Ainsworth's later years were marred by ill-health which prevented him from keeping a firm grip on the school and he retained his office until he was an old man. During his retirement he received a pension out of the endowment of £96/13/4d a year. He was the last headmaster to hold his appointment as a freehold right, rather like an ecclesiastical benefice, for the revised scheme of government of 1876 abolished the privilege for his successors.

In 1870 there were about 80 boys in attendance, about a dozen of them being boarders. The whole school was taught simultaneously in the noisy, stuffy schoolroom in Freckleton Street. Plans for a new building near Corporation Park had had to be postponed during the cotton famine caused by the American Civil War.

Subjects taught included Latin, Greek, mathematics, French, German, English, history and geography. Latin was compulsory, but only about a dozen boys studied Greek. Owing to financial limitations and the commercial demands of the Town which were reflected in the curriculum, pupils could not be prepared for university scholarships. The school fee was £6/6/-d a year, and there was an extra charge of £2/2/-d each for French and German. There were neither free places nor university scholarships.

Of the four full-time teachers only the headmaster and second master were graduates. A part-time assistant gave instruction in modern languages.

The income from the endowment, about £160 a year, had changed little in half a century and still provided salaries of £90 for the master and £10 for the usher, although, of course, these salaries were supplemented by a share of school fees. £4/7/4d of the endowment income still came from the Duchy of Lancaster in respect of land in Yorkshire as ordained by the Commission of Edward VI.



Since its refoundation in 1567 the school had been governed by a corporation of 50 local inhabitants. This body, which rarely mustered more than half a dozen members at a meeting, was responsible for financial affairs. It was exclusively Church of England and the school was consequently denied the support of a considerable section of the Town.

The inspector in 1871, Mr. Bryce, had a general impression of mediocrity. He described the headmaster as "an active and painstaking teacher", but the instruction given to lower classes by his assistants was "rather poor, deficient in life and intelligence". It was Mr. Bryce's opinion that Blackburn and district was large enough to support a good grammar school of 300 pupils providing scientific and literary courses to university entrance level, and commercial and practical courses at a higher level than that obtaining in private schools. The school's most urgent needs were better buildings, and a new constitution for the governing body.

Until 1876 the school was regulated by the original Elizabethan charter. In the above year the Charity Commissioners approved a new scheme of administration and this remained in force for the next generation.

There were to be 20 governors, half of them representative and half co-optative. Eight of the representative governors were appointed by the Town Council and the remaining two by the School Board, and all these served for five years. This body nominated the co-optative governors who held office for eight years.

As soon as possible new buildings were to be erected on a new site and were to be large enough for at least 250 scholars and suitable for future extensions. Part of the capital endowment could be used for this purpose, subject to the consent of the Charity Commissioners. Headmasters were to be graduates of a British University, but not necessarily in Holy Orders. Normally they could be dismissed at six months notice, without reason given, and in special circumstances were liable to almost immediate dismissal as long as they had been given an opportunity

of defending themselves and were opposed by a two-thirds majority of the governors.

The headmaster was solely responsible for appointing and dismissing assistant teachers. He presented an annual report to the governors. His salary was £100 a year together with a capitation grant of from £3 to £6. A pension fund, financed by payments by the headmaster and governors spread over 20 years, was at the discretion of the governors.

External examiners were selected and paid by the governors to whom reports were submitted before being passed on to the headmaster. An examination was conducted annually.

The governors were empowered to "prescribe the general subjects of instruction, the relative prominence and value to be assigned to each group of subjects, the arrangements respecting the School terms, vacations and holidays, the payments of day scholars and the number and payments of boarders, if any . . . . . They shall determine what number of Assistant Masters shall be employed. They shall every year assign the amount which they think proper . . . . for the purpose of maintaining Assistant Masters . . . .".

The headmaster controlled "the choice of books, the methods of teaching, the arrangement of classes and school hours, and generally the whole internal organization, management, and discipline of the school, including the power of expelling boys from the school . . . .".

Fees were to be within the range £6/6/-d to £14/14/-d a year for every boy irrespective of his place of residence. Foundation scholarships, according to the amount of money at the governors' disposal and never exceeding 10% of the total number of places could be provided. Exhibitions to places of higher learning were also permissible for scholars of at least two years standing.

The minimum age of admission was seven years, and no boy would be allowed to stay at school beyond the end of the term in which he celebrated his seventeenth birthday, unless he obtained special permission from the governors. An entrance

examination was set in reading, writing from dictation, and "sums in the first two simple rules of arithmetic".

Subjects in the curriculum included reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, history, English grammar, composition and literature, mathematics, Latin, French, natural science, drawing, and vocal music. Optional extras for an additional annual fee each of at least £3 were Greek, German, and extra science. Religious instruction was to be given according to a scheme drawn up by the governors, but boys could be withdrawn from acts of worship and religious lessons.

A move was made in 1878 to encourage the school to look towards the universities instead of restricting its interest to the needs of local industry and commerce, when one of the governors, John Tattersall of Quarry Bank, transferred to a special scholarship trust 58 Blackburn Corporation Waterworks Annuities in order to endow "an exhibition of £50 a year for four years, tenable at any college at either of the Universities of Oxford or Cambridge ..... by .... the sons of parents resident in the Parish of Blackburn who shall have received not less than the last four years of their education at the Blackburn Grammar School.

A few years later Mrs. Dodgson furnished nine entrance exhibitions to the school. A third of these were awarded annually to ex-elementary school pupils.

The same benefactress enabled the governors to carry out another of the Charity Commissioners' recommendations - the provision of new buildings. Until these were opened in 1884 the school, then numbering nearly a hundred boys and half a dozen teachers, was still conducted in a single room where overcrowding had become quite serious according to Rev. G. Bennett's report in 1883. The new school was on the west side of the Corporation Park. Its site, which cost £2,808, was rather limited in extent and as later extensions had to be built on the adjoining recreation space, playing fields had to be rented at some distance away. The buildings cost very nearly £7000. Little difficulty was met in raising sufficient funds for the

whole project. Just over £4,600 were permitted by the Charity Commissioners to be deducted from the £10,000 Dodgson Bequest, the old building was sold for £1,740 and public subscriptions realized over £3,000. Seven years later a chemistry laboratory was added for a further £1,000, and in 1896 a gymnasium followed for a rather smaller sum. By then the set of buildings provided a large assembly hall, two classrooms, a physics laboratory, a chemistry laboratory with lecture room and preparation room attached, a gymnasium, a dressing room and a dining hall.

Despite these improved facilities - and a comparison of the new with the old building reveals nothing less than a revolutionary change - the public of Blackburn were slow to respond by sending their sons to the school. The Examiner's Report of 1888 expresses disappointment at this coolness and suggests two of the causes:-

"The hopes I entertained that a large increase in the number of both day-boys and boarders would soon follow upon the occupation of this stately structure, have I admit, not yet been realized. And casting about for the causes of this, I conclude that, notwithstanding the increase of population, the supply of boys for the Provincial Grammar Schools is rather on the wane than the increase. For at one end of the social scale, from which supply should naturally flow, parents seem to be content to give their sons such education as can be obtained, at slight cost, at the higher grade elementary schools. And wealthier parents, at the other end of the scale, follow the fashion of sending their sons to schools of repute in the South of England, in which the admixture of classes is the more easily avoidable. So that, while the school has only held its own in point of number of pupils, other schools in the North of England have greatly declined".

It ought to be pointed out that grammar school pupils of this period were distinguished more by their middle class background than by their academic ability. With so few scholarships - only three a year under the terms of the Dodgson Bequest - Blackburn Grammar School was virtually closed to the working

classes, and so a considerable reservoir of talent was left untapped, or at best diverted to the higher grade schools. Boys could enter the Grammar School at the age of 7 and receive both their primary and secondary education in the same institution.

Internal weaknesses also contributed to the school's unpopularity. An outspoken article in the Nonconformist newspaper, the Northern Daily Telegraph, in 1888 accused it of inefficiency and stagnation. It was alleged that for some time the school had been only two-thirds full and that many middle class families sent their sons to schools in other districts because they were dissatisfied with the education given locally. The headmaster, Mr. Ainsworth, was handicapped by limited resources and failing health. Science and modern languages were neglected. As an instance of this, the writer cited the decision of the governors to build a chemistry laboratory some years before, and their subsequent failure to carry out the proposal, so that no practical chemistry was being taught. Only a rudimentary science course was offered. A rather different kind of criticism was centred on the fact that the new body of 20 governors included only two Nonconformists.

There can be little doubt that during the last years of Mr. Ainsworth's headmastership the general morale of the school was as low as local opinion. The internal administration was old-fashioned, school games received little support, and charges of harsh discipline were not unknown. According to the following lampoon in the contemporary school magazine, The Elizabethan, financial considerations sometimes counted for more than educational ones:-

"I remember, I remember,  
 The Grammar School on a hill,  
 The stained-glass window where the sun  
 Came peeping in at will.  
 And where, alas! The darkness too  
 Would peep in afternoon;  
 And send us home (to save the gas)  
 Full half an hour too soon".

Some reforms in the organization of the establishment did follow soon. The old custom of dividing the year into quarters was replaced by three terms, and the prefect system was inaugurated, but the school continued to decline in numbers and in spirit. Mr. Ainsworth retired in 1894.

If we look back over his period of office we shall see that his school helped to educate quite a number of local professional people, but that many of them used it more as a preparatory school than as a true secondary school. Perhaps the one who achieved most national fame during the second half of Victoria's reign was John Morley, the statesman and writer, who spent a few months at Blackburn Grammar School before proceeding to Cheltenham and Oxford. A survey of the academic histories of the most successful scholars before 1894 shows that a number of boys spent a year or two at Blackburn before moving on to a well-known public school further south. The list also reminds us, if we regard it as a fair sample, of the comparatively restricted field of studies at Oxford and Cambridge at that period. Nearly all the degrees taken were in medicine, natural science, and theology. Not one graduated in the "novelties" such as history, geography, English and modern languages.

Recreational facilities were available. Cricket had become a favourite sport by the mid-1870's, and regular fixtures were arranged with such teams as Mintholme College, Oldham Grammar School, Clitheroe Grammar School, East Lancashire Juniors and the Ravenswing Cricket Club of Mellor.

Mr. Frank Allcroft, M.A., B.Sc., was selected from over 150 applicants as the new headmaster in 1894. At the age of 36 he already had a distinguished academic and professional career behind him.

His appointment coincided with a changing attitude in the country towards secondary education. Only the previous year the first fully comprehensive conference on secondary education had been sponsored by Oxford University, with a view to the sharing of knowledge and experience gained by all the bodies

represented, including the University. In its original resolution suggesting a conference the Hebdomadal Council was aware "of the probability of legislative enactment concerning Secondary Education".

In 1894 the Bryce Commission was set up to investigate the best methods of creating a national system of education. It admitted that there was failure and confusion in this field, and suggested administrative reforms at national and local levels, the application of the rates to secondary education, and the award of free places for children from the elementary schools. These reforms were carried out in 1899 and 1902. In the meantime local headmasters and governors were left to improve their schools on their own initiative.

