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Dissertation for the

M.Ed. degree

J. H. Rex, B.A.

THE  
ORGANISATION OF PUBLIC  
ELEMENTARY EDUCATION IN YORK  
1870 - 1902

October, 1960.

## ABSTRACT OF

### THE ORGANISATION OF PUBLIC ELEMENTARY EDUCATION IN YORK 1870 - 1902.

The period under review is divided into two halves, the dividing line being the year 1889, when the first York School Board was elected.

Thus, the first part (1870 - 1888) is concerned purely with how Voluntary Schools provided elementary education in the city. It begins by showing how the provision of schools in 1870 was such that a School Board was not thought necessary, and how the Denominations increased the supply up to 1888. Much attention is given to the way in which these schools were financed, and to the difficulties which they met in raising sufficient funds. Chapter 3 deals with the problem of school attendance, describing in detail the measures taken by the School Attendance Committee, and the effect they had.

The second part (1888 - 1902) opens by showing how a deficiency arose in accommodation, necessitating<sup>ing</sup> the formation of a School Board; the composition of that Board and subsequent ones is then summarised. In the next Chapter, details are given of how schools were provided, by both the School Board and Voluntary bodies, with some ~~mention~~ mention of alleged competition. Then follows a comparison of the way in which both types of school were financed, again underlining the difficulties of the Voluntary bodies and showing the advantage that lay with the School Board. Attention is then given to the continued activities of the School Attendance Committee, and the resulting success, to the gradual abolition of fees and to the raising of the school-leaving age.

The final chapters deal more specifically with the activities of the School Board designed to widen the scope of education in York, including the introduction of scientific and practical subjects, evening schools, education of pupil-teachers and the beginning of recreational and educational visits. How some of these were affected by the Cockerton Judgment is also described.

The dissertation concluded<sup>s</sup> with an assessment of the work of the School Board and the Voluntary bodies, and notes the transfer of the whole system in 1903 to the new Education Committee.

# University of Durham

From the office of  
The Registrar and Secretary

OLD SHIRE HALL  
DURHAM (TEL. 5261)

Ref: P/Rex

3rd October, 1966.

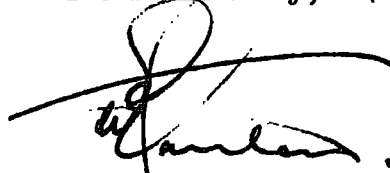
J.F. Willatt, Esq.,  
Department of Education,  
48 Old Elvet,  
Durham.

Dear Mr. Willatt,

I am enclosing herewith, for deposit in the Department Library, the top copy of Mr. J.H. Rex's dissertation - "The Organisation of Public Elementary Education in York 1870 - 1902".

Mr. Rex was successful in his dissertation in 1960, but failed to satisfy the Examiners in his written papers in Educational Law and Administration and History of Education. As you will see from the attached copy letter, we have been forced to assume that the candidate no longer wishes to be registered for the degree, and we are, therefore, returning to him the second copy of his dissertation.

Yours sincerely,



W.E. SAXTON.  
Deputy Registrar.

WES/MB

Copy to Mr. Willatt

Ref: F/Rex

3rd October, 1966.

J.H. Rex, Esq.,  
408 Spon Lane,  
West Park,  
Leeds 16.

Dear Sir,

I refer to my letter of 10th May last in connection with your candidature for the M.Ed. of this University.

Since we have not heard from you since September 1963 and in view of the fact that no reply has been received to my last letter, it has now been assumed that you have withdrawn your candidature and your name has been deleted from our records.

I am returning herewith the second copy of your successful dissertation - "The Organisation of Public Elementary Education in York 1870 - 1902". The top copy of the work has been deposited in the Library of the University Education Department.

Yours faithfully,



W.E. SAXTON.  
Deputy Registrar.

ES/TB

### Introduction: The 1870 Education Act

From 1860 onwards, most thinking men had been urging the importance of a national system of elementary education, and during the later years of the decade evidence of the need for such a system accumulated rapidly. Without a doubt destitution reigned; by 1870, schools under government inspection provided places for little more than 50% of the estimated requirement, while schools were unevenly distributed, attendance was irregular and the leaving-age was low. An additional factor was the 1867 Reform Bill, which added a million voters to the Parliamentary Register, and which made it imperative for England to be an educated country.

It was becoming obvious that the Voluntary bodies could not rectify the position unaided, but there were strong objections to financial support being given to them from the local rates. Thus, education became a political issue, a struggle between advocates of an unsectarian, free and compulsory system and those of a denominational system, free only in cases of necessity and compulsory by the better application of the Factory Acts.

The Education Act produced in 1870 was, according to Forster, framed so as to bring about the 'least possible expenditure of public money, and the avoidance of injury to existing and efficient schools'. It was really a compromise, as the voluntary schools

were to be left untouched, while any deficiencies in the provision of accommodation which they could not make good were to be supplied by School Boards formed for the purpose and able to draw on the rates. Education was to be free only to children of necessitous parents, to be compulsory only where School Boards used their power to make Bye-Laws, and not to be purely secular. Compromise was also reached on the question of Religious Instruction, the denominational schools operating side-by-side with undenominational Board Schools. In both types a 'conscience clause' was to be operated.

The system established by this Act was to continue until 1902, and it is the object of this dissertation to work out in detail the consequences of the Act, and further Acts which amended or added to it, in the City of York.



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PART ONE

THE VOLUNTARY SCHOOL

PERIOD

1870 - 1888

## Chapter 1 : The Situation in York, 1870

The procedure to be followed for determining the need for a School Board or otherwise was laid down mainly in SS 8 and 9 of the 1870 Act. Under these provisions, a return of existing accommodation had to be made to the Education Dept., which would then consider what public elementary accommodation was necessary, and whether such accommodation was already sufficiently provided. Their decisions were to be published in a notice which was to contain details of the accommodation which appeared to them to be required. If the existing accommodation was considered to be insufficient, a period of six months grace was to be allowed for the deficiency to be made up, or to be in the course of being supplied. Failure to do this in the required period would lead to the Dept. causing a School Board to be formed. (A) Under a further section of the Act (B), it was possible for a School Board to be formed without enquiry or notices, upon application by electors of the School Board or by the Council of a Borough. The only exception to these provisions concerning the formation of School Boards was London. (B2).

- (A) 1870 Elem. Education Act, S.10
- (B) 1870 Elem. Education Act, S.12
- (B2) 1870 Elem. Education Act, S.37

By the 5th September, 1870, the Town Clerk of York had already received a letter requiring a Return to be made to the Dept., and had requested information from the parish clergy and other interested Ministers and persons. (C) Some two months later, he was able to present a Return to the Education Committee of the Council showing that in the City there were 36 elementary schools classed as public and 9 as private. (D) To the Managers of these schools, the Committee proposed to apply for details about the number of pupils, area of buildings, etc., so that they could judge the sufficiency of elementary education in the City, and be enabled to decide whether or not to apply for the formation of a School Board.

Before the end of January, 1871, the Town Clerk had prepared a statement for the Education Committee and the Dept., giving the following overall picture:-

Public Elementary School Accommodation in York, 1870

No. on roll in schools within Municipal Boundary			
and in operation	Boys	3,046	Girls 2,425
No. on roll in schools as above in course of			
being supplied	Boys	735	Girls 285
			Infants 610
No. in or intended to be in schools outside the			
Municipal Boundary	Boys	537	Girls 443
			Unspecified 210

- (C) Report of Town Clerk on Elem. Educ. Act of 1870 dated 5.9.1870  
 (D) Report of Education Committee dated 9.11.1870

These figures included 248 places in schools classed as private, but did not include the accommodation in one R.C. school for which figures were not supplied. The grant total of places included in the Report was 8,291, while the assumed population of the City within the Municipal Limits was 45,000. As a rule, the Dept. required that a number equal to one-sixth of the population should be taken as the number of children resident in the district; on this basis, there should have been accommodation for 7,500 pupils in York. It is interesting to note that, three years earlier, Mr. Fitch, H.M.I., reported that, in the City, the proportion of scholars under instruction in all types of school to the population was 1 : 5.5 or 18%. (E)

While the decision of the Dept. was awaited, the Education Committee of the City were trying to get information as to the efficiency of the education given in the various Government-inspected schools, with a view to reaching a decision as to whether application should be made to the Dept. for the formation of a School Board (F). Many bore in mind that only by a School Board being formed could compulsory education be introduced, while there was strong feeling in the City both for and against a Board. (G).

- (E) Report of Mr. Fitch, H.M.I. to Schools Inquiry Commission, 1868  
(F) York Herald Reports: 28.1.1871 4.2.1871 11.2.1871  
(G) York Herald Reports do.

The enquiries made showed that the schools were for the greater part efficient. (H). When at last, late in 1872, the official notification with the schedule was received from the Dept., it showed that schools considered available as Public Elementary Schools were capable of accommodating 8824 children, and it stated that no additional accommodation appeared to be required. (I) As a result of this, and in view of probable forthcoming legislation with regard to compulsion, the City Council decided not to take steps for the formation of a School Board.

(H) York Herald Reports : 11.11.1871  
(I) York Herald Reports: 16.11.1872

## Chapter 2 : Voluntary School Accommodation and Finance

### Provision of Accommodation

As shown in the previous chapter, York, with its strong Anglican tradition, was quite well provided with Voluntary Schools. In 1870, as shown by the following figures, the preponderance of the Church of England and the National Society was undoubted:-

#### Public Elementary School Accommodation in York, 1870 (A)

	Schools open	<u>Accommodation</u>			<u>Total</u>
		<u>Boys</u>	<u>Girls</u>	<u>Infants</u>	
Church/England	15	1316	988	812	3116
Wesleyan	3	482	299	446	1227
Independent	1	29	100	-	129
Roman Catholic	3	235	278	69	582
		(no figs. included for one school)			
Undenominational	3	490	106	181	777
	( 2 British)				

Throughout the country, the 1870 Act, because of the six months period of grace allowed, led to a great effort by the denominations, in the hope of avoiding the necessity of School Boards. This trend was illustrated in the City of York, where, by the end of 1870, a further 1770 places were in the course of being provided in 4 new C/E Schools, and 1 new R.C. School, which were all opened between 1871 and 1873. (B)

After this initial spurt, there continued to be a steady

(A) Statement of School Statistics by Town Clerk, 23.1.1871

(B) do.

increase in Voluntary School provision in the country by the Church of England and the Roman Catholics, although Wesleyan and Undenominational Schools decreased in number (C). York proved to be no exception to the rule, as a great deal of expansion was called for because of the increase in population during the period. In 1871, this was 43796 (D), while in 1887 (according to the Council Year Book) it had risen to 67654. Accordingly, between 1874 and 1888, a further 2833 places were added by the supply of 6 new C/E Schools and 1 new R.C. School. (E). In addition, extensions to existing schools created a further 2643 places, these being provided by the various denominations as follows:-

C/E - 1587; Wesleyan - 889; British - 167 (E)

Against these increases, however, must be reckoned the loss of about 2700 places, due mainly to the closing of 14 schools; of these, 9 were C/E (1850 places), 1 Independent (130), 2 R.C. (70) and 2 Undenominational (670). It is noticeable that these included all the small schools, with under 250 places each, within the City boundary.

Thus, by the end of 1888, 10794 places were provided by Voluntary Schools, as follows:- (E)

- (C) F. Smith - History of English Elementary Education, 1760-1902
- (D) 1871 Census
- (E) 1st Triennial Report of York School Board, 31.12.1891

	<u>No. of Schools</u>	<u>Accommodation</u>
C/E	16	7274
Wesleyan	3	2117
Roman Catholic	3	1130
British	1	273

On comparing these figures with those given for 1870, it can be seen that the denominations had increased their school accommodation by some 77% in an attempt to escape the formation of a York school Board. During the same period, the population had increased by approximately 55%. (E2).

In addition to the Public Elementary Schools, there were in 1889 62 private schools in York, 29 of which were regarded as giving elementary education, while a number of endowed and charity elementary schools persisted, although these diminished in importance. (F)

During this period, on at least two occasions (1883 and 1884), the Education Department pointed out deficiencies of accommodation which had arisen in particular areas of the City, because of the growth of population resulting in an outgrowing of the buildings available (G). In both cases the deficiency was made good, but these cases of a local, rather than a general, deficiency proved to be pointers to one of the reasons why a School Board had eventually to be formed.

(F) 1912 Local Handbook - Royal Sanitary Institute

(G) York National Schools Society Minutes, 11.1.1883 - 28.1.1885

(E2) 1871 Census Figures and 1888 Council Year Book.



## The Financial Aspect

### 1) New Buildings

As a result of the 1870 Act, the system of paying parliamentary grants in aid of the cost of providing new buildings, and enlarging or improving existing buildings, was discontinued, except in the case of applications received before the end of 1870. (H). There was a great rush of such applications, but even where they were granted, large amounts of money were required in addition, amounts which mainly had to be subscribed by voluntary subscription. Thus the erection of the large number of Voluntary Schools in the 70's was largely made possible by the great sums voluntarily subscribed. (I).

In York, only 3 of the schools erected in these ten years received aid in the form of building grants, (J) but there was an immense effort to provide voluntarily all the money required to supply new C/E and R.C. Schools. The C/E Schools also received aid from the York National School Central Board, which in 1871 sold £1200 N.E.R. stock and used the proceeds of £800 to give grants towards the building of 3 schools. (K). A typical example was the St. Lawrence School, opened in 1872 and costing £2260, the money being provided as follows:-

National Society

£120

(H) 1870 Education Act, §:96

(I) Adamson: 'English Education, 1789 - 1902'

(J) Annual Reports of Committee of Council on Education

(K) York National School Society Minutes, 3.11.1871

York National School Central Board	£200
York Special Education Fund	£102.9.8.
Ecclesiastical Commissioners	£ 50.
S.P.C.K.	£ 36.
Government Grant	£438.
Private Subscription	£1110.

The deficiency, at its opening, of £203 was soon to be paid off by subscription and collection. (L).

By the end of the 1870's, however, this great effort had burned itself out, and thenceforth expansion became a real difficulty, and the provision of new schools an overwhelming problem. (M). Any funds which had been held in reserve had been used up, and by 1880 the York National Schools Central Board found itself £550 in debt. (N). This was paid off, but in the next eight years a total of only £80 was paid out as grants to aid buildings and enlargements. It was becoming difficult to find subscribers for new buildings; when such were urgently required in 1884, only £750 out of the required £2000 could be raised, so that a special appeal culminating in a Public Meeting presided over by the Archbishop of York was required. (O). It was becoming clear that the poorer localities in particular could no longer provide for their own requirements, nor was this problem confined to Church of England Schools. The Groves Wesleyan School needed more accommodation

- (L) Bishophill & Clementhorpe School - cost £1612; Govt. Grant £392  
 York Nat. Schools' Central Bd. £300 Voluntary subs. £800  
 Deficit on opening £120  
 St. Pauls School (opened 1875); cost £950, vol. subs. totalled  
 £758.
- (M) York National School Society Minutes, 4.2.1884  
 (N) York National School Society Minutes, 5.2.1881  
 (O) do. 28.1.1885

in 1883, could not afford it, and so had to use the Preachers' Vestry and the Chapel itself for school purposes. (P). Eventually, two years later, the money for two classrooms was loaned. (Q).

There is no doubt that the school buildings fell far behind the best standards of the time because of lack of attention due to lack of funds. Whilst the new schools were built up to recognised standards, and buildings as a whole were reported 'excellent' in 1878, (R) by 1890 the HMI stated that there were very few, if any, well-arranged and -equipped schools. He mentioned the insufficiency of classrooms in some, unsatisfactory ventilation in others, and want of suitable playgrounds and cloakrooms in many. (S). 8 sq. ft. per child was used as the basis of calculating accommodation, compared with 10 sq. ft. in Board Schools, while many of the school-rooms were structurally unsuitable. (T).

11) Maintenance

The main difficulty of the Voluntary bodies was caused by the constant rise in the cost per child, due to rising standards demanded by the Education Dept. and stimulated by the achievements of the School Boards. (U). This cost per head of maintenance had risen, in Voluntary Schools from £1.6.0. in 1870 to £1.15.9½ in 1885. (V). How the York Schools compared with the rest of the

- (P) Groves School - Chapel Minutes, 30.3.1883  
(Q) do: 25.11.1887  
(R) 1878 HMI's General Report (S) 1890 HMI's General Report  
(T) National Educ. Assn. pamphlet 'The School Case at York' 1890  
(U) Curtis; History of Educ. in Great Britain; Adamson: English Education 1789 - 1902  
(V) Smith: History of English Elem. Educ. 1760 - 1902 do.

*his was  
found  
in York  
62*

country is shown by the following figures for 1884-85:-

Average Attndce. under 300      York  $34/1\frac{3}{4}$  per head  
Vol. Schools nationally       $34/3\frac{3}{4}$

Average Attndce. over 300      York  $32/10\frac{1}{4}$  per head  
Vol. Schools nationally       $34/0\frac{1}{4}$       (W)

Generally, then, the cost of maintenance in York was lower than average, particularly in the larger schools, a fact which seems to be a significant one in explaining how the Voluntary Schools continued to hold the field, to the exclusion of a School Board, for so long.

These Voluntary Schools had three main sources of income:- School Fees, Government Grants and Voluntary Subscriptions. As regards the first of these, there was a steady increase throughout the country: in 1872 the average was  $8/9\frac{1}{2}$  per head, but this had increased to  $11/2$  per head by 1884-85. (X). We shall see that this was the case in York, the fee per head of average attendance being  $14/0\frac{1}{2}$  for 1884-85. (Y). This produced a total amounting to some 43% of the income of the schools in that year. (Z).

Grants earned by schools had also increased, although in the early years they had been restricted by the rule that, for any individual school, they should not exceed the income from other sources. (A). Some relief was granted by the 1876 Education Act,

(W) Cross Comm. Report: Digest of Statistics, 1884-85

(X) Adamson: English Education 1789 - 1902; Cross Comm. Report.  
Digest of Statistics 1884-85

(Y) See Chapter 3.      (Z) Cross Comm. Report, Digest of Statistics  
1884-85

(A) 1870 Elem. Education Act. S.97

which abandoned the pound-for-pound principle and laid down a limit of 17/6 per head within which the grant would not be so reduced as to equal income per head from other sources. (B). But if the grant earned was greater than 17/6 whilst other income did not exceed that figure, such excess of earned grant would not be payable. In York; from 1870 to 1876, there had been a general increase in the grants earned per head, but this trend showed signs of being reversed by the later year. (C). The provisions of the 1876 Act did, however, have a very beneficial effect; in 1876 the grant earned had totalled £2800, or 13/7<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>d. per head, but by 1878 it had jumped to £4002 or 18/5 per head, in the 17 schools included in the earlier figures. Thereafter, things deteriorated once again, so that by 1884-85 the average of all the York schools was 16/6 per head as compared with a national average for voluntary schools of 16/9. (D). This amounted to a sum total which was just below 50% of the total income for the year.

Thus, by the time of the Cross Commission, only just over 7% of the income of the York Voluntary schools derived from voluntary subscriptions, and what evidence there is points to the fact that the trends in the City from 1870 to this date, were the same as

(B) 1876 Act, S.19

(C) Report of Committee of Council on Education

(D) Cross Commission Report: Digest of Statistics, 1884-85.

those found throughout the country. This was a story of falling subscriptions, particularly in the 80's, being experienced by all the denominations except the Roman Catholics. (E). Because of this and the 17/6 limit, many schools sustained deductions in their grant, the final result being one of schools and organisations finding themselves in great financial straits.

In York, this trend is reflected in the story of the National Schools' Society, with which all of the C/E Schools eventually became associated. As a result of two re-organisations in 1871 and 1880, the Central Board relieved itself of the responsibility of directly maintaining individual schools, and became a body for collecting subscriptions and apportioning them amongst schools in need of assistance. (F). By 1875, the Dean of York was having to appeal for further subscriptions to the Society of up to £150 per year, and the rest of the period is punctuated by urgent appeals for new subscriptions, more Church collections, etc. (G). Nevertheless, the income of the Society from these sources decreased from £177.15.7 in 1881 to under £130 in 1886, while collections for individual schools diminished from £47.0.6 to £12.8.4 in the same period; (H). The Non-Conformists had the same problem, the annual income of the Hope Street British School falling from £106 in 1874 to £62 in 1888, so that it had finally to be closed due to lack

(E) Adamson: 'English Education 1789 - 1902'

(F) York National Schools Society Minutes, 19.7.1871; 15.12.1880

(G) Yorkshire Gazette, 18.12.1875

(H) York National Schools Society Annual Reports

of funds. (J). In fact, subscriptions as a whole had fallen so low, that by 1884-85 only 7 out of 24 schools averaged more than 5/- per pupil while 2 received no contributions at all. (K). The national average for all Voluntary Schools was 6/8½d. per head, the average for York only 2/5¾d. It must be added that the threat of a School Board produced a great improvement in C/E Schools during 1887-88, the amount of subscriptions being doubled. (L).

Side by side with this, there was a progressive worsening of the financial position of many schools, which became particularly acute after 1880. As already indicated, the Central Board of the National Society paid grants to C/E Schools in need of them; in the 1870's, 3 schools appear to have needed such support, but by 1884 it was stated that the poorer 11 schools were being kept going only by such grants, and that they were leading an uncertain life. (M). Certainly the calls for help were increasing, and it is little wonder that reference was made to 'the slender means in the way of subs. and church collections ..... on which the work is carried out' (N). There is also evidence of an overall increase in the Overdrawn Balances of the Church schools, which rose from £1492.0.5 in 1882 to £2089.1.3. in 1888. (O). Priory Street

- (J) Benson: History of Education in York.
- (K) Cross Comm. Report; Digest of Statistics, 1884-85
- (L) York National Schools Society Annual Reports, 1888-89
- (M) do. Minutes, 15.12.1880; 4.2.1884
- (N) do. 28.1.1885
- (O) York National Schools Society: Annual Reports

Wesleyan School, by 1877, also seems to have been in a bad financial state, as funds could not be found to carry out much-needed repairs to the playground. (P).

Such a gloomy picture of worsening finances leads one to ask how it was that the Voluntary schools were able to continue for so long to provide education for the City without the help of a School Board. I feel that the relatively low cost of maintenance per head provides the most significant clue; as I shall briefly indicate in the next section, the standards of equipment in the schools were in general low. On the other hand, the low rate of subscription was to a great extent compensated for by the high income from fees; high fees, apparently, had always been a feature of the York schools, and during this period they were relied upon a great deal to keep the schools going. (Q).

### iii) Conditions Inside the Schools.

The two main ways in which the restricted incomes were reflected were in the quality and the quantity of the teaching staff, and the provision of equipment. It was remarked in 1887 that the pay, educational and professional attainments of the teachers were poor. (R). A part of this statement is borne out by the fact that in

{P} Benson; History of Education in York

{Q} do.

{R} Minutes of Joint Meeting of Managers and S.A.C. 23.5.1887



1884-85, for 20 schools with an average attendance of 5362, there were only 61 Heads and Certificated Teachers (i.e. 1 to 88), of whom only 41 were trained (i.e. 1 to 130), 41 Uncertificated teachers, 75 Pupil-Teachers and 26 Paid Monitors. (S). As regards apparatus, the HMI in 1880 was to state that it was "not what it should be either as regards quantity or quality." (T). The consequence of these conditions was that the results obtained were not at all good; in 1874, the HMI was of the opinion that instruction in the 3R's was very poor, and things had not improved a great deal by 1884. In that year, 80.5% passes were obtained, compared with a national average of 84.5% in Voluntary Schools and 88% in Board Schools. When considered together with the fact that the curriculum was narrow, (U) these figures cannot be regarded as satisfactory. It does seem, as was alleged in some quarters, that education in the York Voluntary Schools was "education on the cheap".

(S) Cross Commission Report: Digest of Statistics, 1884-85

(T) HMI's General Report, 1880

(U) See Part II. Chapter 6.