One of Mr. Allcroft's first reforms was the foundation of a separate preparatory department in 1895 for boys aged 7 - 10 years. There were about 30 places available, at £2/2/-d a term, under the supervision of a special master. Religious knowledge, reading, writing, spelling, grammar, literature, English history, geography, arithmetic, drawing, singing and drill were taken by all pupils, and the promising ones also studied French, Latin, and science. There was an emphasis on physical education and games in school hours. It was intended that the department should provide a good early education for Grammar School candidates without breaking into the continuity of their education by moving them from another school.

Some progress had been made in the school by 1898. There were then three old boys at Owens College, and that year another pupil gained a scholarship to the Lancashire Independent College. Considerable success was being achieved in the Cambridge Local Examinations at Preliminary and Junior levels, and in the Science and Art Examinations. A change was made in 1898 to the Oxford Local Examinations in the upper school so that the school year could end in July and coincide with the Science and Art Department's year.

Reference has been made earlier to the Peel Scholarships which began in this same year for elementary schools. There were

two secondary school scholarships; each worth £15 a year, tenable for three years at the Grammar School or High School for pupils under 15. Four years previously another scheme which would benefit the Grammar School was planned. Mr. Frederick Pickop - Dutton left £50,000 of his estate to local charities, of which the Technical School was to receive £10,000 and the Grammar School £5,000 on the death of his widow and three nephews. The portion of the estate falling to the latter was for the endowment of Dutton Scholarships at the universities. In 1899 the terms of the Tattersall Exhibition were altered so as to include Victoria University.

Signs of a new spirit abroad are found in the foundation of an Old Boys' Association. Its first annual reunion was held in 1898, when rules were fixed and a committee elected. A local journalist took the opportunity, in his press report, of commenting on the danger to grammar schools offered by elementary schools with a "secondary top" and he referred to a recent speech of the Duke of Devonshire's which had speculated about the possibility of new legislation to help secondary schools. The Blackburn writer, however, wished to distinguish very clearly between higher grade and secondary educations. "The prime essential of a good Secondary education is Latin", he claimed, "and the mind which has been educated in what we may call a Latin environment is a very different article from that which is produced in other surroundings....".

Some ground had been lost by the beginning of the new century. A bitter attack was launched against the school in a local newspaper in 1901. By that date the number of pupils had declined to 60 and it was felt that this was caused more by financial restrictions and an inefficient governing body than by any deficiencies in the teaching staff. Reform was needed first in the scheme of government, it was suggested, and then perhaps the time would be ripe for financial aid from the Corporation, followed possibly by a lowering of fees in order to attract more pupils. In view of the drop in numbers and a revised instrument of government a few years later, there must



have been much truth in the charge, but we ought to notice another side to the case. There were a number of references in the contemporary press to the academic successes of old boys at Oxford, Cambridge and Victoria Universities. One, J. Garstang, formerly an open scholar at Oxford, was awarded his Oxford B.Litt. in 1902 for archeological research in the Middle East, and he was later to become a professor at Liverpool University. The same year two boys won open scholarships to universities.

Financial difficulties there were. Early in 1902 a debit balance on the previous year's accounts of £367 was published and it was expected that the amount would increase. Assistance from the Town Council in the teaching of art and modern languages was anticipated, however, in the near future, and within a few months the part-time services of two teachers for these subjects from the Technical School were secured.

More improvements followed. In 1903 Mr. G. A. Stocks replaced Mr. Allcroft as headmaster. He was headmaster of Lancaster Grammar School before coming to Blackburn at the age of 44. His new school had 60 scholars and three teachers.

Aid grants of £500 a year were begun in 1903 by the Town Council. This was in accordance with the 1902 Education Act which empowered local authorities to assist secondary education for the first time. The amount was sufficient to cover the annual deficit at this time.

In the same year, on the headmaster's recommendation, the governors decided that the school would no longer be a "School of Science (Division A)" but that science be retained as part of a more balanced curriculum. It was to seek recognition as a secondary school with a science course. An additional mathematics teacher was engaged, plans considered for improvements to the building, and a search begun for a playing field.

This new spirit of progress lasted for the next few years and was well rewarded both by the success of pupils and a growing interest and support from the Town. Although the school maintained its full independence, it was linked to the Secondary Education Sub-Committee of the Borough's Education Committee and

indirectly, with the Technical School. The head boy of the Grammar School in 1903 - 4 specialized in science and studied for part of the time at the Technical School where there were better laboratory facilities. In 1904 he won an open award to Cambridge. A year later a record result was achieved in the Oxford Junior Local Examination when all 17 entrants passed, 13 of them with honours, and three in the first class. By then the school had grown in numbers to about 140, more than twice the total of two years before, and the Inspector, Dr. Scott, was able to declare it "thoroughly efficient".

Support came from townsmen in the form of gifts for the extension of the premises and for the foundation of a library. Mr. R. C. Radcliffe, a successful barrister, Chairman of the governors, and a former Mayor of the Borough, offered in 1905 to build a new science wing including two laboratories and a lecture room at a cost of £2,600 on condition that the governors cleared the outstanding debts and made a number of other improvements. The latter had to find a total of about £4,000 and by the end of the year more than a quarter had been raised. Two years later the work was completed, although the governors had by then raised less than half their proportion of the cost. New rooms included physics and chemistry laboratories, classrooms, a manual instruction room, a masters' common room and a sixth form room. An old classroom was converted into a library for the stock of books which had begun two years before with a gift of £5 from the Town Clerk. Electric lighting was installed. One facility that was sadly lacking was a playing field belonging to the school, although Witton Park was occasionally available.

Local criticism had not yet died down. The press in 1905 shows that some townsmen, including Councillors, were of the opinion that the school should be taken over completely by the municipal authority. One of the motives behind this was a desire for more boys to be admitted from the public elementary schools. At this time there were 22 free scholars out of a roll of 137. The headmaster pointed out that the school was not obliged to take more than 15 free scholars, but that in fact

the governors were willing to provide for more themselves.

Actually there was a slight increase in 1907, a year which marked a new stage in Blackburn Grammar School's development. The new buildings opened that year, unfortunately just after the death of Mr. Radcliffe, had doubled the accommodation and also enabled the school to extend its practical science courses. In the same year the local authority officially recognized it as an essential part of its scheme for higher education, although this had already been implicit in the practice of the last four years of making an annual grant of £500 and in using it for the training of teachers.

The governors decided to adopt the 1907 Board of Education Regulations for Secondary Schools so as to gain an increased grant. In accordance with Article 20 four more scholars were selected for free places in order to bring the proportion up to one quarter of the total. Article 20 stated that a secondary school charging fees must, in order to qualify for a grant, provide a proportion (usually a quarter) of free places to candidates from elementary schools who had satisfactorily passed an entrance examination "... having due regard to (1) the age of the applicants, (2) the subjects in which they have been receiving instruction, (3) the standards of attainments and proficiency required for admission of fee-paying scholars...".

The County Council also contributed towards the cost of maintaining the school. It paid a capitation grant at the rate of £2 in respect of scholars, from the county area.

As a result of these changes, together with a new trust scheme and a more enterprising outlook, the numbers began to grow. From 150 in 1906 the total increased to about 200 three years later. The average size of the school until the end of our period was 170. Of the total number in attendance in 1909 no fewer than 129 had entered from elementary schools and a total of 43 were non-fee-paying. The free scholars included two pupil teachers, four probationers, three Board of Education bursars, nine Dodgson scholars, three Daniel Thwaites scholars, eight Corporation scholars, and 14 scholars with fees paid by the governors of the Grammar School or Lancashire County Council.

They were taught by the headmaster and ten assistant masters, nine of them graduates.

A year later the trust scheme was amended. There were in future to be 21 governors, 11 representatives appointed by the Town Council and holding office for five years, and 10 co-optative appointed by the governors for a term of 8 years. The school was to be conducted as a public secondary (day) school, but the governors could accept boarders. Boys could still be admitted from the age of 7, but could now stay until the end of the school year in which they turned 18, and the governors could grant an extra year. There was provision for entrance scholarships, and free scholars were eligible, in appropriate circumstances, for a special maintenance grant not exceeding £10 a year. Arrangements were also made for leaving exhibitions which were not to total more than £200. Most of the other regulations, including the scale of fees, remained substantially the same as those of 1876. The most significant change in the whole scheme was the transfer of the majority on the board of governors to the local authority.

It is evident that during the last decade of our period a high academic level, especially in the sixth form, was established and maintained. Open awards at the universities, chiefly at Cambridge, were won annually and most distinction was achieved in mathematics and science. Other universities that attracted Old Blackburnians were those at Oxford, Manchester, Durham and London. A fair share of "firsts" in degree examinations was claimed and a number of former pupils took up university posts ranging from the Chair of Egyptology at Liverpool in 1911 to the Chair of Physics at Wellington University, New Zealand, in 1913.

By now it was possible for the very gifted boy of humble social origins to enjoy a successful academic career. An outstanding example of this occurred in 1911 when a former free-place holder became a Cambridge "wrangler". He had entered Blackburn Grammar School as a Dodgson Scholar and later gone to university on the strength of a Tattersall Exhibition and an open

college exhibition. At Cambridge he obtained his "first" in Part 1 of the Tripos a year before the normal time. During the last year or two of our period there were about ten or twelve old boys at university.

Physical education was not neglected, despite the absence of a private sports ground, and both football and cricket teams enjoyed good seasons before the Great War. By 1906 at the latest, annual matches were played against the Old Boys, and the latter usually outplayed (outweighted according to some reports) the Present Boys. The cricket match of 1911 must have been an exciting one because after the School declared at 175 for 4 the Old Boys rattled up to 213 for 2 in an hour and a quarter to achieve a hubricane victory.

Earlier reference has been made to the formation of the library in 1905. Within a year it numbered 200 books. It relied for support upon private donations, an occasional grant from the governors, and from the proceeds of lectures given by the staff. One of the early talks, "Familiar Faces" was on wild flowers and was delivered appropriately by Mr. Stocks, the headmaster. Other titles in the first years were "Glimpses of Paris", "Extinct Monsters", and "Soap Bubbles".

By 1907 there was a Debating Society which met fortnightly during the winter months. Towards the beginning of 1914 a Scout Troop was formed.

The school was well provided with buildings and general facilities by 1914 except for a playing field, and the probability of securing one of the latter was apparent in that year when the will of another generous benefactor was published. Mr. Henry Harrison, a wealthy industrialist with wide interests, succeeded Mr. Radcliffe as Chairman of the Governors and held the office until 1912. At his death early in 1914 he left £2,000 for the purchase of a playing field and £1,000 for the endowment of university scholarships. The gift for the field would only be available if it were in use before five years had elapsed. Within a few months the Corporation offered land at Revidge but negotiations fell through owing to the obstruction

of the Golf Club that held the lease. In 1919, just before the deadline, 12 acres were purchased near the "Hare and Hounds", Lamack.