### Chapter 3; School Attendance, 1870 - 1888

The 1870 Act did not make elementary education compulsory, but only gave School Boards the power to make bye-laws requiring compulsory attendance between the ages of 5 and 13 (A). As we have seen, no School Board was set up in York. Thus there was no possibility of any bye-laws to enforce attendance during the years immediately following the passage of the Act. This naturally hindered any effort to secure improved attendance, and as early as 1871 the Lord Mayor referred to the difficulty of getting children into the schools, and pointed out the need for power of compulsion to be given to the Town Council. (B). The result was that the level of attendance became low<sup>(\*)</sup>, the following figures indicating that it became more irregular than ever:-

(C) 1870 No. actually on roll 6275 Avge. Attendance 4742 (75%)

(D) 1877 No. on roll 7502 do. 4842 (65%)

Although the number of children on the roll of schools had increased greatly, there were still over 600 not attending an elementary school. (D).

(A) 1870 Act, S.74

(B) York Herald report, 11.11.1871

(C) School Attendance Committee Minutes, 23.4.1877

(D) Reports of Comm. of Council on Education: 1878 General Report

(D') Benson: History of Education in York.

(\*) Letter from Rev. G. Hewison to 'Yorkshire Gazette' 11.12.1875

York Church of England Schools, 1875:

No. on books 2501. Avge. Attendance 15.63

Only 1177 attended with sufficient regularity (more than 250 attendances) to earn the grant.

The solution to the problem was provided by the 1876 Act, which enforced attendance in an indirect manner by prohibiting the employment of children under 10, and of children between 10 and 14 until they had complied with certain educational conditions specified in the Schedules of the Act. (E). To enforce these measures; in any area where there was no School Board, a School Attendance Committee was to be appointed (D); to these Committees was given the power of making bye-laws compelling attendance, and of appointing officers. (G).

As a result of this legislation, at the City Council meeting on 9th November, 1876, a School Attendance Committee was constituted, consisting of the Lord Mayor and 11 other members. (H).

#### Efforts to improve attendance, 1876-1888

By 1876, 84% of the population of Boroughs were under bye-laws and it appeared to the newly-formed Committee that their most urgent task was to formulate and to put into effect a set of their own. (I). Yet three years were to pass before this was achieved, the delay being largely due to a wrangle with the Education Dept. over the style of heading; the Committee wished to label York a 'City', but the Dept. wished it to be a mere 'Borough'. (J).

(E) 1876 Act: 1st Schedule

(F) 1876 Act: S.7

(G) 1876 Act: S121 and S.28

(H) City Council Minutes, 9.11.1876

(I) F. Smith "

(J) School Attendance Comm. Minutes, 3.8.1877

Eventually, the bye-laws were issued early in 1880, in time to avoid York coming under the provisions of the 1880 Act, which made the issue of bye-laws a duty on every local authority. (K). They provided for compulsory attendance between 5 and 13 unless there was 'reasonable excuse', with full exemption for those between 10 and 13 if the 5th Standard was reached, and partial exemption if the 3rd standard was reached and if the child was 'beneficially and necessarily employed'. (L). In a very short time, the employers asked that the standard for partial exemption be lowered, as many in employment would have to go back to school. (M). This request was refused. (N).

In order that the Committee should have full knowledge of all the children in the City, a census of those under 14 was taken, and arrangements made for Returns of Births and Deaths to be supplied. (O). To act in execution of the Act, 2 Attendance Officers were appointed, this number eventually being increased to 4 because of population increases and extensions to the City boundary. (P). Originally each officer had a district of the City to cover, but the final arrangement was that there were only 3 districts and the fourth officer was left to look for truants in all districts. (Q).

(K)	1880 Act; S.2	(L)	Bye-laws dated 9.2.1880
(M)	School Attendance Comm. Minutes,		28.4.1881
(N)	do.		13.6.1881
(O)	do.		3.8.1877 - 21.1.1878
(P)	do.		23.4.1877 - 24.3.1879 - 21.1.
(Q)	do.		24.9.1888 1885

To gain knowledge of irregular attenders, among other things, schools were requested to submit monthly returns (R), but it was soon found necessary for Attendance Officers to visit all schools once each week to take note of them. (S). As this did not prove to be adequate, as evidenced by deputations from the Managers (T), it was arranged for each school to send a list of such people by the end of the week, for immediate action by the officers. Much difficulty was experienced getting children of the 'poor and wastrell classes' into the schools, as many of the Managers refused to accept them. (U). Eventually, the National Society were prevailed upon to re-open a school specially for them, and later other Managers were persuaded to accept them. (V).

Under the 1876 Act, the School Attendance Committee had the duty of warning or prosecuting the parents of children habitually absent from school or found habitually wandering. (W). Accordingly a Sub-Committee was formed to investigate, and, if necessary, interview parents and order them to have their children attend. (X) Later in that year, the Committee first used its power to summon parents before the Magistrates, with the result that a few fines and committals to industrial Schools were awarded. (Y). After 1880, with the bye-laws to be enforced, the number of prosecutions increased greatly reaching a peak of over 200 per annum during the

(R) SAC Minutes, 18.2.1878 (S) School Attendance Comm. Minutes, 24.3.1879 (T) SAC Minutes, 21.1.1885 (U) York Gazette Report, 21.4.1877 (V) School Attendance Committee Minutes, 23.4.1877 - 18.11.1878 (W) 1876 Act: SS 11 and 12 (X) SAC Minutes, 21.1.1878 8:7:1878 (Y) SAC Annual Reports

years 1883 - 85. (Y). The Magistrates appear to have given the Committee good support, judging by the number of fines and committals, but the pressure became so heavy that a Bye-Laws Sub-Committee was formed to interview parents and to decide who should be prosecuted. (Z). In 1885, a total of 629 parents appeared before this Sub-Committee, but there was a rapid decrease after that year. (Y).

By 1880, there was great difficulty in finding Industrial School accommodation, and it was decided to investigate the possibility of establishing a Day Industrial School in the City. (A). An additional reason was the burden of the cost of placing children in schools elsewhere; in 1883, there were 66 York pupils in such schools at a cost of over £500. (B). This annual figure was to rise to a maximum of over £700, but in spite of a good deal of activity, little was achieved as regards the proposed school by the end of 1888. (C).

Various minor actions were taken from time to time to attempt to improve attendance; actions such as controlling casual employment, publicising cases and attempts to stop bathing in school hours. (D).

- (Y) S.A.C. Annual Reports
- (Z) S.A.C. Minutes, 19.11.1883
- (A) S.A.C. Minutes, 15.11.1890
- (B) do. 22.1.1883
- (C) S.A.C. Annual Reports
- (D) S.A.C. Minutes, 5.12.1882 - 13.9.1880

Results of the efforts of the S.A.C.

Throughout the period under review, the Committee reported in their Quarterly Reports increases in the number on school rolls, improvements in attendance and decreases in the numbers not attending school. Quite early on, a Sub-Committee visiting schools reported a considerable decrease in the number of children running about the streets, and there is a further reference to the great improvement in attendance and behaviour of 'street arabs'. (E). At various times, these improvements were put down to the activities of Attendance Officers, and the effect of the Bye-Laws and summonses resulting from them. (F).

From the statistics published at the time, it is evident that a great improvement did in fact take place; in 1877 the number on rolls totalled 7502 with an average attendance of 4841 (65%), whilst in 1887 the former figure had risen to 10329 and the latter to 7942 (76.9%). (G). The rise in the number of children on the rolls of the schools is largely accounted for by the increase in population, the proportion of the whole population on the rolls remaining at between 15% and 16%, compared with the national figure of 16.24% in 1886. (H). Regarding the average attendance,

(E) S.A.C. Minutes 17.8.1877 - 18.11.1881

(F) do. 3.8.1887 - 30.6.1880

(G) 1877 Report of Comm. of Council on Educ. - S.A.C. 1887 Annual Report

(H) Adamson: English Education, 1789 - 1902.

there was little, if any, improvement until the Bye-Laws were issued in 1880; in fact, the 1878 figure actually fell to 64.8%. This gave rise to adverse comments about the delay in obtaining Bye-Laws from the HMI (I) and from the Managers of local schools. (J). As soon as they were issued, there was a tremendous improvement as seen by comparing these figures:- (K)

Dec. 1879	No. on Rolls	8906	Average Attendance	4847 (54.4%)
Dec. 1880	No. on Rolls	9066	Average Attendance	6093 (67.2%)

By 1881, the average attendance for the year had reached 70%, and progress thenceforward was steady. Throughout the period, there was a regular decrease in reported irregular attenders, of which there were only 11 in 1887. The average attendance for that year (76.9%) can be compared with the national figure of 76.27% quoted by the Cross Commission for 1886, (L) which indicates that, by the end of the period, attendance was comparable with that of the country as a whole.

One great difficulty which badly affected the attendance figures for the City was that of about 1500 - 2000 pupils attending schools within the boundary but living in rural areas outside the control of the Committee. All attempts to persuade the Rural S.A.C. to co-operate failed, largely because of financial arrangements, (M)

- (I) 1878 HMI General Report            (J) S.A.C. Minutes, 18.11.1878  
(K) S.A.C. Annual Reports  
(L) Adamson: English Education, 1789 - 1902  
(M) S.A.C. Various Minutes, 1879 - 1882



and it was not until the City boundaries were extended to include these areas at the beginning of 1885 that the problem was solved. (N) It is noticeable that the average attendance for 1885 was 76.5% as compared with 73.5% for the previous year.

### School Fees and Their Remission

An important factor affecting school attendance was the level of school fees and the difficulty met by some parents in paying them. It was laid down in the 1870 Act (O) that the fees of a public elementary school must not exceed 9d. per week but, inside this limit, there was a steady increase in fees, particularly in Voluntary Schools, where they rose from 8/9<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>d. per head of average attendance in 1872 to 11/2<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>d. in 1885. (P). This appears to have been the case in York, where complaint was made to the S.A.C. about the raising of fees in various schools. (Q). From the Report of HMI (R), it appears that the prevailing system in York during this period was to raise fees as children rose in the school, a system which discouraged regular attendance and led to attendance ceasing when the legal obligation had passed. That fees were high is also undoubted; in 1884-5, the payment for fees and books per head of average attendance was 14/7<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>d. as compared with the national

- (N) S.A.C. Minutes, 21.1.1885  
(O) 1870 Act S.3 (P) Adamson  
(Q) S.A.C. Minutes, 8.1.1880 (R) 1888 General Report

average for all Voluntary Schools of 11/2. (S).

Under the 1870 Act, School Boards were empowered to remit fees in the case of poor parents' children, (T) but this did not apply to York, where, apart from the children of parents on relief, no machinery existed for the remission of fees until the passing of the 1876 Act. By this Act, the Guardians had the duty of paying school fees for poor parents if satisfied with their inability to pay. (U). In York, the School Attendance Committee appointed a Sub-Committee to liaise with the Guardians, (V) and it was agreed that it should from time to time send a list of parents claiming to have fees paid, and that the Attendance Officers would give the Guardians what information they possessed. (W). Eventually, this Sub-Committee worked with a Sub-Committee of the Board of Guardians to make recommendations to the Guardians as to which parents should have the fees paid. (X).

Although applications varied with the level of unemployment in the City, the number being larger in winter, the amount paid out per year rose to over £400 in the 80's and became quite a burden on the ratepayers of poorer parishes. (Y). It was suggested that some endowments, no longer being used for their original purposes, be set aside to ease the burden but no action appears to have been taken,

- (S) Statistical Report - Cross Commission (T) 1870 Act: S.16  
(U) 1876 Act: S.10  
(V) School Attendance Committee Minutes, 31.8.1877  
(W) do. 14.9.1877  
(X) do. 21.12.1877  
(Y) Annual Reports of S.A.C.

although the amount paid reached a peak of £421 in 1888. (Z).

(Z) S.A.C. Minutes 16.4.1885 and 1888 Annual Report.