The Blackburn Grammar School of Victorian times was, like so many in England, an establishment struggling for success in the face of many difficulties, not least of which was inadequate financial support. Blackburn was a town with a large working class, a small middle class and a small upper class. It was natural for the children of the poor to go to the public elementary schools, for the children of the lower middle class to patronise the higher grade schools, and for the sons of the wealthy families to be sent away to public schools. There was a lack of that solid middle class support which might have made the Town's Grammar School a success. There were also the internal weaknesses of the school, particularly during Mr. Ainsworth's declining years.

A new lease of life began with the new century and to this contributions were made by the headmaster and staff, the Education Committee, and the Board of Education. Greater academic levels were reached; the Act of 1902 and the Regulations of 1907 brought financial stability; and the Regulations broadened the basis of the school by ensuring a reasonable proportion of scholars from the working class, although private benefactors had already made a useful contribution in this direction. In common with most ancient grammar schools in England, Blackburn Grammar School still existed largely for the benefit of a particular social rather than academic class in 1914, but the way was already open for some of the ablest boys in the Town, irrespective of domestic circumstances, to reach university.

The Girls' High School.

Like so many schools in Blackburn, the Girls' High School was the result of private enterprise. A need was felt by middle class families for a secondary school for girls which would fulfil a similar function to that of the Grammar School. A preliminary discussion was held by notable gentlemen of the Borough in April 1883, at the home of a wealthy manufacturer, Mr. J. Hargreaves. One of the original letters of invitation still survives. Included on the foundation committee were Mr. W. H. Brewer, H.M.I., who acted as secretary until his retirement from Blackburn in 1907, Mr. T. M. Eccles, whose house is now the Junior Department of the school, and Mr. H. Stones, an architect. Mr. Eccles was Chairman of the Governors 1883 - 1905, Mr. Brewer 1905 - 7 and Mr. Hargreaves 1907 - 18.

The school was modelled on those founded by the Girls' Public Day School Company (later Trust). This organization sponsored no fewer than 38 schools in the period 1873 - 85 and Blackburn's was one of them. A company was formed to administer the school, but the shareholders only seem to have received two dividends by the time the company expired early in the present century, but no doubt most of the investors were more interested in providing a suitable education for their daughters and the daughters of their friends than in making a profit for themselves. There were few good residential secondary or public schools for girls at this time, and so the Girls' High School could draw from a larger social group than its male counterpart. At the turn of the century it had considerably more pupils than the Grammar School and despite the expansion of the latter in the decade before the Great War the Girls' High School was never left behind, and indeed in and after 1914 began to forge ahead again.

When the school first opened in September 1883 there were 29 pupils accommodated at 103 Preston New Road. Within ten years there were about 150. In 1892 the premises were considerably enlarged according to the plans of one of the

governors, Mr. Stones. By this time young boys and girls, aged 5 years and upwards, were accommodated in a kindergarten which had had its humble origin as a special row of small desks in the main classroom. Most Girls' High Schools in the country contained a kindergarten, largely because Maria Grey had been the dominant force in both the foundation of the original Girls' High School Company in London and of the Froebel Society. Entry to the main school for girls was from about the age of 9 in Blackburn High School.

One or two teachers sufficed in the first year or two, but by 1905 there were nine, including the headmistress who herself taught English, French and Scripture. In 1914, when the number of pupils first rose above 200 there were thirteen on the staff. Until 1898 the headmistress was Miss M. Green, and she was succeeded by Miss Tate. From 1905 until well beyond the end of our period Miss M. Gardner was in charge.

The curriculum followed the usual pattern for schools of this type and consisted of English, history, French, mathematics, geography, science (chiefly botany and chemistry), music (singing, and early in the present century, instrumental music in preparation for the school orchestra), art, gymnastics and games, and Scripture throughout most of the school. Latin was begun in Form III (at about the age of 12) and could be replaced in the upper forms by German. Nearly all the academic subjects were taught by university graduates, and the practical courses were under the supervision of well-qualified specialists. Appropriate instruction was given by the turn of the century for the examinations of the Cambridge Local Board up to Higher Level, the Oxford and Cambridge Joint Board, Oxford Responsions, the Associated Board of the Royal Academy of Music, the Royal College of Music, and the Royal Drawing Society. The first scholar to enter one of the ancient universities was E. Brewer, daughter of a founder-governor and the District's H.M.I., who was successful in the Oxford Responsions of 1900. Tennis was played on hard courts behind the main building, and field sports were provided on land at Billinge.



Under the terms of the 1902 Education Act it was possible for a secondary school, as we have seen, to receive grant aid from the local authority. From 1903 onwards the Girls' High School was paid £500 a year by the Borough in return for 10% free scholarship places, and six representatives on the High School Council. In accordance with the revised regulations for pupil teachers a maximum of four bursars entered the school annually from public elementary schools at the age of 14 from September 1904 and so the social background of the pupils began to widen.

The next important year of change was 1907 - 8 when the Blackburn Girls' High School was recognized by the Board of Education as a secondary school on the recommendation of a special sub-committee appointed by the Borough Authority to examine the organization of secondary education. As a result the school occupied an intermediate position between that of the private company it had been since 1883 and that of a maintained secondary school that it was to become in 1932. The original company was converted into a trust and shareholders were given the choice of endowing the school by cancelling their shares or of leaving them as an interest-free loan for 30 years. 1,792 shares, with a face value of £4,480, were yielded to the trust and only 208 retained for the 30 year period.

In future the management of the school was to be vested in 23 governors. Of these 11 were the nominees of the Borough Council and included two women, one was appointed by Lancashire County Council, one each was chosen by the Universities of Manchester and Liverpool, and the remaining nine vacancies were filled by the foundation governors, including two women. All the representative governors served for three years, and the foundation governors for life.

The Board of Education gave its recognition and grant as from August 1st 1907 for a public secondary school for day girls aged 8 - 19 years. It could provide courses for pupil teachers and this was one of the motives behind the change of status.

In the autumn of 1909 a general inspection was carried out. At that time there were 149 pupils, including 15 boys, in a school with accommodation for 200. There were nine forms containing the following numbers, starting with the youngest:- 20, 10, 7, 23, 22, 25, 14, 8. All were day pupils, and boys were admitted to the kindergarten only. There was no entrance examination and it was the inspectors' opinion that too many girls were entering at the age of 14 or above with the consequent problem of adjusting themselves to courses that had already begun for their classmates. It was particularly difficult for them to make any progress in foreign languages. About 54% of the scholars entered the High School from private schools or home, and the remainder came from public elementary schools. Of the latter 43 held free scholarships provided by the Local Authority, endowed foundations and the governors. This number was abnormally high in 1909 owing to the transfer of seven girls from the Pupil Teacher Centre who were intending to become bursars at the school. Most of the Borough's women teachers were recruited from the school and there were at this date six bursars and eight student teachers. Finances did not permit any leaving exhibitions.

As the following chart illustrates, the school was at this time fulfilling two main functions, the provision of a kindergarten for boys and girls of the middle class, and the provision of a secondary school for girls aged 12 - 16 who were preparing to become teachers or enter the civil service and commerce.

AGE.	under 9	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18+	Total.
NO.	28	2	4	6	13	23	27	28	14	4	-	149

Its social background was varied because on the one hand it was achieving its original aim of educating the Town's middle class girls and on the other it was recruiting girls from any social class to train as elementary school teachers. Below are listed the social backgrounds of the pupils on the rolls in 1909, using the official classifications and order.

<u>CLASS.</u>	<u>NO.</u>
Professional, Independent, etc.....	43
Merchants, Manufacturers, etc.....	32
Retail Traders, etc.....	23
Farmers.....	1
Commercial Managers, etc.....	29
Service (domestic and other) Postmen, Artisans, etc.	12
Fathers deceased.....	9

121 came from the Borough, and all the rest, with one exception, were from the County.

Annual fees were regulated according to a scale, ranging from 9 - 18 guineas, which had been sanctioned by the Trust Scheme of 1908. They are shown in detail below.

<u>General Fee.</u>	<u>Stationery, etc.</u>	<u>Extras.</u>
<u>Preparatory Dept.</u>		
Under 8 yrs. = £4. 14. 6.	10 - 6	Piano, violin & solo singing = £6. 6. 0.
Over 7 " = £9. 9. 0.	"	(under 10 yrs) = £7. 17. 6.
<u>Main Dept.</u>		
Under 10 yrs. = £9. 9. 0.	13 - 6	(over 10 yrs) Harmony = £3. 3. 0.
10-12 " = £12. 12. 0.	"	Dancing = £1. 5. 0.
Over 12 " = £15. 15. 0.	"	(per term).
Entering over 15 yrs. = £18. 18. 0.	"	

General fees reached a maximum of £12/12/-d for girls who entered before the age of 10 years.

Apart from fees the main sources of income were Board of Education grants and the annual grant of £500 from the Education Committee. These sums were sufficient for the maintenance of the school, mortgage repayments, and the debts owed to former shareholders. Recent improvements to the heating and ventilating systems, and redecoration in 1908, had more than doubled the bank overdraft to a sum of over £1,000.

The staff was adjudged to be well-qualified and efficient and the inspectors of 1909 noted "an excellent spirit of loyal and intelligent co-operation throughout the School". This must have been due, in some degree, to the leadership of Miss Gardner

who had been appointed to the headship in 1905 at the early age of 31 and who possessed "academic distinction, sound judgment and strength of character". There were eight full-time and two part-time teachers, and it was felt that an additional assistant was needed to make the time-table more flexible.

There was a prefect system to assist in the preservation of order, and the tone of discipline in the school was very good. Indications of the spirit are given by the facts that forms had their own libraries to which girls contributed books, and that there had been a flourishing Old Girls' Association since 1888.

An unexpected feature was the provision of school dinners for many of the staff and pupils.

There had been few curriculum changes since the early days of the school. The courses were determined largely by the Oxford Local Examinations and by the Oxford and Cambridge Joint Board subjects and included religious instruction, history, geography, English, French (throughout the school), Latin (begun in Form III by most girls), German (an alternative to Latin in Form V), Greek (for a few girls in Form VI), mathematics, science (general science in the lower forms, and botany in the higher), art, needlework, music and physical exercises.

The premises consisted of two large halls, one on the first floor used as an assembly hall and the one below as a gymnasium, a series of classrooms on both floors, a laboratory, an art room and a singing room. Classrooms were well-lighted and adorned with pictures. Although no reference to it was made in the Inspectors' Report, a visit to the old premises reveals that some of the classrooms opened directly on to the gymnasium. One can imagine the noise from the latter disturbing lessons in the former, and children entering or leaving the classrooms disturbing the lesson in the gymnasium. Most of the hostile criticism of the inspectors in 1909 was directed against the special subject rooms: the laboratory was too small and inadequately lighted, the art room was badly lighted, and the singing room was unsuitable. There were no facilities for

domestic subjects. Another criticism was made about the inconvenient situation of the playing field.

The general conclusions of the inspectors were excellent.

Within months of the Report being published some of the rooms were reorganized. The old lecture-room was converted into an art studio, the old studio was given two new windows and made into a science room, and the former science room was turned into a Sixth Form room. In 1910 an additional teacher was also appointed, as recommended.

From 1910 to 1914 the school steadily expanded. In terms of numbers it grew from 145 in 1910 to 150 in 1911, 160 in 1912, 180 in 1913 and 210 in 1914. This process was to be accelerated during the War, for when a separate junior department was opened in 1917 there were 400 pupils, and two years later the total had become 525.

During these last years there were usually between 40 and 60 girls receiving a free secondary education. In 1914 there were 57 scholarship holders and bursars and 10 student teachers. Of these 35 had their education financed by the governors, nine by the Education Committee (six of them preparing to be teachers), six by the Leyland Trust, three by the Peel Trust, two by the West Riding County Council, one by the Lancashire County Council and one by the London County Council.

A reasonable degree of success was recorded in the various Oxford and Cambridge local examinations and the London and Northern matriculation examinations during these years before the War, and in 1910 work began in connection with the Higher Froebel Certificate. Between 10 and 17 ex-pupils were attending college in any year between 1910 and 1914. In 1912, for example, there were eight at training colleges, one at the Royal Holloway College, one at Bedford College, London, one at Manchester University, one at Newnham College, Cambridge, one at the Royal College of Music, and one at the Froebel Institute.

There is little doubt that from its foundation as a small middle class school in a private house in 1883 until the outbreak of the Great War over thirty years later, when it had

become a thriving secondary school governed by a Trust and aided by the Borough's Education Committee and the State's Education Department, the Blackburn Girls' High School was a well-organized, well-staffed, and well-supported establishment with a more consistent record of progress than its male counterpart.

The Convent of Notre Dame Secondary School.

Although this Roman Catholic Girls' Secondary School did not come into existence until 1908, its roots extend further back than that year. We have already reviewed the work of the Convent's higher grade school and its pupil teacher centre. The two were fused together into a secondary school and so give us the only example in the Town of a former higher grade school being developed into a secondary school, a conversion which was common throughout the country as a whole in the decade following Balfour's Education act.

Blackburn's Roman Catholic population was larger than average and the new school fulfilled two important needs: it provided a day secondary school for middle class Roman Catholics, and it trained future elementary school teachers for the denomination in an institution that functioned more efficiently as a single unit than as two separate ones in a set of buildings that already housed a religious order and a private boarding school. Miss Rockliff, former head of the pupil teacher centre, became first headmistress of the new school. She, like most of the staff 1908 - 14, was not a university graduate.

The special sub-committee set up by the Education Committee in 1907 to examine the provision of secondary education decided to recommend the official recognition of the Convent School following the application of the Sister Superior of the Convent, Miss Adele Green (Sister Mary Cecilia), who was the general supervisor of the House and its schools from 1893 to 1914. However, when the Education Committee showed its willingness to accept the school on rather generous terms, there was opposition from officials in London. The Committee had agreed "that the following conditions imposed by the Regulations for Secondary Schools may be waived with advantage in view of the educational needs of the Borough, viz:-

(1) "The condition imposed by Article 5(a) that no catechism or formulary distinctive of any particular religious denomination may be taught in the School except as therein provided;

(2) The condition imposed by Article 23 that the instrument under which the School is governed

(a) Must not require any members of the teaching staff to belong, or not to belong, to any particular denomination.

(b) Must not require a majority of the Governing Body (whether in virtue of their tenure of any other office or otherwise) to belong, or not to belong, to any particular religious denomination.

(c) Must not provide for the appointment of a majority of the Governing Body by any person or persons who, or by any body the majority of whom, are required (whether in virtue of their tenure of any office or otherwise) to belong, or not to belong, to any particular religious denomination.

(3) The conditions imposed by Article 24, that -

(a) The Governing Body of the School must contain a majority of representative Governors appointed or constituted by local representative authorities.

(b) The appointment and dismissal of the Head Master or Head Mistress of the School must be in the hands of a Governing Body so constituted, and must not be subject to any approval except that of a local representative authority or combination of local representative authorities".

In a sense the Committee could afford to be generous in the above proposals because it stood to gain the recognition of a school that had cost it virtually nothing, and that was to be denied the sort of grant from the rates that was being awarded annually to the Grammar School and the High School. It was rather a different question for the Board of Education, however, and the officials in London refused to waive Article 5, and would only waive Articles 23 and 24 if the governors representing local bodies were nominated by those bodies instead of by the School Authorities. When the Convent agreed, it was able to open as a secondary school in September 1908. A year later when the Board of Education refused the higher grant on the grounds that the school did not comply with Article 20, the governors instantly agreed to increase the number of free places in accordance with



the regulations, and the first examination for the admission of free scholars was held in September 1909.

Control of the school was vested in a Governing Body of 10 - 12 persons. This included the headmistress and two members nominated by the Borough Education Committee. The remainder were appointed by the Central Governing Body of the Institute which consisted of the Provincial of the English Province of the Institute of Notre Dame, the Provincial's Assistant, the Principals of St. Mary's Hall, two nominated laymen, and one nominated clergyman. A large majority was in the hands of the denomination and this probably contributed to the refusal of the Education Committee to offer local aid.

In the first year there were 171 pupils but this included 16 boys who were there as a temporary expedient. A year later the total was 133 and this improved steadily until it was about 160 in 1914, but not all the children were of secondary school age. The table below indicates the age distribution of pupils in July 1910, when the first general inspection was held. The kindergarten is not included.

	under										
AGE.	9	9-10	10-11	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18	
NO.	2	12	11	23	17	23	7	15	13	3	= 126

38% were under 12 years of age, 59% were aged 12 - 16, and the remaining 13% were over 16. About half the scholars left school between the ages of 14 and 16, over one quarter left between the ages of 12 and 14, and more than half the remainder left between 17 and 18. The school was handicapped in its development by the short school life (an average of two years) and early leaving age of most of its pupils. There was the lack of an academic tradition leading to the universities that had by now grown in the Borough's other two secondary schools. It was the purpose of the Convent School to complete rather than continue the education of most of the girls who entered and the few who stayed longer were usually prospective elementary school teachers. In 1910 there were eight bursars and five pupil teachers.

About half the pupils came from the "traders' class" and about one quarter had a working class background. Many of the latter were admitted as free scholars under the terms of the Education Department's regulations. Three-quarters of the girls were from the Borough and the rest resided in the County. Fees were £6 a year. The only other source of income was the Board of Education whose grant for 1911 was £658.

For the whole of our period Miss J. Rockliff was headmistress. She was assisted by ten regular and three occasional teachers. It was the inspectors' opinion that although the staff was sufficient in quantity it was deficient in quality. Mathematics, English and French were singled out for particular criticism. Salaries were too low to attract well-qualified teachers. According to the next Report, published in 1920, the problem of finding good staff was still unsolved ten years later, but there had been some improvement in the situation.

Until 1911 studies were based upon the Oxford Local and the Preliminary Certificate Examinations. In that year the latter was dropped, on the recommendation of the inspectors, so that the whole school could concentrate on the Oxford Senior Local Examination which could also be taken by bursars and pupil teachers as an entrance qualification for training colleges. The subjects taken were English language and literature, history, geography, French, Latin, mathematics, science, art, domestic economy (needlework, laundrywork, and cookery), music and physical exercises. Physical education was given to the junior forms for a quarter of an hour each morning by form teachers, and to forms IV - VI for half an hour a week by a visiting teacher. Progress was handicapped, according to the Report of 1911, by unsuitable dress. Net-ball was played in the yard. There was no playing field and consequently no organized games, and the position was the same in 1920.

It was felt by the inspectors that French alone would be a sufficient foreign language in the school as it was. This illustrates that there was not yet any preparation for the universities.

The premises formed part of the extensive Convent buildings. There were seven classrooms, an assembly hall, art room, laboratory and rooms for cookery and laundrywork. This accommodation, and its ample playground, was adjudged satisfactory.

It is unwise to form any conclusions about a school that has existed for a mere half-dozen years. In its early years the Convent of Notre Dame Secondary School never rose above the level of mediocrity, but it was no doubt conscious of its double heritage of higher grade elementary and pupil teacher work. By 1914 it was soundly established and in a position to develop along more ambitious lines.

### Evening Classes.

After the 1902 Education Act came into operation in Blackburn the following April, evening classes became the responsibility of the Secondary Education Sub-Committee of the Borough Council which was authorized "To exercise and carry out the powers and duties of the Education Committee in connection with the Secondary, Commercial and Industrial Education for boys and girls, in connection with the training of teachers, and technical instruction....". All meetings were held at the Technical School. Mr. J. H. Stones was appointed first chairman with Mr. W. E. Bickerdike as his deputy. A year later the former was succeeded by Councillor Higginson who thus became chairman of both education sub-committees.

All the secondary schools were independent foundations and consequently much of the Sub-Committee's attention was taken by the Technical School and evening continuation classes. The latter had formerly been the concern of the School Board, the elementary education authority, but were now accorded secondary status.

The first years of the new century were years of progress in the field of evening classes. One of the main changes, and one indicative of greater efficiency, was the reorganization of classes into different grades. Two senior grade schools, one at the Parish Higher Grade School and the other at Moss Street Council School, were opened during the autumn session of 1903. At the same time the old practice of returning fees to regular attenders was abandoned. An innovation was the purchase of foreign newspapers for the benefit of modern language classes.

By the next year classes were held at 15 centres with ten departments for males, eight for females, and five mixed, and with courses in English, arithmetic, geography, history, music, drawing, elementary science, ambulance work, domestic economy, cookery, dressmaking, millinery, book-keeping and shorthand. Most of the English had a practical bias, following the business courses of the Union of Lancashire and Cheshire Institutes, and instruction was given in letter-writing, essays, and commercial correspondence.

The numbers on the rolls showed a considerable increase, but attendance was, if anything, more erratic and irregular than before, and this was partly due to those students who were admitted free if they had just left school but who gave up after a week or two. During 1904 - 5 978 students entered for the Union of Lancashire and Cheshire Institutes' Examinations compared with 563 the year before, and 183 in the session 1899 - 1900.

At this point we might pause to compare the development of this form of education in Blackburn with that in other towns. On the Board of Education List for 1905 there are 22 evening schools in Blackburn including the Technical School with 684 students recognized for grant purposes, Moss Street with 175, Parish Higher Grade with 131, Mill Hill Church of England with 128, and St. Anne's Roman Catholic with 108, as the largest, and with the others ranging from 99 at Accrington Road down to 33 at Park Road. At this time Bolton had 31 evening schools, Salford 25, Oldham 23, Burnley and Preston 13 each, Bury 11, and in other parts of the country Sunderland had 24, Derby 9, Portsmouth 7, and Southampton 3.