PART TWO

THE PERIOD OF THE  
SCHOOL BOARD

1889 - 1903

Chapter I : A Deficiency Arises (1887-89)

On 16th December, 1886, the Education Dept. informed the School Attendance Committee that the Peter Lane School was no longer considered efficient (A) and that, as a result, it was doubtful if the supply of public school accommodation was sufficient. In reply to a request for information, the Dept. was informed that, as the estimated population was 67654, a total of 11275 places were required. (B). In 1886, when an average of 10172 children were on school rolls, 10509 places were supplied with the addition of 985 in schools not recognised as efficient due mainly to defects in the buildings. (B):

Writing on 24th March, 1887, the Dept. queried the population estimate as being low and considered that, according to the latest Returns, there was a deficiency of 450 places which would possibly be 1000 if the higher population estimate was correct. (C). There were also two schools whose continued recognition was doubtful, and one school which did not appear to be available to the full extent of its nominal accommodation. In addition, there was a local deficiency due to unequal distribution of schools, especially on the western side of the City and in the centre, where not a single elementary school was sited. This local deficiency was contested

- (A) School Attendance Comm. Minutes, 4.1.1887  
(B) do. 10.1.1887  
(C) do. 28.3.1887

on the grounds that schools were close together in the densely-populated areas of the City, whilst in the centre there were mainly business premises, with the people living there being of a class not using elementary schools. (D). The fear was expressed that the Dept. might proceed without public enquiry and notices (E), as it was felt that such an enquiry should be held.

The Managers of the Voluntary Schools were inclined to doubt the figures for the population and numbers of school age, but at the same time they formed a Committee to make recommendations on the needs for accommodation. (F). As a result, the Department postponed action for three months to give them an opportunity to supply the deficiency. (G). The Managers, however, were unable to formulate a scheme within the time and, in a letter dated 16th August, requested a further period of grace, to which the reply was made that no immediate action with regard to Notices was contemplated.

As the Managers in the eyes of the Department, continued to take no effective action to increase accommodation, a warning was given that the issue of a first Notice might be necessary, and this indeed did take place on 23rd January, 1888. (H). This Notice contained details of the procedure laid down in SS 9 and 10 of the 1870 Act, which could lead to the formation of a School Board, and also listed

(D) School Attendance Comm. Minutes, 28.4.1887

(E) 1870 Act. S.12 (2) (F) S.A.C. Minutes, 25.7.1887

(G) S.A.C. Minutes, 29.8.1887

(H) S.A.C. Minutes, 26.9.1887

the schools considered available. (I). There were 24 of these, providing a total of 10789 places, which meant that accommodation was required for at least 600 pupils, with special attention required to the need for further Girls' and Infants' accommodation in the west part of the City.

This Notice spurred on Voluntary effort to meet, in particular, the demand for a centrally-placed school, and the Committee of Managers recommended that one of 300-400 places be built. (J). These efforts were, however, insufficient to stay the final Notice, which was issued on 22nd May, 1888, and which required the provision of 'at least 1000 places', of which a minimum of 300 were to be in the City centre towards Bootham. (K). There is some mention of a scheme, to provide increased accommodation, being prepared by a Voluntary School Extension Committee, but the Lord Mayor, on 22nd January, 1889, received an order for the formation of a School Board. (L).

(I) S.A.C. Minutes, 30.1.1888

(J) National Educational Assn. pamphlet 'The School Case at York'.  
1890.

(K) S.A.C. Minutes, 29.10.1888

(L) do. 24.1.1889

## Chapter 2: Composition of the School Boards

The Order to the Lord Mayor laid down that the number of members of the School Board should be eleven, and that the election should be held within 28 days. (A): Accordingly, on 15th February, 1889, all persons on the burgess roll, each of them casting eleven votes, proceeded to elect the first School Board. (B). As a result, the Church party gained 6 seats (3 Churchmen, 1 R.C. and 2 Independents) to the 5 won by candidates supporting Unsectarian education. (C): By agreement, a Churchman (Rev. H. Clarke) was elected as Chairman, and an Unsectarian member (H. Tennant) as Vice-Chairman. The members were elected for a period of 3 years, (D) so that further elections were held in 1892, 1895, 1898 and 1901, and at each of these subsequent elections the church party gained a 6 to 5 majority over the Unsectarian group. (E): During the whole of this period, it was only once necessary, in 1895, to fill a vacancy on the Board due to resignation; the other members decided on this occasion that the retiring member should be replaced by one holding the same views. (F)

From the very first, all parties agreed that they would work in reasonable harmony with each other in carrying out their business, (G), and this appears to have been done until signs of

- (A) S.A.C. Minutes, 24.1.1889. 1870 Act. S.31 (1)  
(B) 1870 Act, S.29 (C) School Board Minutes, 7.3.1889  
(D) 1870 Act, 2nd Schedule (E) School Board Minutes, 16.2.1892,  
9.2.1895, 4.2.1898, 10.2.1901 (F) School Board Minutes, 4.5.1895  
(G) S.B. Minutes, 5.3.1898



deeper division manifested themselves in 1898. In that year, the Church party tried to fill the Vice-Chairmanship with one of their own supporters; in the end, they followed the precedent set after previous elections as regards this, but for the first time they did take up the Chairmanship of all the Committees. (H). After the following election in 1901, they also took over the Vice-Chairmanship of the Board. (I).

This continuing majority of the Church party did of course explain the considerate attitude of the Board towards the Voluntary schools in the City: They were always quick to give approval to the proposed establishment or extension of such schools, and on many occasions appeared most anxious to avoid competition with existing denominational schools when a new Board School was contemplated: (J). In the very first year, in spite of strong opposition from Non-Conformist interests, they accepted a scheme whereby the deficiency in the centre of the City was made good by a Church school; so that no Board school was actually built there at that time. (K). This policy led to the feeling being expressed that the York School Board was considered by the Education Dept. to be obstructive, (L) while Sir George Kekewich himself remarked, at the opening of the Fishergate Board School that there had been differences between the Board and the Dept. which had necessitated the latter to press upon the School Board certain

- (H) S.B. Minutes, 4.2.1898 (I) S.B. Minutes, 10.2.1901  
(J) School Board Minutes, 4.2.1893, 4.3.1893; 5.5.1893, 2.3.1894  
(K) do: 4.10.1889, 1.11.1889  
(L) do: 8.7.1893

matters of school supply: (M).

It is, then, apparent that much of the Board School supply was only provided because the demands of the Dept. could not be resisted, and that the composition of the Boards goes a long way towards explaining their usually generous attitude towards the Voluntary Schools in the City.

(M) School Board Minutes, 5.8.1895

### Chapter 3 : Provision of Accommodation

The 1870 Act laid down that a requisition should be sent to a newly-formed School Board, requiring them to take proceedings for supplying the accommodation mentioned in that requisition, and that any Board not complying would be in default. (A): In a letter dated 26th April, 1889, the Education Dept. pointed out to the York School Board that it was their duty to provide schools for the purpose of supplying the deficiency of accommodation set out in the Final Notice. (B). This letter was to be the subject of a prolonged dispute as regards its interpretation; the School Board, having put in hand the provision of 650 places, accepted the offer of the Church Extension Society to provide a centrally-situated school, and decided not to build any further school themselves. (C) The clerk to the Board advised them that they were not at liberty to delegate the duty of providing accommodation, this view being supported by the Minority of the Board in a letter of appeal to the Department. (D). Writing on 31st January, 1890, the Department stated that it was not its duty, under the circumstances, to send a requisition to the Board under S.10 of the Act. It was, however, argued by many that the letter of April, 1889 was a requisition, until Mr. Mundella received, in reply to a question in the Commons, the answer that such a letter was not deemed to be one. (E).

- (A) 1870 Act - SS. 10 and 11
- (B) National Educ. Assn. Pamphlet 'The School case at York' 1890
- (C) School Board Minutes, 2.8.1889 - 4.10.1889
- (D) do. 1.11.1889
- (E) National Educ. Assn. Pamphlet 'The School case at York' 1890

Later, he was informed that the proposed Voluntary School would in fact supply part of the required accommodation, and there the matter rested in spite of further protests.

#### School Board Accommodation

Thus, in its early years, the School Board provided only one school, which was opened at the beginning of 1891; however, in the following year a large Wesleyan school was closed, and the Board accepted its transfer at the recommendation of the Education Dept: (F), who pointed out that its closure would give rise to a deficiency of over 1000 places in the district. (G). It was decided to replace it by a new Board School of 1000 places, but within a few months a further crisis arose due to the demand for free places. As a result of a conference held between the Board and HMI to consider this, the Education Dept. decided that 3000 extra free places were required, and agreed with the proposal for two further Board Schools of 1500 places each. (H). The position was made worse by the closing of another Wesleyan school, which was transferred to the Board and opened as a temporary Board School: (I). In seeking a site for one of the new schools, Scarcroft, the Board was unable to get the one desired by agreement, and had to resort to the compulsory powers given in the Act. (J).

(F) 1870 Act - S.23

(G) York School Board 2nd Triennial Report ending 31.12.1894

(H) Letter from Educ. Dept. to York S.B. dated 6.7.1893

(I) 1870 Educ. Act, S.23

(J) do. S.20

As a result, a Provisional Order was made in April, 1894 and confirmed by Act of Parliament in the August; but eventually agreement was reached with the City Council.

With the completion of these 3 schools in 1895-96; (K) things remained as they were until 1899, when a deficiency arose in two areas of the City, in both of which a great deal of new housing was to be provided in the near future. (L). To meet this, 2 Board Schools were planned to provide an additional 1800 places, but were not completed before the School Board handed over to the new Education Committee.

Voluntary School Accommodation

The formation of the School Board in 1889 was met by further effort from the Voluntary bodies, who provided 1207 additional places in the years 1889 - 1891. (M). Of these, the majority (846) were in Church Schools and the rest in R.C. establishments. This, however, was the peak of their achievement, and, as throughout the country; a decline set in. (N). No new voluntary schools were built after 1890, and during the years 1892-1902 accommodation fell by 2000 places, 5 schools being closed. (O). The greater part of this was due; as in other parts of the country; to the reduction of

- (K) York School Board 3rd Triennial Report ending 31.12.1897
- (L) do: 4th do. 31.12.1900
- (M) do: 1st do: 31.12.1891
- (N) Adamson: English Education, 1789 - 1902
- (O) York School Board Triennial Reports

places in Wesleyan and British schools (1650), the R.C.'s actually continuing to increase their accommodation and the C/E losing some 500 places: (O). Thus, by 1902, the 19 Voluntary Schools and 10003 voluntary places were provided as follows:- (P)

C/E	15 schools	7536 places
R.C.	3 schools	1653 places
Wesleyan	1 school	814 places.

### Conclusion

The provision of accommodation in the 1890's thus followed the pattern of national developments; after the first 3 years of the Board, during which two-thirds of the new accommodation was provided by the Voluntary bodies, practically all additions were due to the building of Board schools. From 1891 - 1902, the total supply increased from 12660 to 15129, while places in Board Schools increased from 659 to 5126, so that by 1902 the Schools Board was supplying over one-third of the accommodation. The rapid Board expansion after 1892 was due to several factors, the chief ones being an expanding population (1891 Census 66984; 1901 est. 75000), (Q) the demand for free education, the closing of Voluntary Schools and the failure of Voluntary bodies to increase their supply:

- (O) York School Board Triennial Reports
- (P) Report by Clerk to York S.B. on Elem. Education, May, 1903
- (Q) York S.B. Triennial Reports, 1891, 1900.

### Competition of Board with Voluntary Schools

Many of the larger School Boards, supported by the Education Dept., (R) held that they could not delegate their responsibility of providing schools to other bodies, (S) while there were many allegations of them using improperly their powers of providing additional accommodation which was, 'in their opinion, necessary'. (T). This was not the case with the York School Board, as pointed out in the previous chapter; certainly, allegations were made, in its later years, that the Board was acting unfairly to Voluntary Schools in the siting and size of its schools. (U). These were continually denied in unmistakeable terms and, to be fair to the Board, it must be said that they appear to have been under considerable pressure from the Dept. regarding the provision of more accommodation.

However, well-meaning the Board, it cannot be denied that the opening of Board Schools did harm some of the Voluntary Schools; in 1889 these schools, providing 10800 places, had 10527 on roll, while in 1898, with 10200 places, they had only 8304 on roll. (V). After two Board Schools had opened in 1895, the two nearest Voluntary Schools lost 165 and 135 pupils respectively, (W) whilst in 1897, after a further Board School had opened, one nearby free

(R) Adamson: English education, 1789 - 1902

(S) 1870 Educ. Act, S.18 (T) 1870 Educ. Act, S.18

(U) York S.B. Minutes, 24.9.1895; York National Schools Society Minutes, 11.2.1897

(V) York S.B. Triennial Reports for 1891 and 1899

(W) York School Board Minutes, 24.9.1885

Voluntary School had 277 vacant places and another, charging fees, had 272 vacancies. (X): It must be pointed out that, with the exception of the school just mentioned, the ones hardest hit were those continuing to charge fees. But, in spite of all, there was no over-provision of accommodation in the City. The Education Dept. had worked on the principle that 20% of the population might be found on the school rolls, whereas in York the places provided totalled 15,129; some 1500 in excess of the number on roll, which was 18% of the City's population.

#### Private Schools

Schools of this type providing elementary education steadily dwindled in number, so that by the end of the period they were of negligible importance. It was reported in 1898 that there were only seven schools attended by 170 children of the class who would normally be found in the public elementary schools. (Y).

(X) York S.B. 3rd Triennial Report ending 31.12.1897

(Y) York School Board Minutes, 1.7.1898



## Chapter 4 : Finance, 1889 - 1903

### A. Board Schools

The provision of new schools by the York School Board was, not unnaturally, a major item of its expenditure, although they appear to have been provided economically as compared with those of other school Boards. Shipton Street, opened in 1891, cost £9.16.7. per head at a time when the average cost in England and Wales was £12.12.2, while the other three schools were supplied at an average of £11.14.1 per head, a figure which was appreciably less than those for schools erected at the same time by neighbouring authorities. (A). In spite of the reasonable cost, these schools attracted favourable comment from HMI, and were far better premises than any provided by the denominations. (B). This was due, of course, to the fact that the School Board could draw on financial sources not available to the churches. By the 1870 Act, (C) they had the power to borrow money for building schools etc., with the consent of the Education Dept., and were able to charge the School Fund and the local rates with principal and interest payments. Thus, all the money required for the new York Board schools was loaned, the annual charge on the School Fund for principal and interest payments rising to £3059.9.1 by 1900. (D).

- (A) 1st and 2nd Triennial Reports of York S.B.  
Newcastle, Hull, Leeds and Scarborough average cost per head  
£12.13.0.
- (B) 1897 HMI Report quoted in 3rd Triennial Report of York S.B.
- (C) 1870 Act, S.53 amended by 1873 Act, S.10
- (D) 4th Triennial Report of York S.B.

Throughout this period, the cost of maintenance of the schools was rising, the 1881 average of £2 per head in Board Schools having increased to £2.17.7½ per head by 1900. (E). In York, this trend was reflected by a sharp increase from £2.14.6 per head in 1895 to £2.18:6 per head in 1900, the latter being in excess of the national average. (F). This high cost, was to a great extent, the result of generous staffing and the good salaries paid to the teachers. In 1898, the average cost of salaries per child was £2.4.7¼ in York compared with a national average of £2.0.8, whilst in 1903 the Board schools, with accommodation for 5126 children and an average attendance of 4594, were staffed for 5950 pupils. (G) On top of this, the provision of books and apparatus was without doubt 'admirable', to quote from the HMI's Report of 1897. (H).

The two main sources of income for the School Boards were Government grants and School fees and/or free Grants. Regarding the first of these, the grants earned by the York Board Schools remained at a high level throughout, rising from 19/3 per head in 1891, when the average for the whole country was 18/5½, to 22/8 in 1900, (I), as compared with an average of 22/1 for the English County Boroughs. (J). In the 1900 Code, the existing system of variable grants was replaced by one of block grants, which were to be paid at practically the same rate to all schools, and to be of no higher value than

- (E) Smith: 'History of English Elementary Education, 1760-1902
- (F) 3rd Triennial report of York S.B./Report of Board of Education, 1900-01
- (G) Report by Clerk to York S.B. on Elementary Educ. May, 1903
- (H) 3rd Triennial Report of York S.B.
- (I) 1st Triennial Report of York S.B.
- (J) Report of Board of Education, 1900-01.

hitherto paid to average schools. (K). This occasioned some regret on the York Board; it being feared that their schools would suffer a diminution of grant of about £200. (L). In actual fact, in the first year of the new system, the grant earned was £101.16.0 less than it would have been under the old one. (M).

As will be shown, (N) fees were quickly abolished in the Board Schools after the 1891 Act, so that income from this source came in the form of a Fee Grant. In 1900, this amounted to £2156; about 17% of the total income of the schools. (O).

Income from these two sources was by no means sufficient to meet the expenditure of the Board Schools, and it was laid down in the 1870 Act (P) that any deficiency in the School fund (out of which all expenses were paid) should be made up by the rating authority out of the local rate. The calls made on the ratepayers of York proved to be ever-increasing, rising from £2500 (the equivalent of a 2d. rate) in 1890 to a peak of £11500 (11d. rate) (£1) in 1897, a burden far heavier than the average for County Boroughs. After two years of smaller demands, the rise began again and continued until 1903, when the amount was £14400 (9½d. rate), a rate

(K) 4th Triennial Report of York S.B.

(L) York S.B. Minutes, 4.4.1900

(M) do. 6.12.1901

(N) see Chapter 5

(O) 4th Triennial Report of York S.B.

(P) 1870 Act, s.54

(£1) 1897-98: Avge. rate for County Boroughs, 9.8d.

which was now much lighter than the average. (x2) (Q). By 1900, the schools themselves were dependent on the rates for almost 50% of their income, (x3) a percentage which had actually been exceeded in 1897. (R).

It is little wonder that the York Board was subject to criticism of extravagance, both from some of its members and from the City Council; (S) these criticisms were soon spreading throughout the City, and had to be strongly answered by the Chairman of the Board on at least one occasion. (T). Although it is difficult to judge how fair these charges were, it must be admitted that the schools were overstaffed, by average County Borough standards, (x4) and well-equipped, but it must be remembered that the Board was trying to remedy defects in the City's educational provision by supplying expensive Science and Practical facilities. Although those having to foot the bill might describe the Board's financial policy as "extravagant", educationists would probably describe it as "progressive".

- (x2) 1902-03: Avge. rate for County Boroughs, 11.7d.  
(x3) 1896-97 Rates provided 56.6% of income of S.B.'s in England  
1897-98 do. 58.3% do.  
1901-02 do. 61.4% do.  
(Q) York School Board Triennial Reports  
(R) York School Board 4th Triennial Report  
(S) York School Board Minutes, 2.4.1896 - 2.6.1899  
(T) do. 4.7.1896  
(x4) Report of Committee in Council of Education, 1898  
Salaries per head of average attendance:-  
C.B.'s Average £2.1.0. York £2.6.0.

## B. Voluntary Schools

As with Board schools, the cost of maintenance rose rapidly during the period, the national figure per head increasing from £1.15.0. in 1881 to £2.6.4½ in 1900. (A). They were also seriously hit by the requirements of the Dept. for repairs and improvements, as many of the buildings were old. In the City, we have already seen that in 1884-85 the cost of maintenance per head was £1.3.6, a figure below the national average; (B) by 1898, this had risen to £2.3.11, which compared with a national Voluntary School average of £1.19.0. (C). Thus, the York schools were now costing more to run than the average voluntary school of the country, but this cost was much less than that of the Board schools in the City. (D).

While the voluntary schools had obviously made a great effort to improve their conditions and standards of equipment and staffing, so as to compete with the new Board schools, they were still inferior in many ways. In 1903, 8 out of 24 schools were reported as having deficiencies, such as unsatisfactory playgrounds, weak staffing, insufficient light, bad heating and ventilation, poor toilet facilities and the existence of galleries. (E). Whilst the Board schools had one Principal or Certificated teacher to 51 children there was only one to 101 pupils in the Voluntary schools. (F).

(A) Smith: History of English Elem. Educ. 1760-1902

(B) Part I, Chapter 2.

(C) Minutes of York National Schools Society, 24.2.1898

(D) 1898 Board Schools, £2.16.1½ per head

(E) Report by Clerk to York S.B. on Elem. Education, May, 1903

(F) do.

The cost per head of salaries in Board schools in 1896 was £2. 0.0. compared with a figure of £1.1.5 in Voluntary schools; for books and apparatus the costs were 6/6 and 1/11 per head respectively. (G). In 1898, the new salary scale for Certificated teachers in C/E Schools was £75-85 per annum, while that existing in Board schools was £70-120 per annum; obviously, such a salary scale was not going to attract the best teachers. (H). Thus, the York voluntary schools, like those throughout the country, still had to employ more unqualified teachers, pay smaller salaries and purchase less equipment than their richer partners in education.

To meet this expenditure, the Voluntary schools still had the same three main sources of income as previously mentioned. (J). From the mid-80's to the early 1900's, there was a considerable rise in the Government grant earned, so that by 1901-02 they had reached a sum of £7457.11.8, which represented some 47% of total income. (K). Compared with an average of 16/9 per head in 1884-85, this represented one of 19/3 per head.

Throughout the early 90's, the schools had found the 17/6 limit irksome (L), and in 1895, the Bishop of Beverley produced a plan to get round it. (M). Briefly, he proposed that all subscriptions

- (G) York School Board Minutes, 2.4.1896
- (H) Minutes of York National Schools Society, 8.3.1898
- (I) Part I, Chapter 2
- (K) Report by Clerk to York S.B. on Elem. Education, May, 1903
- (L) Part I, Chapter 2
- (M) Minutes of York National Schools Society, 18.2.1895

to C/E Schools should be paid into a common fund, as should the Fee Grants earned; any schools likely to be affected by the 17/6 limit would receive enough money out of the Subscription fund to allow them to receive their full grant, whilst the other schools would receive money out of the Fee Grants fund. This scheme, based on S.6 of the 1891 Act, was approved by the Education Dept., and resulted in net additions of grant of £124.17.5. in 1895 and £174.4.4 in 1896. (N). By 1897, the financial plight of the Voluntary schools was recognised, the result being the 'Relief Act' of that year. By this, the 17/6 limit was abolished, Voluntary schools were exempted from the rates and an aid grant of 5/- per pupil per annum was to be paid to associations of Managers grouped for the purpose. In the first year, this Aid Grant amounted to £1610 for the York C/E Schools, and by 1901-02 made up 14% of total income, but it was soon felt that help under the Act was not sufficient to lead to a permanently satisfactory position. (O). Yet another item of concern was the Block Grant system introduced in the 1900 Code, as most of the schools had been earning a relatively high grant. (P).

As pointed out earlier, fees had provided nearly half the

- (N) Minutes of York National Schools Society, 23.1.1896, 27.1.1897
- (O) do. 24.2.1898, 26.1.1899
- (P) Minutes of York National School Society, 9.4.1900  
Report of Board of Education: Grant per head York Vol.  
Schools £1.0.9 - Vol. Schools in County Boroughs £1.0.7

income of the schools in 1884-85, and they and the Fee Grant (where fees were abolished) remained an important source of income right up to 1901-02. In that year, they averaged 11/4 per head of average attendance, which was much the same as in 1884-85. (Q). However, they now accounted for only 29% of the income of the schools thus having decreased a great deal in relative importance.

Voluntary subscriptions had been low before 1888, but improved during the 1890's, so that in 1898 the level compared favourably with that for the country as a whole. (R). After this year, there was a deterioration in the position, while that in the country generally appears to have improved; (S) by 1901-02 the total (including collections etc.) received by all the City's Voluntary Schools amounted to £1194.0.1, some 8% of their total income, and an average of 3/1 per head of average attendance. (T). The averages per head by denominations were:- C/E 3s.0<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>d., Roman-Catholic 3s.10d. and Wesleyan 1s.8d., figures which go a long way to explaining the continued existence of all C/E and R.C. Schools during these years and the closing of all but one of the Non-Conformist schools.