A second stage in the reorganization of night schools was reached in 1905 and 1906. The Principal of the Technical School prepared a special report on the schools so that greater co-ordination could be achieved. A brief prospectus of the revised system was then distributed by the head teachers of both day and evening schools, and the school attendance officers visited the homes of pupils who had left school within the last year in order to inform them of the facilities available for further education. An encouraging increase in attendance resulted and it was thought worthwhile to repeat the experiment.

The revised scheme provided evening centres at three grades: the ordinary Evening Continuation School, the Preparatory Technical School, and the Technical School. A series of scholarships made it possible for a young person to pass through all grades free of charge if conditions of attendance and attainment were fulfilled.

Two further innovations were the inclusion of special evening

classes for adults, and a special course in domestic hygiene drawn up for women and girls by the Medical Officer of Health. The adult classes were held in the Technical School. A special branch of the classes for men provided suitable instruction for policemen.

Pay for evening school teachers was increased in the autumn of 1906. Head teachers in a Grade 11 School were to receive 10/-d per evening together with 10% of the annual grant, with a maximum limit of £50. Those in Grade 1 Schools were paid at the rate of 9/-d per evening and 10% of the grant, with a maximum limit of £40. Assistant teachers in both grades of school earned 6/-d per evening, together with 1/-d for special qualifications in the case of Grade 11 staff.

During the second session of the revised scheme there were many encouraging signs. Excluding the Technical School, nearly 4,000 students joined the Committee's evening classes. This represented an increase of over 20% on the previous year and of over 90% on the session 1904 - 5.

Adults also showed a greater awareness of their educational needs. No fewer than 180 men enrolled for the session compared with 37 for the previous one, and 253 women compared with 142. Such was the support for these classes at the Parish Higher Grade and St. Peter's National Schools that overcrowding was experienced.

1,218 school-leavers availed themselves of their opportunity for free places and about 600 other students earned scholarships.

In its Report published in the Spring of 1909 the Education Committee listed the full details of an amended scheme for secondary education scholarships and because most of the scholarships concerned evening schools a full summary is given.

(a) Free scholarships were offered at ordinary evening schools for two sessions to those who had left an elementary school within the past nine months.

(b) and (c) were similar to (a) except that to go from elementary school to a Preparatory Technical Evening School Standard VI had to have been previously reached, and to the Technical School Standard VII had to have been achieved. In both these cases recommendations from elementary school head teachers

were necessary.

(d) A maximum of 15 free places were available at the School of Art for two consecutive sessions for pupils who were over 13, had left school during the previous four months, and showed special ability in drawing.

(e) Free scholarships from ordinary evening school to Preparatory Technical School were given to students with a previous 75% attendance record and a head teacher's recommendation.

(f) Free continuation scholarships were awarded in Grade 1 and Grade 11 evening schools if a student could show a 80% attendance record and the head's approval.

(g) Free scholarships from a Grade 11 school to the Technical School were given on the conditions for (f)

(h) 12 free places for evening classes in art, and 12 for day or evening classes in other departments of the Technical School were available for secondary school pupils on the recommendation of the head of the Grammar School or High School.

(i) Continuation scholarships, limited in number and worth 10/-d or 12/6d, tenable at the Technical School, on the recommendation of the Director of Education and the Principal of the School were offered.

(j) The Governors of the Grammar School, High School, and Convent School were obliged by the Board of Education regulations to provide 25% of their places free of fees. In the three schools mentioned above there would be about 50, 28-32 and 24-40 free places available respectively. The annual intake was calculated on the basis of a four-year course and so the above totals should be divided by four. The Education Committee was prepared to pay grants of up to £3 a year for each scholar.

(k) At least one quarter of the places in the Higher Elementary and the Parish Higher Grade Schools were to be free, and in some cases the Corporation would provide grants of up to £2 a year.

This list shows a comprehensive range of opportunities for the bright and industrious boy or girl of any social background to reach a reasonable standard of education without serious

financial difficulty. It also reveals how evening schools were an integral part of secondary education in the Borough. We should remember also in passing that private charities and trusts were still offering scholarships.

The last few years before 1914 were a period of consolidation. On the average about 3,500 students enrolled annually of whom 1,100 - 1,200 were school-leavers and 1300 - 1400 the holders of free scholarships. There were 11 ordinary evening schools for males and 15 for females, three Preparatory Technical Schools, and one Central Commercial Evening School.

Attendance prizes were not awarded after 1910 - 11.

Future awards were limited to specific work prizes and free scholarships tenable for one session. Despite this, attendance generally was not adversely affected. At the Bangor Street Preparatory Technical School, for example, the five classes during the session 1911 - 12 had attendances of 84%, 88%, 90%, 91% and 97% respectively, and in the junior grade classes the figures were 53%, 55% and 60%. The contrast in the attendance returns at the two different grades strikingly illustrates the fact that the more ambitious and successful students were much more regular than those at a lower level. The problem of those who left before the end of a session was still unsolved although some improvement was registered. In 1911 - 12, for example, 58% of those who had taken up free places as school-leavers still came to their classes at the end of the session, and 73% of those with other scholarships were still attending.

Additional evening classes were being provided during the last few years of our period by the Workers' Education Association. Inspired by trade unions and the co-operative movement, this national organization had been founded in 1904 with the object of increasing the educational background of the working classes. Its methods were similar to those of the university extension movement, but there was often a marked bias towards political and economic studies. All classes of society praised its work. Soon after it had been established the President of the Board of Education was able to say:-



"It is this gap between the first instruction and the first desire for instruction, which comes much later in life, which has somehow or other to be filled. There is a great demand for this, I believe, among the adult population, and it is to be seen most strongly in the remarkable success of the Workers' Education Association....".

The Blackburn Branch was begun in 1909 and was assisted by the Manchester University Extension Department. By 1914 there were over 250 members and 54 affiliated societies (mostly trade unions and Sunday School Adult Classes). Subjects were chiefly economic, scientific and literary, and courses in trade unionism and psychology began in 1913. There were no financial problems.

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In the sphere of secondary education, as in elementary education, the lead in Blackburn was taken not by public authority but by private initiative. Before 1903, of course, secondary schools throughout the country were entirely private concerns, and by the time rate aid was available schools for both boys and girls had already been provided in Blackburn. On the whole, after 1883, girls had a more promising opportunity than the boys, perhaps because the latter were for some time the victims of a moribund tradition that affected many ancient foundations during the nineteenth century, although there was a marked improvement in the Grammar School in the decade before the Great War.

It was left for the School Board, and its successor, the Education Committee, to make their most original contribution through evening schools, and here there was consistent progress and success. Support was given to the Grammar and High Schools in the form of annual grants, and the Borough Council also encouraged the growth of these schools, and at the same time made a secondary education the privilege of a widening section

of the community, by awarding scholarships. The reorganization of the training of elementary school teachers at the beginning of the present century had a similar result, and so we can observe that the development of secondary education became the combined responsibility of national, local and private bodies.

TECHNICAL EDUCATION.Early Science and Art Classes.

The Government appointed a Royal Commission on Technical Instruction in 1881 and its reports in the three following years revealed the weak condition of this branch of education compared with that in other countries. There were few technical schools or colleges outside London, although technical and scientific courses were being offered by some of the larger school boards such as Manchester, Leeds, Liverpool and Birmingham, and by those in one or two smaller industrial towns such as Oldham, Barrow-in-Furness, and Keighley. It was a number of years before new legislation was introduced, but the Commission did draw public attention to the problem.

In Blackburn most of the story of technical education is the story of the Technical School, but classes in science and art existed before that institution was founded, and similar instruction was given in the higher grade schools and the Higher Primary School and School of Science after 1889. The last-mentioned schools have been reviewed earlier, and brief reference to the other classes is now given.

The first science and art classes in Blackburn were conducted on a private basis by Dr. T. Isherwood. He began a chemistry class in the St. Peter Street School in 1868 and at the same time assisted at the old Mechanics' Institute in King Street which closed the same year. His work in St. Peter Street flourished so quickly that he bought an old building in Paradise Lane and converted it into a private school. In 1872, the last year in which science teachers were paid directly by the Science and Art Department in South Kensington, Dr. Isherwood received the largest grant in the country. Over 120 Queen's Prizes and many certificates were gained that year. At that time special Saturday morning classes for teachers attracted attendances of over 20. Subjects taught included mathematics, physics, chemistry, the biological sciences, geography and art. The school flourished for over twenty years in Paradise Lane,

and later at St. George's School, and Dr. Isherwood's students won awards at Oxford University, Owens College, the Royal School of Mines and the Royal College of Science in Ireland. The school was incorporated into the new Technical School and took with it a fine tradition. Dr. Isherwood himself retired to Southport where he became Mayor in 1901.

Parallel with the later classes of Dr. Isherwood there were classes in art and technical subjects sponsored by a voluntary committee. At first the controlling body was styled the Technical Instruction Council and arranged instruction in textiles and engineering. When trade unions began to send representatives, it was renamed the Technical and Trades Instruction Council. Classes were taught by local works' executives and visiting teachers. They were organized in conjunction with Dr. Isherwood's science classes, although there does not appear to have been any official link. Local artists began to give instruction in industrial design, and the co-ordinating committee was renamed the Technical, Trades, and Arts Council. Special premises were taken in Kensington Chambers at Sudell Cross. The success of these private ventures encouraged the sponsors to plan a building of their own. When the new Technical School at Blakey Moor was opened, the classes at Sudell Cross, like those of Dr. Isherwood, ceased to exist.

### The Technical School.

When in 1887 Queen Victoria celebrated her Golden Jubilee, Blackburn was invited to subscribe towards the cost of building the Imperial Institute in London to mark the occasion. It was decided, however, to open a technical school in Blackburn instead, because it would be of greater local benefit.

There was a growing consciousness both nationally and locally of the need for a speedy expansion of technical education.

A writer in the "Blackburn Standard" in July 1887, thought that a recent investigation carried out by the London Chamber of Commerce would help stimulate the development of technical and higher grade schools. It was discovered that 35% of the City's leading business houses employed foreigners, usually Germans, because they were better educated and lower paid. Some 99% of English clerks had no knowledge of French or German, whereas the Germans usually commanded three languages.

This showed concern for commercial education; a similar feeling for scientific and artistic education was also apparent in the Council of the Technical School's petition to the Corporation for financial assistance two years later:-

".... In this competition the scientific German and the artistic Frenchman are dangerous rivals to the less scientific and artistic Englishman, who has fewer opportunities for acquiring technical knowledge..... Art is no longer a luxury for the rich; it is a new and vital element in trade, and, when applied to industry, has considerable money value. Science likewise is essential, for by its light new inventions and discoveries must be sought and applied....".

The problem led to the foundation of a Municipal Technical School in Blackburn and in most industrial towns. By the turn of the century one had been established in Bolton, Burnley, Bury, Salford, Oldham, Sunderland, Portsmouth, and Leicester, to mention only a selection at random. Blackburn was different from many in that it began before, instead of after, the passing of the 1889 Technical Instruction Act.