A good picture of the trends of the period is given by the fortunes of the C/E Schools and the National Society, on which they

- (Q) Report by Clerk to York S.B. on Elem. Educ. May, 1903
- (R) Elem. Educ. Return Cd. 315 HMSO 1901: 1898-99 National avge. for Vol. Schools 3/10 per head - York Vol. Schools 4/3 per head
- (S) Report of Board of Education: 1901-02 Avge. for England & Wales 6/10<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> per head, i.e. 15% of total income
- (T) Report of Clerk to York S.B. on Elem. Educ., May, 1903  
Figs. for 1884-85 Total £783., 7% of income and 2/5<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> per head



still leaned heavily. The threat, and eventual formation, of the School Board stimulated voluntary efforts, so that the level of contributions to the schools jumped from £335 in 1887 to £761 in 1890, while the Society was able to distribute to several schools a sum of £264 in the form of extra grants. (U). Thereafter, although there was a falling-off in the early 90's, this higher level of subscriptions to the schools was reached again and maintained until 1902, when the amount received totalled just over £800. (V). As for the Society, its annual receipts of subscriptions and collections picked up after 1892, when the total had fallen to £109:8:9, and were maintained at around the £200 mark until 1898, when they began to decrease once again. (W). In addition, the period was notable for several special efforts and appeals; in 1893, £585 capital was raised after a special appeal, in 1896 a Bazaar and Theatricals produced £1330 and, in 1900, £150 was raised by a Recital. (X). This increased income of the 90's meant that increased grants could be made to the schools; in all £645 was granted to fourteen schools, whilst the windfall of £1300 was distributed amongst all the schools. In addition, the annual grants were kept at a higher level than in the 80's, ranging from £135 in 1898 to £287 in 1900, and benefiting some fourteen schools. (Y). These grants began to fall after 1898, when the

(U) Minutes of York National School Society, 30.1.1888, 29.1.1891

(V) Report by Clerk to York S.B. on Elem. Educ., May, 1903

(W) Minutes of York National Schools Society, 3.2.1892 and Annual Reports, 1893-1902

(X) Minutes of York Nat. Schools Socy. 3.2.1893, 7.1.1897, 30.1.1901

(Y) York Nat. Schools Socy. Annual Reports, 1893-1902

subscription level fell once again.

Thus, compared with the pre-school Board days, the Voluntary Schools were receiving increased income per head from grants and subscriptions, roughly similar amounts from fees or free Grants, and additional sums from the Aid Grants. But they were burdened by a constant increase in the cost of maintenance, with which the increased income could not keep pace. (Z). As a result, apart from some improvement up to 1891, the financial position of the schools got steadily worse; the overdrawn Balances of the C/E Schools had decreased from £2089.1.3. in 1888 to £1754.11.0. in 1890, but then increased year by year to a total of £4913 in 1902. (A). Schools of the other denominations were likewise affected, and in 1902 two C/E Schools were the only ones with balances in hand. (B). Naturally, there were constant references to the need for increased subscriptions required to provide money for the provision of free places, and to meet the increased standards of staffing and equipment laid down by the Education Department. Reference was made to the increased difficulty of raising subscriptions due to the high call on the rates by the School Board, and by 1900 there was great anxiety over finance. Most of the Aid Grant was spent on

(Z) York Nat. Schools Socy. Annual reports, 1893-1902

(A) do.

(B) Report by Clerk to York S.B. on Elem. Educ., May, 1903

increasing efficiency. Any required extensions or alterations needed a special effort, so it was little wonder that the Voluntary bodies could not afford to provide new schools. (C). By 1894, the National Society were being told of the inability of the denominations to provide free places, and the School Board had already been asked by one C/E School to provide increased accommodation which could not be otherwise provided due to lack of funds. (D).

In spite of the great efforts made, and the good response, the Voluntary schools were hardly able to keep their heads above water, let alone provide further schools. When the level of subscription is compared with the amounts received from the rates by the School Board, how uneven was the struggle is clearly shown.

(C) Minutes of York National Schools Society, 29.1.1890  
(D) do. 2.6.1894  
4.3.1893

## Chapter 5 : School Attendance, Leaving Age and Fees

Early in 1890, the Chairman of the School Board stated that the level of attendance in York schools was not satisfactory, attributing this to three main causes:-

1. That many parents did not appreciate the value of education
2. That many parents found difficulty in paying fees, being reluctant to apply for relief, and that the system of fees in York Schools was bad

3. That half-timers were not kept on a separate register. (A) His reasoning appears to point to the three directions of the main efforts made in the 1890's; efforts to secure more regular attendance, to ease and finally remove the burden of school fees, and to raise the school leaving age. Before 1889, the emphasis had been on the first of these but in this later period it appears that it had shifted to the other two.

### S.A.C. and Administration of the Bye-Laws.

The 1876 Education Act laid down that where a School Board was appointed in a district where a School Attendance Committee was functioning, the latter authority should cease to act two months after the election; although the bye-laws made by it should continue in force unless being altered by the Board. (B).

- (A) Statement of Chairman of York S.B. 7.2.1890  
(B) 1876 Education Act, S.36

As such a Committee was functioning in York, it was three months after the School Board was elected before it appointed its School Attendance Committee (C); for a period of two months, it consisted of the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and two other members, but was then expanded to include all members of the Board. The existing bye-laws were adopted, but were to be slightly amended within a few months, while, at an early meeting of the Board, 4 Visiting Officers were appointed. (D).

The Chairman of the School Board indicated at an early date that firm administration of the Bye-Laws was very necessary, but for this to be carried out effectively, the support of the Magistrates was vital. (E). However, throughout the first years of the Board's life, there are references to lenient treatment of offenders and to the need for more support from the Bench. (F). Prosecutions rose from 355 in 1889 to 704 in 1890, the first full year of the new S.A.C., and then gradually declined to around 480 by 1897; out of the high number of people prosecuted in 1890, there resulted 37 fines, 22 committals and 168 Orders, whilst in the following years less than 30% of the prosecutions were successful. (G). After 1897, the Magistrates began to give more

- (C) York School Board Minutes, 17.5.1889
- (D) do. 3.5.1889 - 2.8.1889 - 15.3.1889
- (E) Statement of Chairman of York S.B. 7.2.1890
- (F) York S.B. Minutes, 5.5.1893 - 7.3.1896
- (G) York School Board Triennial Reports

support, this being commented on by the Board in 1900; in 1898, over 50% of the prosecutions were successful, whilst the number of those fined jumped from 32 in 1896 to 117 in 1900, two years in which the number of prosecutions was nearly equal. (H).

From time to time, other actions were taken by the S.A.C. to try and reduce the number of irregular attenders. They found it necessary to post placards saying that they could enforce attendance up to the age of 14 of any child whose education was neglected; (I) while later the Committee was divided into two sections, so that more cases could appear before them. (J). It was suggested on one occasion that prosecutions should be made against some employers who were irregularly employing children while members of the Board were occasionally quite concerned at continued parental indifference to education by those of the poorer classes. (K).

Throughout the country, the effort to secure regular attendance continued to be rewarded with improvement, average attendance rising from 77.3% in 1889 to 81.2% by 1894, and 82.2% by 1901, although there were still some children who absented themselves too readily and escaped punishment too easily. (L). We have seen that the second remark applies to York, and the first one has equal force as regards the City. In 1889, the average

- (H) York School Board 4th triennial report
- (I) York S.B. Minutes 6.12.1889 - 1876 Education Act, S.11
- (J) do. 4.2.1893
- (K) do. 5.11.1898
- (L) Reports of Committee of Council on Education/Board of Education  
Smith: History of English Elementary Education, 1760-1902.

attendance for York was 76.4%, not only below the national average but considered more unsatisfactory because many towns had figures of over 80%. One good feature was that no children were found who were not attending school. (M). The labours of the new S.A.C. began to produce results by the following year, when the average attendance was better. (M). This improvement continued, an 80% average being reached in 1891 and some 87% in 1902. By 1894, the Board could be told that attendance was well above the National average, while on one occasion it reached 89%, the highest figure of any County Borough at that time. (N). Undoubtedly, by the end of the School Board era, school attendance in York could stand comparison with most County Boroughs in the country. (x)

#### Payment, Reduction and Abolition of School Fees

In his annual statement of 1890, the Chairman of the School Board expressed dissatisfaction with the existing way of making application for the remission of school fees, and suggested an alternative, which he repeated in his statement of the following year. (O). The first Board School having been opened, applications on behalf of children attending that school would have to be made to the Bye-Laws Sub-Committee of the Board, and he felt that parents of children in Voluntary Schools should do the same.

- (M) 1890 Chairman's Statement
- (N) York School Board Minutes, 2.6.1894 - 1.9.1899
- (O) 1891 Chairman's Statement
- (x) Report of Board of Education, 1900-01.  
Average attendance in York 82.8%  
Average attendance C.B.'s in England 82.7%

School Board officers could then make the necessary enquiries and make recommendations to the Board of Guardians, who could then pay fees direct to the Managers. Thus, the reluctance of many to apply would be overcome, and attendance be improved. However, though requested by the School Board to consider the matter, the Guardians took no action and nothing further was heard of it. (P).

As regards the fees demanded by the schools up to 1891, they remained high and continued to rise up the school, although it was reported to the Board that, with a view to improving attendance in the higher standards, the fees charged in some Voluntary Schools had been reduced. (Q):

The most significant developments, however, occurred after the passing of the 1891 Elementary Education Act, which offered a fee grant of 10/- per head, for children between 3 and 15, to schools which abolished fees or so reduced them that the fees and fee-grant did not exceed the old fees. (R). It also laid down that, where there was a deficiency of free accommodation as desired by parents in any district, that deficiency was to be supplied under SS. 9 and 10 of the 1870 Act. (S). This real attempt to make the schools free was welcomed by the York School Board, which accepted the fee grant

- (P) York School Board Minutes, 6.2.1891 - 6.3.1891
- (Q) Chairman's statement, 7.2.1890 and 6.2.1891
- (R) 1891 Act, SS. 1 and 2.
- (S) do. S.5



for the single school opened by them. (T). Managers of Voluntary schools, however, were not so eager to accept it, except for Infants, and by the end of 1891 provided only 2260 places for Boys and Girls out of a possible 8450 (only 464 infants places were not free). (U). As we have seen, partly at least due to this policy of Voluntary School Managers, deficiencies of free accommodation resulted in various districts, and were supplied as laid down in the 1891 Act, by the School Board, which had provided 5306 (of which 1437 were Infants) such places by 1900. (V). In the meantime, supply by the Voluntary Schools continued to be slow until after 1893, when things speeded up a great deal, so that by 1900 they were providing free accommodation for 7103 pupils, of which 2363 were Infants. (V). Another result was that no more deficiencies of such accommodation were reported during the period 1894 - 1903. By the middle of the latter year, out of 15129 places provided, 13009 were free, and of 24 available schools, only 5 were reported as receiving any income from school fees. (W). Thus, by the end of the period, nearly all the schools had in fact become free, as was the case throughout the country. (X).

It was hoped that this Act would accelerate the improvement in average attendance, but the results were not as good as expected.

(Y)

- (T) York School Board Minutes, 3.7.1891
- (U) do. 28.8.1891 - 1st Triennial Report
- (V) York School Board 4th Triennial Report
- (W) Report by Clerk to York S.B. on Elementary Education, May 1903
- (X) Curtis: History of Education in Great Britain
- (Y) Smith: History of English Elementary Education, 1760-1902

The figures for England and Wales show a slight improvement for 1891 as compared with previous years, a setback in 1892, but a great improvement of nearly 4% between 1892 and 1894. (Z). This pattern was almost exactly followed in York, as shown by the following figures:-

September, 1889	-	Average Attendance	81%	
"	1891	-	"	82%
"	1892	-	"	82%
"	1894	-	"	86% (A)

The average attendance showed some improvement after the 1891 act, the figures for each month of the first year of its operation being higher than those for the corresponding months in the previous year. (B). However, the most startling improvement occurred in the years 1892-94, a period of great activity in the planning of free places, which actually were not provided until 1895, thus making it difficult to assess the importance of the abolition of fees in making this improvement. It seems significant that the average attendance in 1897 was 4% higher in schools where fees were paid than in those where all places were free, the explanation possibly being that many children at the latter schools came from poorer families, who were reported as not having sufficient appreciation of the value of education. (C).

- (Z) Reports of Committee of Council on Education
- (A) York School Board 1st, 2nd and 3rd Triennial Reports
- (B) do. 1st Triennial Report
- (C) 1890 Chairman of School Board's Statement

### Raising of the School-Leaving Age

During the years 1889-1902, a veritable stream of Acts of Parliament and local Bye-Law amendments combined to help to lengthen the school life of York children. By the 1893 and 1899 Acts, the minimum age of total or partial exemption, under any Bye-Laws, was raised from 10, first to 11 and then to 12. There followed the act of 1900, which gave power to Local Authorities to enforce directly, under Bye-Laws, attendance of children between 5 and 14, thus raising the maximum age by one year. The first two Acts were obligatory, the third permissive.

The School Board, shortly after assuming power, amended the existing Bye-Laws by raising the half-time exemption standard to 4, but during the 1890's the number of pupils gaining exemption, (D), particularly full-time, rose rapidly from 45 (41 full) in 1890 to 289 (284 full) in 1897. (A). This occasioned much concern on the Board, poor parents being held largely responsible, until in 1898 the Bye-Laws were again amended, raising the full-time exemption standard from 5 to 6, and the half-time from 4 to 5. (E). This had the effect of rapidly reducing the numbers of exempted pupils, full-time falling to 121 by 1901, and there being no half-timers at

(D) York School Board Minutes, 2.8.1889

(E) York School Board Minutes, 6.4.1895, 8.2.1896, 5.6.1897, 4.12.189

all after 1897: A large number of these pupils gained exemption under the 1876 Act by passing Standard 4, and they were the source of some concern when the Board considered extending the Bye-Laws, to children up to 14, under the 1900 Act. (F). They were told by the Board of Education that children of 13-14 would not come under the 1876 Act, but could only be exempt under Bye-Laws. (G). There the matter rested for the time being, it being considered that so few would pass Standard 6 and that hardship would be caused to many by having to keep a child at school until 14. (H). However, this amendment was eventually made in 1902, so that parents in 1903 could be told to note that attendance was compulsory from 5 to 14, and that no child was exempt unless it was over 12 and had passed Standard 6. (I).

That the length of school life was increased is undoubted; reference to this does appear in a meeting of the School Board, (J) but the evidence supplied by the following figures is significant:-

	<u>No. on roll</u>	<u>Population</u>	
September, 1891	10416	67000	
September, 1901	13657	75000	(K)

- (F) 1876 Act, S.5 (2) and 1st Schedule s.1 York S.B. Minutes, 7.11.1900  
 (G) Letter from Board of Education to York S.B. dated 17.10.1900  
 (H) York School Board Minutes, 3.1.1901  
 (I) do. 4.7.1902 - 1.5.1903  
 (J) do. 5.6.1897  
 (K) York School Board 1st and 4th Triennial Reports

A 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ % rise in the population was matched by a 30% rise in the number of children in the schools; a greater proportion of the population was now on the school rolls than ever before, an indication that many who in earlier years would have left school were now still in attendance.

#### The Effect of the Curriculum on Attendance

A point which should be mentioned here is that there was a general improvement in the curriculum (L) due in particular to the Board Schools, which must have had a beneficial effect on the attendance. In fact, the percentage of the total number of pupils who were in standard 5 and above had risen, by 1900, to 29.2 for boys and 27.1 for girls, compared with averages for County Boroughs in England of 24.1 and 23.2 respectively. (L2).

(L) See the following chapter.

(L2) Report of Board of Education, 1900-01.

Chapter 6 : Curriculum (incl. R.I. and Technical Subjects), with Special Reference to the Board

Schools; The Cockerton Judgment

Voluntary Schools (pre-1889)

From 1871, changes in the Code initiated the policy of enlarging the elementary school curriculum, to the 3R's being added an increasing number of 'class subjects' and 'specific subjects' for which grants could be awarded. (A). Throughout the country, however, due to the 17/6 limit, specific subjects were little taught in the 70's and 80's, so that teaching still mainly consisted of the 3R's. (B). This appears to have been especially so in the York schools where, by 1884-85, out of 34 Senior Depts., 2 did not even teach English as a 'class subject', whilst 7 failed to provide a second 'class subject'. (C). As for 'specific subjects', only 90 passes were recorded in that year, whilst by 1889 such subjects were taught in only four schools. (D).

During the 80's, the view was developing that practical subjects were of great value in education, but there was little provision of them, largely because of the cost entailed. (B).

- (A) Adamson: English Education, 1789 - 1902
  - (B) Smith: History of English Elementary Education, 1760 - 1902
  - (C) Cross Commission Report: Digest of Statistics, 1884-85
  - (D) do.
- York School Board Minutes, 6.12.1889

In York, in 1884-85, only 39 girls earned the grant for Cookery; in that year a Cookery class was established for all the York schools but it was not a success, largely because the Managers and Teachers had no interest in the grant. (E). Six years later, it was reported that no Cookery was taught. (F). At this time, the teaching of Drawing under the Science and Art Dept. was being widely undertaken, yet out of the 34 Senior Depts., in York, only 11 were making such provision. (G).

Undoubtedly, then, the curriculum of the York Voluntary Schools was still extremely narrow up to 1889, being largely confined to the basic essentials.

#### Voluntary Schools (1889 - 1902)

The curriculum remained largely of a basic character during this period, there being little provision made, by 1900, for anything but the 3R's, Singing and Class Subjects. Of the 26 Senior Depts. in that year only 3 taught any Specific Subjects, one instructed the girls in Needlework and one provided Science teaching and Manual Instruction. (H). Two schools, Castlegate and Priory Street Wesleyan, were, however, classed as Higher Grade Schools.

#### Expansion of Curriculum in Board Schools (1889 - 1902)

In his statement of 1890, the Chairman of the York Schools

- (E) HMI's General Report, 1884
- (F) HMI's General Report, 1890
- (G) Cross Commission Report: Digest of Statistics, 1884-85
- (H) Annual Report of Board of Education, 1900-01.

Board pointed out that the Board was beginning its work in a field which was fully occupied by voluntary Schools, and that its attention might well be directed to the supply of privileges not yet offered in these schools. Such a policy was indeed largely followed during the life of the School Board.

As regards General Subjects, the narrow curriculum of the 3R's was expanded on the lines laid down by the various Codes. In addition to the Obligatory Subjects, all the Board Schools taught 2 class subjects; these were Geography (for which a special local scheme was used) and one of English, History, Elementary Science and Object lessons. (J). Specific Subjects were from the first taught, and by the end of 1897 a total of 19 of them were offered in the various schools. (J). In 1900, under the New Code, 7 'Optional Subjects' and 7 'Upper Subjects' were dealt with in addition to the obligatory 3R's, drawing (Boys), and Needlework (Girls). (K).

The most important advances were made, however, in the fields of Cookery and Manual, Technical and Scientific Subjects. This type of instruction was recommended for elementary schools by the Cross Commission, (L) and received encouragement in the Code of

(J) York School Board 3rd Triennial report ending 31.12.1897

(K) do. 4th Triennial report ending 31.12.1900

(L) Smith: History of English Elementary Education, 1760-1902



1890 as well as by the Technical Instruction Act of 1889, which authorised the newly-created Local Authorities to supply technical and manual instruction and to raise up to 1d. rate for the purpose. In addition, the 'Whiskey Money' might be devoted to secondary and technical education. In accordance with the 1889 Act, the York City Council appointed a Technical Instruction Committee, as suggested by the School Board, which in 1890 contributed £300 to be distributed between eligible institutions. (M). Two years later, after a conference with the School Board, it was decided that the Council would purchase the Fine Art Institute and the York Institute, which were to be established as a Technical School to be financed out of the 'Whiskey Money'. (N). Thus was the York City Council launched into the sea of education, accompanied by a plea from the School Board that a plan should be adopted which would allow children in the upper standards of the elementary schools to receive benefit from the Act. (O).

In the meantime, the Board proceeded with its own plans; it was soon decided to establish a Cookery Centre at the first Board School, and this was followed by similar provision at later schools, so that from 1895 four such centres existed. (P). All

- (M) York City Council Minutes, 3.2.1890  
(N) do. 1.2.1892  
(O) York School Board, 1st Triennial Report ending 31.12.1891  
(P) do. 3rd do. 31.12.1897

girls from Standard 4 and upwards attended, whilst Voluntary School Managers were invited to send classes on payment of a fee; by 1900, eleven such schools were sending a total of 376 girls. (Q) For the boys, Manual Instruction Centres teaching Woodwork were provided at three of the schools, and nearly all boys from Standard 5 and upwards attended. These were also open to Voluntary School classes, but by 1900 only two schools sending 48 boys were taking advantage of the fact. (R). In 1903, Cookery grants were earned by 522 Board and 370 Voluntary pupils, and Manual Instruction grants by 315 Board and 39 Voluntary School boys. (S).

To give instruction in Scientific subjects, Day Science/Art Classes were formed at two of the schools whilst an Organised Science School was established at a third. (T). In addition, Drawing under the Science and Art Dept. was taught in all four of the schools. It was in connection with the establishment of the Organised Science School that there appeared the first signs of difficulty with the Technical Committee. Although the scheme was supported by the Chairman of that committee, many people objected that it would compete with Council-supported establishments and, in spite of an effort to arrange that there should be no

(Q) York School Board 4th Triennial report ending 31.12.1900

(R) do.

(S) Report of Clerk to York School Board on Elementary Educ., May, 1903

(T) York School Board 4th Triennial Report ending 31.12.1900

overlapping of technical classes, the T.I. Committee remained difficult and said that the Board was spending money doing the same job as they were doing. (U). Nevertheless the school was opened to provide instruction for ex-Standard 7 pupils and, as predicted by the Board, was self-supporting, the Art/Science grant being such that a profit of £30 was made in the first year. (V).

Thus, by 1900, the School Board was undertaking in its schools a great deal of work which was carried out under the Art/Science Dept., and was bound to be affected by the famous Cockerton Judgment. The Cockerton Judgment and Subsequent Acts

The judgment delivered in the Cockerton case ruled that no public money could be legally spent on instruction outside the Code curriculum or in the education of adults, and, as a temporary measure to legalise such classes and schools, a Bill was prepared, under which School Boards had to get the authority of the rating authority (County Borough and County Councils) to carry on as before for the period of one year. (X). This was seen by the York School Board as "a deadly blow against the existence of the School Boards" (Y), and was the subject of a Special Meeting, at which it was

- (U) York School Board Minutes, 2.5.1896 - 3.10.1896
- (V) do. 11.9.1897
- (X) Adamson: English Education, 1789 - 1902
- Eaglesham: From School Board to Local Authority
- (Y) York School Board Minutes, 4.7.1901

decided to memorialise the Government to amend the Bill, so that Boards be allowed to carry on as before for a further two years and so that Government Grants and money out of the 'School Fund' could be paid without reference to any authority other than the Board of Education. (Z). They no doubt remembered that some years earlier the City Council, when asked for its views on the subject of Municipal corporations taking over the work of the School Boards, had shown much sympathy for the idea. (A). Opposition to the Bill was heated, and the Board of Education was charged with being unfair in turning on the Boards for doing work which the Education Dept. had in the past encouraged.

However, it was obvious that the Bill would become law, and, at a further special meeting, the Board decided to apply to the City Council for leave to carry on their work. (C). This much-regretted step was taken because it was felt that no arrangements would be ready to take the place of the existing provision and teachers might be thrown out of work. At a meeting of the Technical Instruction Committee, this request was granted, subject to the Board complying with suggestions to avoid overlapping, and a sum of £400 was allowed for maintenance. (D). Such terms were accepted by

- (Z) York School Board Minutes, 12.7.1901
- (A) do. 10.6.1895
- (C) do. 2.8.1901
- (D) York City Council Minutes, 12.8.1901

the Board, and the classes were carried on. (E). The 1901 Act, under which this action was taken, was extended for a further year by the 1902 Act, and once again the School Board had to go 'cap in hand' to the City Council for sanction to carry on. (F). This was given quite readily, the allowance for maintenance being increased to £800.

As a result of these measures, the ground had been well prepared for the Education Act of 1902, when the gloomy prophecied of the York School Board regarding their future proved to be justified.

#### Religious Education in Board Schools

The 1870 Act specified that any religious teaching given in Board Schools should be unsectarian, (G), and that in future no grant would be made in respect of this instruction, which would no longer be inspected by the Education Dept. (H). However, it was open to Voluntary Schools to arrange to be inspected by other than HMI, (I) and early in 1872 the York Diocesan Education Society reported the appointment of a Diocesan Inspector for Religious Instruction. (J). At about the same time, the Archbishop of York

- |     |                            |          |                                   |
|-----|----------------------------|----------|-----------------------------------|
| (E) | York School Board Minutes, | 6.9.1901 |                                   |
| (F) | do:                        | 4.7.1902 |                                   |
| (G) | 1870 Act, S.14 (2)         |          | (H) 1870 Act, S.97 and D.7 (3)    |
| (I) | do. S.76                   |          | (J) York Herald Report 13.4.1872. |

was pointing out the danger of schools becoming practically secularised due to the ending of Government inspection, and calling upon all to provide Religious Instruction and Inspection. (K).