A public subscription list was opened in May 1887, and by the following April over £15,000 had been received, a magnificent response from a town of barely 100,000 adults. Workers in some of the mills collected over £600.

A provisional Council was appointed, and a sub-committee went straight ahead with the examination of proposed sites. The Regent Street site was offered at cost price by the School Board who hoped to get rid of a plot of land that was proving an embarrassment now that it no longer intended to build a higher

grade school. The offer was made despite the fact that the site was only 67 feet wide, the width of a cottage block, and lacked light and air. Eventually it was decided to choose Blakey Moor because it was central, it was in an area scheduled for slum clearance, and the purchase price was returned to the Council by the owner, Lieutenant-General Feilden. No doubt the Borough Council was relieved at the final choice, although it had lost a customer for its own land, for it quickened the clearing of an unsavoury district notorious for taverns of ill-repute.

The site was not cleared without incident. Although the Council owned the freehold of the land, the yearly tenancy of a local joiner, George Keeley, had not expired and he refused to move until it had. In order to clear the rest of the site the School Council auctioned the other buildings to be taken away as building materials by the purchasers at their own risk. Unfortunately the workmen extensively damaged Keeley's premises and he sued the Technical School Council for damages on the grounds that the purchasers were its agents. At Manchester Assizes he was awarded £155, but lost appeals to the Court of Appeal and the House of Lords.

The new Technical School building consisted of three full storeys (including a basement) and a partial one on the roof linked to four sheds at the rear. The first shed was for spinning, the second and third for winding, warping, sizing and weaving, and the fourth was divided between mechanical engineering and modelling. The Textile Department and workshops were to be housed in the basement; various offices, the Commercial Department, the Engineering Department, the Physics Department, and the Cookery Department were accommodated on the ground floor; the Chemistry Department occupied the first floor; and the second floor provided facilities for the Art Department. The first part of the scheme was limited to £15,000, but no maximum expenditure was set for the complete establishment.

On July 5th 1889, the "Deed of Trust of the Blackburn Technical and Trade School" was drawn up, and a schedule attached to it determined the constitution of the Technical School Council.

This body was made up of Perpetual Members, Life Members, Nominated Members, Representative Members, and Co-optative Members. A donation of at least £1,000 qualified the donor for Perpetual Membership which was transmitted at death to a nominated successor. There were two in this class. A gift of £500 guaranteed Life Membership. There were nine in this category. The list of 20 nominated Members was filled by two members of the Town Council, two named by the Blackburn and District Power-Loom Weavers' Association, and one each chosen by other unions. These all held office for three years.

Twelve Representative Members were elected annually at the Ordinary General Meeting of the donors and subscribers. The latter were allowed a number of votes in accordance with the sum they had given to the School, so that subscribers of £1,000 at one end of the scale had the privilege of ten votes whilst those donating between £5 and £100 at the other end exercised a single vote.

Finally there were six Co-optative Members nominated by the Council and holding office for three years.

The Technical School Council was surely one of the most representative bodies in the Town at this time, although women seem to have been excluded. Its size fluctuated but it was always large. At first it had 49 members. It met at least once a month, except in August, and conducted its meetings according to prescribed regulations. A President, Vice-President, and Treasurer were elected every year, and a paid Secretary was employed. Routine administration was in the hands of three sub-committees, one each for finance, building, and management.

On September 25th 1889, the first Council of the Blackburn Technical School was constituted with Mr. Edgar Appleby as President, Mr. Eli Heyworth as Vice-President, and Mr. J. H. Bailey as Treasurer. The new Secretary, Mr. A. W. King, who was engaged for £125 a year, had had a varied and interesting experience of teaching. After his arrival he discovered some opposition to the new enterprise among the workers and he spoke to them about it at trade union meetings and in the open air.

At about the same time he began to give public lectures on various subjects at the School of Art, Sudell Cross, and at the Town Hall, and when the Technical School was completed, he spoke there.

At the first Council meeting an offer was received from the Committee of the School of Art for its classes to be absorbed by the new Technical School. It was accepted and the School of Art's equipment was bought for £400. By this time building operations at Blakey Moor had commenced and the question of seeking financial aid from South Kensington was examined, but when it was found that the Government would require some control over the curriculum in return for a grant of about £1,000, the Council resolved to go ahead with local support only. The first annual report referred to the matter in these terms:-

"As it is the desire of the Council that the tuition given in the Technical School shall bear upon the industries of this district, and not be forced into an unsuitable groove by an outside authority, it was decided not to ask for any Government Grant, and to retain in our own hands full liberty to use the School as we may find most advantageous".

As it happened, the Technical School was soon to discover another and more valuable source of assistance. The Government grant would have been merely a capital award of £1,000, but in 1890 the Town Council began the payment of a penny rate and in the first year this realized very nearly £1,750. This was made possible by the Technical Instruction Act of 1889 which empowered local authorities to contribute a maximum of a penny rate on condition that the Town Council was represented on the governing body. These terms were agreed upon in Blackburn in March 1890.

A year later yet another source of income appeared. The Local Taxation (Customs and Excise) Act enabled local authorities to pay towards technical education money which had originally been set aside as compensation for publicans who had failed to have their licences renewed. This "whiskey money" could have been used to relieve the rates but Blackburn Corporation, like



many other authorities, offered it to the Technical School.

47 out of 58 county boroughs in England and Wales, and 12 out of 14 in Lancashire, devoted all the "whiskey money" to technical education, and most of the remainder used part of it for this purpose by 1892. Only three of the Lancashire towns levied a rate under the 1889 Act, and of these Rochdale levied  $\frac{1}{2}$ d, Manchester had been granted the full penny but had not yet found it necessary to use more than a fraction, and Blackburn spent the full amount. Five of the Lancashire county boroughs had technical schools open, but four more were planned. It seems that Blackburn had one of the first technical schools under public control in the county. Altogether Blackburn was spending £3,500 from the two public sources. By the end of the century nearly all the English county boroughs used the residue grant for education and about one-third gave rate aid.

The foundation stone of Blackburn's new building was laid by the Prince of Wales on May 9th 1888, but the first stage was not open for students until September 1891. Meanwhile temporary classes were held in the Town Hall, the old Paradise Lane School, Sudell Cross, the Parish Church School, and St. Paul's School.

Each session at the School lasted from September to May and in some courses was divided into quarters beginning in September, November, February and April. In the Art Department fees varied from 10/-d a quarter for elementary half-day classes to 21/-d for advanced whole-day classes, and evening classes were provided at a flat rate of 12/-d a session. The Department also held a Saturday class for teachers at 8/-d a session for masters and assistants and 5/-d for pupil teachers and governesses. Science and technology students could take up to three subjects a session for 5/-d unless they chose practical chemistry which cost 12/6d extra. The Commercial Department charged 10/-d a session for English, arithmetic, and geography. French or German could be studied for 30/-d a session or 50/-d for the two together. Lessons in shorthand cost 15/-d a session. These fees were high, probably because the Council was afraid

of its financial position until it saw how much the grants would total and until it received local aid. They were reduced in the second session.

By the end of the century 10/-d was the basic charge (in advance) for all evening classes, and there were extra fees of 10/-d each for practical chemistry and practical weaving. For day students fees were from 10/-d to 21/-d a quarter in the Art Department, and £5/5/-d a session in the Textile Department.

At first students were prepared for the examinations of the Science and Art Department, the City and Guilds of London, the Lancashire and Cheshire Institutes, and the Education Department. As the School progressed, however, a tendency to follow an independent curriculum based on the needs of local industry rather than external examining bodies can be observed, and Blackburn employers were evidently more impressed by the internal assessments of the School's staff than by paper qualifications.

In addition to the formal courses of study, facilities were made available in and after 1890 for informal "Lectures and Conversations". The first programme offered lectures on "Modern Electricity" (with experiments), "Great Violins and their Makers" (with an exhibition of instruments), and "Research Work in Science", and conversations, led by Mr. King on subjects including, amongst others, "Our School and the Future", "Peeps into the Technical Commission Report", and "Blackburn: a Satellite? or a Sun?".

Another activity beginning in 1890 was a Violin Ensemble Class, under the direction of the conductor and leader of the Theatre Royal Orchestra, and this later developed into an orchestra. A year later singing instruction commenced under the supervision of a "Pupil of the Italian Maestro, Signor Schira," and this class formed the nucleus of a choir. At this time the Students' Union began to publish a monthly magazine called "The Bee".

As the School grew it rapidly widened its range of subjects. To take modern languages as an example, opportunities existed by

1891 for students to learn French, German, Italian, Spanish and Portuguese, all under the tuition of Monsieur Sauvain, compared with French and German only in 1889. Fees were lower too. In 1889 they varied from 7/6d to 25/-d according to language and grade; in 1891 they were 10/-d for each course.

There were 650 students in the first full session at Blakey Moor and this number had more than doubled within a decade. From 1902 to 1909 the annual average was about 1,500 day and evening students, excluding pupil teachers who used part of the School during the daytime for some of those years. Between 1909 and 1912 it dropped to just over 1,000 and in 1914 it was below that figure. It was the Education Committee's belief that the falling attendances before 1912 were the result of a general industrial unrest and difficulties, for example, in public transport. At the same time the demand for acting teachers' classes had almost disappeared and they were finally discontinued in 1913. From 1913 to 1914 the reduced attendances were blamed on a revival of trade which provided attractive openings in industry for the best students with the qualifications they already possessed. The frequency of overtime made it difficult, if not impossible, for some of the other students to reach their classes in time. An interesting sidelight on the local effect of national legislation was the irregular attendance of pharmaceutical students in the last year or two owing to the rush of business caused by the Insurance Act. ©

Two changes in the form of government took place between 1889 and 1914. The first of these, in 1892, was made necessary by the Technical Instruction Act which was passed shortly after Blackburn had formed its own Technical School Council. This was replaced by a Technical Instruction Committee, similar to those being established in industrial areas all over the country. Blackburn was fortunate in having for its first Chairman and Vice-Chairman two men with a fine record of public service and with a genuine interest in education, Mr. Henry Harrison, J.P., and Mr. Eli Heyworth, J.P. Their colleagues

included 15 Town Councillors, eight "Gentlemen not Members of the Council", the two Perpetual Members, the eight Life Members, and 20 Nominated Members representing the Chamber of Commerce, the School Board, the National Union of Teachers, the Trades Council, and various local trades. The Committee was reappointed every November. In 1903 the Technical Instruction Committee was dissolved and its duties were assumed by the Borough Education Committee acting through its Secondary Education Sub-Committee.

At first the Technical School was arranged internally into three main departments, Science and Engineering, Technology, and Art, together with commercial, domestic, and miscellaneous (music, farriery, Latin and Greek) subjects. In 1898 the number of departments was doubled to include Physics and Engineering (including mathematics), Chemistry and Dyeing, Building Trade Subjects, Textile, Manual Training, and Art Departments. Two years later Physics and Engineering were separated, and the Manual Training Department was taken over by the School Board. At the same time Mr. T. B. Lewis ended his honorary services as classics teacher. When the Education Committee took control a new Literary Department, under J. D. Baxter, B.A., Head of the Pupil Teacher Centre, was formed. This was virtually a training class for teachers, although anyone could join for the comprehensive fee of 16/-d a term or 4/-d for a single course. By the end of our period there were eight sections: Art, Building Trades, Chemistry, Electrical and Mechanical Engineering, Textile, Commerce, Certificate Classes, and Domestic Subjects (including cookery, millinery, dressmaking, and laundrywork).