Although a few School Boards decided on secular instruction only in their schools, the majority followed London School Board which provided time for Bible reading and Explanation, but strictly made no attempt to attach children to any particular denomination. (L) In York, a similar arrangement was made on the opening of the first Board School. An approved scheme for R.I. was issued with the statement that SS. 7 and 14 of the 1870 Act were to be complied with; it provided for 30 minutes instruction at the beginning of each morning, and an Annual Examination. (M). The whole Board was constituted as a Committee to carry the latter out, with the Chairman to do the actual examining. (N). However, the following year it was decided to ask the Diocesan Inspector to take over the task, an arrangement which continued until 1902, in spite of at least one protest from the Trades and Labour Council about the payment of a Minister for this work. (O). It is interesting to note that the Education Dept. would not allow money from the rates to be spent on prizes for R.I. and a concert had to be held to provide the necessary funds. (P).

- (K) York Herald Report, 20.4.1872
- (L) Curtis: History of Education in Great Britain
- (M) York School Board 1st Triennial Report ending 31.12.1892
- (N) York School Board Minutes, 6.11.1891
- (O) do. 7.10.1892 - 5.10.1895
- (P) do. 24.4.1895

## Development of Kindergarten Methods

After the 1870 Act, interest began to revive in the Kindergarten idea, the eventual result being the founding, in 1887, of the National Froebel Union to examine and certify teachers. (Q). It was reported to the York School Board that, from 1895, it would become a subject in the schools under the Code, and that there was a need for teachers to be instructed. (R). Accordingly a class, open to voluntary as well as Board School teachers, was formed in January, 1895 and attended by over 100 teachers. (S). As a result, schemes of work were prepared for the Board Schools, and the work was introduced into the four lower standards. (T).

## Introduction of Visits, Recreational Activities, etc.

During the 1890's, the Education Dept. encouraged the use of outside facilities and the development of recreational activities in the education of elementary pupils. (U). As early as 1891, due to the generosity of certain leading men in the city, the first Board School was provided with a library, whilst towards the end of the century it was decided that classes should visit the Minster, the Museum and Art galleries during school hours. (V). An extensive scheme for the sending of swimming classes to the Baths was

- (Q) Curtis: History of Education in Great Britain
- (R) York School Board Minutes, 2.11.1894
- (S) do: 2nd Triennial report ending 31.12.1894
- (T) do: 3rd do. 31.12.1897
- (U) 1895/96 codes
- (V) York School Board 1st Triennial Report ending 31.12.1891  
do. Minutes, 1.7.1898

developed in 1897 and expanded in 1900. (W). Here, then, were the beginnings of the kind of activities which have since become recognised as such an important part of the life of a school.

(W) York School Board 3rd Triennial report ending 31.12.1897



Chapter 7 : Evening Schools, Pupil Teachers Centres  
and Special Education

Evening Schools in York, 1889 - 1902

Before 1889, Evening School classes were already in existence in York, certainly having been held at the Institute, Priory Street Wesleyan School and a number of National Schools for some years. (A). No doubt, these classes, as others throughout the country, were restricted in scope due to the conditions that their pupils had to pass in the 3R's, and that an age limit of 21 was imposed. Nationally, these two conditions had in large part contributed to a falling-off in Evening School attendance, and the Cross Commission recommended that both of them be abolished. (B). As a result of their feelings, the 1890 and 1893 Codes abolished the 3R's examination, allowed students over 21 to be recognised for grant, and altered the basis of the grant from that of achievement of individual pupils to one of the total number of hours of attendance. (C). In addition, they encouraged scientific and technical subjects, so that there was a great danger of overlap with Science/Art Classes and technical institutions. (D). The result of all these measures was a great development on evening classes in the 90's.

- (A) 1891 Chairman of York S.B.'s Annual Statement
- (B) Eaglesham: From School Board to Local Authority
- (C) Curtis: History of Education in W.B.
- (D) Eaglesham: From School Board to Local Authority

This development did not by-pass York; early in 1891, the Chairman of the York School Board expressed the feeling that his Board should consider the opening of an evening School under their control. (E). In 1893, it was decided to establish two such centres, a number which had increased to four by 1897. (F). They provided a syllabus of seventeen subjects at Elementary and Advanced level, although Drawing was restricted to the former so as not to compete with Council classes. In addition, an Evening Science class, attending by mainly pupil-teachers, was formed; the students of this class took the Art/Science Dept. examinations, and a study of the syllabus shows that the evening School centres did not overlap with its work. Actually, the only parts of their syllabuses which were at all scientific or technical were Algebra, Experimental Science and woodwork. (G). In these centres, the only fee charged (1/-) was returned at the end of the session to those whose attendance was sufficient to earn the Government grant, but the attendance was so disappointing during the early years that a great deal of the grant was lost. (H). Economies were made in 1897, the classes being held on two nights a week instead of four, but the response continued to be disappointing, the number of students falling from 1403 in 1895-96 to 400 in 1898-99. (J). Things began to improve in 1900, but the Centres had made quite a call on the

(E) 1891 Chairman of York S.B.'s Annual Statement

(F) York School Board 3rd Triennial report ending 31.12.1897

(G) York S.B. 2nd and 3rd Triennial reports

(H) York S.B. Minutes, 4.5.1894 - 7.9.1895 - 2.4.1896

(J) do. 11.7.1897 - 6.11.1897 - 7.7.1899

rates each year, rising to nearly £400 in 1895-96 and remaining at over £200 per annum even after the 1897 economies. (K). Undoubtedly, public money was being spent on the education of adults, it being remarked on one occasion that the classes were being attended by a considerable number of middle-aged people. (L).

The Cockerton Judgment, with its implied age restriction, was a blow as it meant that at least a great part of expenditure on the Evening Schools was illegal. (M). As with the science classes, the Board acted under the 1901 Act and agreed to carry on the classes on the terms laid down by the City Council. (N). The following year, after the 1902 Act, the sanction of the Council to carry on the classes was again sought and received. (O). Thus, at the end of the School Board's life, these classes were still functioning, and continuing to improve as regards the number of students. (P).

In addition, classes were still being held in two voluntary Schools in 1900. (Q).

#### Pupil-Teacher Classes and Centres

During the 1890's, a pupil-teacher was becoming less a teacher and more a pupil, a change welcomed by the Cross Commission. (R). One consequence of this was that many of the School Boards, and even

(K) York S.B. 3rd and 4th Triennial reports

(L) York S.B. Minutes, 8.9.1894

(M) Eaglesham: From School Board to Local Authority

(N) York S.B. Minutes 6.9.1901 (O) York S.B. Minutes, 4.7.1902

(P) York S.B. Minutes 7.11.1902 (Q) Report of Board of Educ.

1900-01

(R) Adamson: English Education 1789 - 1902

some Church of England voluntary organisations, rapidly began to establish special classes or centres for their instruction.

For the first three years of existence of Board Schools in York, nothing was done on these lines, the 'Instructions to Teachers' merely stating that pupil-teachers should receive oral instruction from the Principal Teacher, and that particular attention should be paid to their practical training in the art of teaching. (S). However, in 1894, the Board decided to undertake their education, the outcome being the adoption of a scheme for the establishment of Pupil-Teacher classes. (T). This scheme, as revised in 1897, provided for Central Classes to be held on Tuesday and Thursday evening and Saturday mornings each week, and for them to be open to Voluntary School pupil-teachers also. The 5½ hours of weekly instruction consisted of 60 minutes of English, 45 minutes each of History and Geography, and 30 minutes each of Theory of Teaching, Arithmetic, Music, French, Algebra/Mensuration and Penmanship. (U). Results in the first years were not at all good, it being suggested that perhaps the students had too much to do; the remedy applied was the holding of a Preliminary Examination for Pupil-Teachership under the School Board, which had to be

(S) York S.B. 1st Triennial Report ending 31.12.1891

(T) York S.B. Minutes 2.11.1894 - 3rd Triennial report

(U) York S.B. 4th Triennial Report ending 31.12.1900

passed before anyone could qualify to attend the classes. (V). The hope was expressed that Voluntary Schools would send only suitable candidates. Results then improved, and Latin was added to the curriculum, until it was decided in 1902 to replace the Classes by a Pupil-Teacher Centre at the old Brook Street Board School, and to introduce a 'New Model Course'. (W). Before the School Board finished its work, there was time for them to be able to report a 'great improvement' in the work of the Pupil-Teachers.

### Special Education

The earliest efforts to deal with children not able to be educated in ordinary schools were directed at those who had actually transgressed the law or came from unsatisfactory homes, and consisted of the establishment of Reformatory and Industrial Schools. One of the latter, for Boys, was to be found in York by 1870, one for Girls was opened in 1877, and, after the 1876 Act empowered the founding of Day Industrial Schools for children who did not attend school regularly, the S.A.C. considered deeply the provision for such a school in the City. (X). As far as can be ascertained, this activity was not followed up by the School Board.

- (V) York S.B. Minutes 1.7.1898 - 7.7.1899 - 3.8.1900 - 3.10.1900  
(W) do. 3.10.1900 - 4.10.1901 - 6.9.1901 - 3.10.1902  
Benson: History of Education in York  
(X) Statement of School Statistics by Town Clerk, 23.1.1871  
York S.A.C. Minutes - various references  
1876 Education Act, S.15

As regards physically and mentally defective children, there was little attention until the late 19th Century, when the problem grew due to the advent of universal education following the 1870 Act. (Y). In 1899 was passed the Education (Defective and Epileptic Children) Act, which empowered School Boards to provide special accommodation, In York, a Return of such children was called for, it being estimated that 1% of the City's children would require special treatment (there were 57 M.D. children in the Board Schools.) (Z). It was also arranged that any parents who felt that their child ought to be dealt with under the Act should present such child to the School Board to be examined. (A). There is no information of the results of these arrangements, but no action towards the provision of special accommodation seems to have been taken before 1903.

Blind and Deaf Children had been catered for by voluntary organisations, there being a Residential Blind School in York, before the passing of the 1893 Education (Blind and Deaf children) Act. This made obligatory the provision of facilities for deaf children between the ages of 7 and 16, and the attendance at school for blind children between 5 and 16 (B). Accordingly, the

(Y) Curtis: History of Education in G.B.

(Z) York S.B. Minutes 7.6.1901

(A) do. 4.7.1901

(B) Craig: Child and Adolescent Life in Health and Disease.

Schools Attendance Officers in York were told that it was the duty of the Board to enforce attendance of such children, and that a report should be made to the School Board Clerk of any found not receiving instruction. (C). There is no indication of the numbers in the City, or what arrangements were made for them, but a few were sent, from 1895 onwards, to five Blind and Deaf Institutions, at an annual cost to the School Board of £200 - £400. (D).

(C) York S.B. 2nd Triennial Report ending 31.12.1894  
(D) do. 4th. do. 31.12.1900

found for the provision of further schools, better buildings and an adequate standard of efficiency in instruction and equipment. The effects of the School Board's activities, backed by a secure financial source, were widely felt in the City, both directly and indirectly. The example set by its better-equipped schools and abolition of fees acted as a spur to the denominations, the better facilities and wider curriculum becoming available helped to improve attendance and raise the school-leaving age, all of which contributed to a higher standard of education generally. Without a doubt, it can be stated that the work of the Board was of great benefit to education in York and that much progress had been made, by 1902.

The remarkable thing about these years, however, was the way in which so many Voluntary Schools, particularly Church of England, persisted; but, before 1902, it was becoming obvious that their running costs were far too low to compete for much longer with the rising standards. One is led to wonder how long they would have survived if the 1902 Education Act had not been passed.

Under this Act, the whole of the existing system of elementary education was to pass into the hands of an Education Committee appointed by the York City Council. It was supposed to come into



force on 26th March, 1903, or within the following twelve months; after two postponements, the hand-over took place on the 1st October, 1903, the last meeting of the School Board having taken place three days earlier. (C).

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(C) York S.B. Minutes, 28.9.1903