As a result of fundamental changes in the organization of the curriculum in 1905 students were able to take comprehensive courses of subjects instead of single subjects, and four-year courses began in chemistry, electrical engineering, mechanical engineering, building, and textiles. The full course was made compulsory for all students, except those in textiles, in the next session. Courses of this nature could only be tackled with

a reasonable chance of success by those who had already proved that they had reached a fair level of attainment, and from 1906 a definite standard was set for admission to the Technical School.

For a short period, 1895 - 1900, the School organized evening continuation classes. A Boys' Department provided courses in English, arithmetic, and commercial geography in the Preparatory Division; arithmetic, mensuration, geography, and English in the Middle Division; and advanced arithmetic and mensuration, elementary algebra, elementary geometry, book-keeping, and commercial correspondence in the Upper Division. Students securing a first-class in their examination became eligible for a scholarship of 10/-d, the basic fee for all evening classes at that period. The classes for girls were on a less ambitious scale and offered lessons in elementary English and arithmetic, domestic economy, commercial geography, and cookery at one level. All these continuation classes were taken over by the School Board in 1900.

There is no evidence of any serious staffing difficulties, and a number of highly-qualified teachers were always teaching in the School. In July 1905, the Principal, Mr. A. Gow, B.A., B.Sc., was appointed to the post of Director of Education for Blackburn, but retained his position in the Technical School. Dr. Pickard became Organizing Head of the Science Side in order to relieve Mr. Gow of some of his old duties. Three years later the offices of Principal of the Technical School and Director of Education were finally separated. Dr. R. H. Pickard, Ph.D., D.Sc., was appointed to the former, and Mr. A. H. Whipple, M.A., B.Sc., was appointed to the latter.

There was only one change in fees in the years before the War. Evening classes cost 12/6d for a group course instead of 10/-d, and single subjects were available at 7/6d from 1909. Other fees remained unaltered.

Encouragement to students was offered in the form of scholarships and prizes right from the early years. One gold and one silver medal were awarded to the two best evening students,

and book prizes were given to others who did well in their examinations. The School's own certificate was presented to each successful candidate, and some qualified for free tuition the following year.

The first scholarships awarded in specific subjects were 28 annual awards of £1 each offered appropriately to students of weaving. Eight of these were sponsored by the Weavers' Protection Society for the children of its members, and the remainder were for students whose parents belonged to the Weavers' Association. In 1893 the Daisyfield Industrial Bees' Co-operative Society inaugurated a scheme of 20 annual scholarships of £1 each for the children of members. Three years later they were changed to 40 at 10/-d each. Also in 1893 the first two leaving awards began on the initiative of two Life Members of the School Council. Mr. Heyworth's scholarship, worth £50 a year for three years, was in industrial art and tenable at the Manchester Municipal School of Art or the National Art Training School, London. A scholarship of the same value and tenable at Owens College, Manchester, or the Royal College of Science, London was offered by Mr. Tattersall. Later additions were the Henry Harrison Scholarship of about £30 offered annually in modern languages to help students who were old boys of the Grammar School or the Technical School to spend at least three months in a foreign country. The John Mercer, F.R.S., Scholarship, valued at £27 a year, enabled a student at the Blackburn Technical School to study a special branch of chemistry during the daytime. Both these last awards were administered by the Peel Trustees. Entrance scholarships changed little except that the Spinners' Association made similar provision to that of the Weavers' Association, and the Leyland and Livesey Scholarships could be held at the Technical School.

One of the most pleasing features about the School was its successful attempt to fulfil the needs of local industry. An early indication of this was the desire of many employers to accept the School's own leaving certificates in preference to

the more formal qualifications of external examining bodies. The close co-operation between employers and School was further illustrated in 1913 by the request of the Association of Pharmaceutical Chemists for the foundation of a day course in chemistry, physics, and botany for their apprentices. A course of nine hours a week was arranged and the chemists permitted their employees to attend for two-thirds of that time during working hours. Similarly the Blackburn Master Printers encouraged the establishment of classes in typography, granting their apprentices attendance privileges, and offering the aid of equipment. During that same year William Yates Scholarships in engineering were introduced and successful candidates were granted leave of absence by the Blackburn Federation of Engineering Employers on Mondays and on Saturday mornings.

To this local evidence of the success of the Technical School can be added that of London University and the Board of Education. In 1909, and again in 1910, a woman day student in the Chemistry Department gained a first-class honours degree at London University, and there is other evidence of academic success. An official seal of approval can be found in the Board of Education Inspector's Report, 1912 - 13, which reads:-

"It is a high grade Technical School, well organized and well equipped with a good staff and an excellent and well deserved reputation in the locality. During the short space of the last three or four years it has in many ways improved in its general work and has developed a good Engineering Department. The courses of study drawn up in the Building Trades, Chemical, Engineering and Textile Departments, have proved popular with the new students, who have followed in nearly all cases the complete courses....".

POSTSCRIPT 1960.

A successful industrial democracy needs the buttress of a sound educational system, and it was the purpose of English statesmen in the last quarter of the nineteenth century to fashion one for their country. The needs were both industrial and democratic, because during that generation increasing industrial competition overseas, and the steady growth of a political democracy at home imposed new demands on the ordinary Englishman. It was the ordinary Englishman for whom the great Elementary Education Act of 1870 was intended, and it was for him too that much of the subsequent legislation before the end of the century was passed. Its success can be measured to some extent by the fact that the higher grade elementary and the technical schools proved embarrassing rivals to some of the ancient grammar schools whose watchword was only too frequently tradition rather than progress; and its failure can be detected in the necessity for reform in 1902.

There was no question of the state founding a system that was to embrace the whole educational field. Instead, more typically, the state was to induce local elected bodies to supply the deficiencies in the provision of elementary schools left by voluntary enterprise. The school boards were novel institutions, void of experience, and not always certain of their responsibilities. They were later replaced by education committees, acting for local councils, with wide powers covering elementary, technical, and secondary education. Our study has endeavoured to show how one important town in industrial Lancashire interpreted the changing law of education. Perhaps the most significant lesson has been that Blackburn was often different from many, and sometimes different from most, other districts, a reminder that education had a distinctly local character.

The strength of the new administrative bodies depended largely upon the strength of the churches, and in our chosen town the latter were always the stronger in the sphere of



elementary education. Local, but undenominational, initiative founded a technical school before the Government made public grants from local sources available, and private efforts provided the Town with all its secondary schools. Rate aid, when it became available in 1903, was devoted more to the maintenance than the provision of schools.

Whatever our private prejudices, religious or educational, we must admire the enterprise shown by the denominations in the Borough. The pioneer spirit that was so common during the last quarter of the nineteenth century when the Town was growing at its fastest rate, and when its educational needs developed accordingly, was typified by Canon Louis Maglione, a Roman Catholic priest, who was active in local educational affairs, including a term of office on the School Board, during that period. In 1874, only eight years after arriving in this country from his native Italy, he received the following cryptic challenge from his Cardinal:-

"Be at Audley, Blackburn, by Sunday. You have no church, no house, no school; you must build them all".

Within a few months he had established a school, on the ground floor of some cottages, and opened a church above. In 1877 St. Joseph's Church was officially consecrated by Cardinal Manning, and the following year the first new school building was completed.

Local religious zeal was never handicapped by the temptation to leave the provision of schools to public funds, even when rising standards and costs were nagging problems, except in the case of the Free Churches who gradually handed over most of their schools to the Board or the Committee as a matter of policy as much as expediency. By the early years of the present century there was a sufficient number of elementary schools for the needs of a Town that had ceased to grow, and the churches controlled most of them. In 1870 the 19 recognized elementary schools were all voluntary; in 1914 there were 34 non-provided elementary schools out of a total of 46; and in 1960 45 out of 68 primary schools are non-provided.

The greatest rate of increase has been shown by the Roman Catholics.

This success has produced its own problems. We have already noted that before the Local Authority became responsible for the maintenance of voluntary schools in 1903 fees were retained in all elementary schools because the churches were unable to afford the loss in revenue even when the Government began to offer fee grants in 1891, and the few board schools were not permitted to discontinue theirs.

Financial difficulties were also reflected in the quality of the teachers employed during the School Board period. In 1904 there were more than 250 unqualified teachers in the Borough, but with rate aid and better training facilities this number rapidly diminished until it had become negligible by 1914.

A third problem that has not been solved by 1960, and is unlikely to be solved for many years whilst the present policy of the Ministry of Education - and the Treasury - prevails is that of school buildings. The great majority of Blackburn's schools open today are the product of a single generation that ended sixty years ago. Since then there has been no growth in population to act as a stimulus, and the cotton depression between the wars actually began a steady decline in population which has brought the number of schoolchildren down to 16,000 in 1960, about two-thirds of its size fifty years ago.

Between the wars all except the Roman Catholic schools were reorganized into separate junior and senior schools and this, together with four new council schools (including Blackamoor Open Air School), led to an increase in the official number of schools. Under the terms of the 1936 Education Act which provided capital grants towards new senior schools, the Church of England opened two new senior schools, St. Hilda's and St. Peter's in 1939. The Roman Catholics had already built, some years earlier, the only new secondary school, St. Mary's College (for boys), that was founded in Blackburn between 1908, when the Convent School was reorganized, and 1945 when the Education Committee opened its first secondary school, the

Technical High School, in the premises it had erected at Blakey Moor in 1911 for its Higher Elementary School. The Committee had already taken full control of the Girls' High School in 1932, and today this and the Technical High School which is now classed as a Technical and Grammar School are the only two out of the five grammar schools that are provided by the Borough Council. In 1961 the Girls' High School will move to a new building, the first of its kind ever to be erected by the Authority.

In a town of Blackburn's character we would naturally expect to find a thriving technical education. Ninety years ago this was provided by private science and art classes in hired rooms. In 1891 a new Technical School, one of the first of its kind in England, was opened, and it has always been most successful. The Board of Education once declared that "the Authority can quite rightly claim to have been among the pioneers of technical education in the country". It has now become necessary for a new College to be built behind the old one, and the Science Department has recently transferred to it. A total of 5,000 day and evening students in the 1959 - 60 session suggests that the new building operations are long overdue.

An important change in the organization of the Borough's education was effected by the 1944 Act. The old senior schools were converted into secondary modern schools, and in 1948 the Roman Catholics re-arranged their schools so that they too provided a share of this type of school. Four grammar schools already existed, and the Committee provided its Technical High School in 1945 so that the tripartite system which became the general rule in the country was very quickly established in Blackburn. In 1945 the first People's College to be provided by a municipal authority was founded.

Blackburn's Development Plan of 1947 - 8 envisaged many changes. 64 school departments were to be closed, 19 modernised, and 48 new ones built, together with no fewer than 50 small nursery schools. New Colleges for Technology and Art, Domestic

Science, and Adult Education, and a Central Institute for Recreation were planned for a single "campus" at Blakey Moor. Two or three County Colleges and about ten Community Centres for housing estates are also planned.

Unfortunately much of the Plan of 1948 is still only a Plan in 1960, but this is almost entirely the result of Government policy and general building restrictions. During this period of frustration the Education Committee has built three nursery schools, five primary schools, one special school, and two secondary modern schools, whilst the Roman Catholics have provided three new primary schools and one secondary modern school. Work on the new Technical College is now in Phase III which should be completed in 1962. No date is yet set for Phase IV.

Some indication of the changing status of education in Blackburn is reflected in the cost, even after due allowance is made for a sharp rise in the cost of living. In 1903 - 4, the first year in which it is possible to find a fairly comprehensive figure, the gross expenditure of the Education Committee was £65,000. Ten years later it was nearly £97,000. The estimated amount for 1959 - 60 is £1,731,000. The education rate in 1903 - 4 was 9½d; for the current year it is 26/9d, although this will be greatly reduced with the aid of the Government grant. All this is in a town that is smaller than it was sixty years ago, and it points to an improvement in the quality and a widening of the scope of education.

Looking ahead, it seems that education in the Borough will be very conscious of the heritage that developed during the period of this study. It is possible that the Local Authority will be eventually controlling a larger proportion of the educational institutions, but the Government's recent decision to pay three-quarters of the capital cost of new buildings for non-provided schools may well mean that the Church of England and the Roman Catholic Church will be able to share in the provision of schools for many years to come, and so preserve that distinctive feature that characterised education in Blackburn between 1870 and 1914.

APPENDIX 1.

School Accommodation and Attendance 1871.

School Accommodation 1871. (from the School Board Survey,  
see page 7).

C. of E.

<u>School.</u>	<u>No. of places.</u>	<u>Projected extensions.</u>
Parish Ch. Sch.	1040	
St. Luke's.	525	
St. Peter's.	-	New schools just commenced.
Bent St. N. 2c (Nat. Sch.).	578	
Wensley Fold.	508	
St. Paul's.	223	
St. John's.	1138	
Pleckgate Nat.	183	
Billinge Nat.	261	
St. Michael's.	264	New storey to be added this yr.
" Infant.	202	New classroom being built.
Holy Trinity.	486	New Inf. Sch. being built.
St. Thomas' Infant.	302	New Boys & Girls Sch. being blt.
" Temporary.	461	
Christ Church	<u>1115</u>	
	<u>7286</u>	

Nonconformist.

<u>In Use.</u>		
Mount St. Un. Presb.	231	
Chapel St. Cong.	1174	
Bank Top.	241	New Inf. Sch. being built.
Peter St. Wesleyan.	363	
Town's Moor Baptist.	103	
Barton St. Free Meth.	637	
Montague St. Cong.	384	
Furthergate	369	
Park Rd.	1019	
Nove Scotia.	406	New Inf. Sch. to be added this yr.
Eccles Row.	210	
Mawdsley St. Brit.	376	
" " Inf.	159	

Not in Use.

St. George's Un. Presb.	508
Branch Rd. Bap.	340
Zion Primitive Meth.	202
James St. Cong.	459
Four Lane Ends	<u>311</u>
	<u>7492</u>

R. C.

St. Mary's	531	New Inf. Sch. to be added.
St. Anne's	868	
St. Alban's Boys'	277	
" " Girls' & Infs.'	498	
St. Patrick's	217	
St. Joseph's	<u>266</u>	
	<u>2657</u>	

School Attendance 1871.

Private.		925
Out of Borough.		217
Town's Moor Bapt.		54
Mount St. U. Pres.		110
St. George's U. Pres.		21
Oxford St. Brit. c		12
Mawdsley St. Brit. 2c		485
Eccles Row Brit.		49
Montague St. Cong.		132
Furthergate Cong. c		181
Park Rd. Cong. c's		372
Novia Scotia Cong. c		174
Bank Top. Cong.		165
Chapel St. Cong. 2c		527
Barton St. Meth. F.Ch. 2c		162
Peter St. Wesleyan c		249
St. Patrick's		73
St. Joseph's c		171
St. Alban's c's		954
St. Mary's		314
St. Anne's 2c		805
Wensley Fold		114
Pleckgate c		136
Charity		41
Billinge		110
All Saints		17
St. Michael's Infs. c		87
St. Michael's 3c		725
St. Thomas'		1117
St. Paul's 2c		535
Trinity		667
St. Luke's 2c		598
St. Peter's		562
Christ Church c's		1080
St. John's 2c		1112
Half-Time		4539
FULL-TIME		8534
		<u>13073</u>

Girls' Charity Sch. (att.= 48)  
Not inspected.

Sch. Bd. Report April-May 1871

N.B. These figures include some children not resident in the Borough.

c = certificated teacher.

(From Board's Survey 1871)

APPENDIX 11.

The Distribution of Elementary Schools 1902.



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Personal memories of J.H.A. Swindlehurst whose career as pupil, pupil-teacher, and teacher covered most of our period; Miss E. Brewer whose father was H.M.I. for Blackburn District for much of the period and who was herself one of the first pupils at the

Girls' High School; and Miss M. Gardner, Headmistress of the High School, 1905-33, who also kindly lent personal documents.

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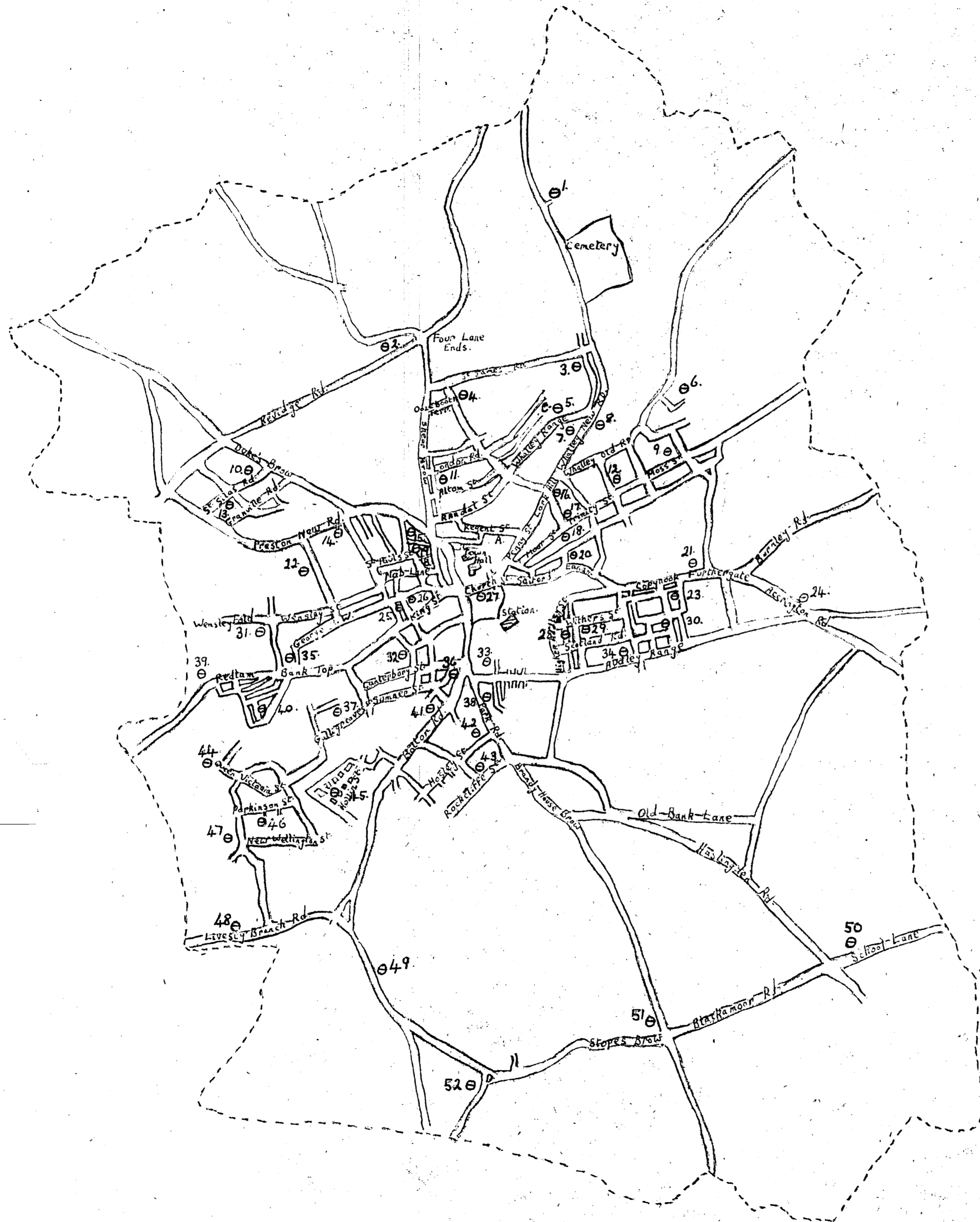
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# PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS 1902.



1. St. Gabriel's
2. Four Lane Ends.
3. Cedar St
4. St. James
- \* 5. Whalley Range.
6. St. Stephen's
7. St. Michael's.
- \* 8. Whalley New R<sup>d</sup>. Girls' R.C. H.G.
9. Moss St.
10. Sacred Heart R.C.
11. St. John's.
- \* 12. St. Michael's (Union Bldg's)
13. St. Silas
- \* 14. Public H.G. Boys.
- \* 15. " " Girls.
16. St. Alban's R.C.
17. " " H.G.
18. Holy Trinity.
19. St. Paul's.
20. St. Patrick's R.C.
21. Furthengate.
22. St. Barnabas.
23. St. Thomas.
24. Accrington R<sup>d</sup>.
- \* 25. Princes St.
26. St. Anne's R.C.
27. St. Mary's H.G.
28. St. Matthew's.
29. Maudsley St.
30. St. Joseph's R.C.
31. Wensley Fold
32. St. Peter's.
- \* 33. Mayson St (Industrial)
34. Addley Range.
35. Bank Top.
36. St. Mary's R.C.
37. St. Luke's.
38. Park R<sup>d</sup>.
39. Wotton Infants.
40. Griffin.
41. All Saints.
42. Christ Church (Mosley St)
43. " " (Rockcliffe St)
44. St. Peter's R.C.
45. Emmanuel.
46. Mill Hill C.E.
47. " " Council.
48. St. Andrew's.
49. St. Bartholomew's.
50. St. James (Guide)
51. St. James (Blackamoor)
52. Lower Darwen.

\* = Closed by 1914.

Regent St Special (A), Blakey Moor (B), and Bangor St (C) were opened 1902-14.