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PAPER CITY:  
CLASS DEVELOPMENT IN HOLYOKE, MASSACHUSETTS, 1850-1920

A Dissertation Presented

By

WILLIAM FRANCIS HARTFORD

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experience made me a better teacher as well as historian. My greatest debt is to Bruce Laurie. Anyone even casually familiar with his work will recognize its influence on the present study. Whatever merit it possesses stems largely from his teaching and encouragement.

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## INTRODUCTION

In the mid-1840s an awful famine devastated large regions of Southern Ireland, spreading death and misery among an already impoverished people and forcing a massive emigration. One area in which they sought to begin anew was Holyoke, Massachusetts, then a rural backwater just entering the early stages of industrialization. The local bourgeoisie cherished the labor of the newcomers - without it their capital would lay idle and their dreams of wealth go unfulfilled - but otherwise despised them. Too preoccupied with matters of simple survival, the Irish seemed scarcely to notice and set about establishing an ethnic enclave no less isolated from native born workers than it was from the millowners. Tradition and the harshness of day to day existence dictated that the saloon and church would dominate the early community: in one immigrants found a brief respite from life's crushing burdens, while in the other they established claims to a heavenly reward that a neo-feudal religion promised those who meekly submitted to poverty and deprivation in this world.

But these conditions would not persist indefinitely and two generations later the grandchildren of the first immigrants would lead a vigorous labor movement more interested in changing than escaping the world in which it existed. This is the story of that transformation.

It is a study of class development. It is also a study of class relations. As E.P. Thompson has written, "the notion of class entails the notion of historical relationship." For class is not a "thing," but something that "happens:" "And class happens when some men, as a result of common experiences (inherited or shared), feel and articulate the identity of their interests as between themselves, and as against other men whose interests are different from (and usually opposed to) theirs." Early chapters thus examine the local bourgeoisie and the social relations of production within the city's two principal industries, paper and textiles. Their purpose is to delineate the world view of Holyoke manufacturers and show how they sought to protect and further their interests in the community as well as the factory.

Yet class development involves more than the interaction of structurally discrete social groups. Class, as Thompson further observes, must be seen as a cultural as well as a social formation. Following a course charted by such historians as Alan Dawley, Paul Faler, and Bruce Laurie, the study proceeds to explore how the family interests, religious beliefs, and leisure activities of Holyoke workers conjoined with changing productive relations to produce three distinct cultural experiences: a saloon culture, and Yankee and Catholic variants of working class respectability. Catholic respectables proved to be the hardest and most enduring of the cultural groupings, and by the turn of the century they would dominate the local labor movement. A final chapter examines the mature post-1900 expression of the culture of Catholic trade unionist respectability.

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C H A P T E R   I  
INDUSTRIAL BEGINNINGS

In the late eighteenth century a traveler journeying north of Springfield along the bank of the Connecticut river would have soon come to the beautiful Hadley Falls, where the swiftly moving waters of the great river plummeted nearly sixty feet. Aside the falls on the western bank of the river lay a tiny farming village called Ireland Parish in memory of John Riley, a Protestant Irishman who had first settled the area a century earlier. Ireland's rich lands yielded ample crops of hay, corn, rye, potatoes, and oats as the Connecticut's annual overflow regularly replenished the mineral content of its broad meadows. Largely a subsistence economy, local farmers produced enough to meet their basic needs and a small surplus which they marketed at Northampton or Springfield, the region's principal trade centers.<sup>1</sup>

The first attempt to develop the area came in 1792 when a group of Northampton and Springfield merchants

formed the "Proprietors of the Locks and Canals on the Connecticut River," a corporation whose purpose was to facilitate the movement of goods upriver from Springfield. In 1795, the proprietors completed construction of a canal around the falls at South Hadley and during the next decade undertook similar ventures at Turners Falls and Bellows Falls, Vermont, thus allowing a three-fold increase in the amount of merchandise shipped above Hadley Falls between 1795 and 1820. The improvements at the falls did little to disturb the tranquility of Ireland Parish, where the corporation's local agent, Whiting Street, oversaw the unloading of cargoes. When the water level fell in summer or froze in winter, Street organized local farmers to transport the shipment by land, using oxen in summer and horses in winter.<sup>2</sup>

Although the proprietors did much to stimulate commerce, they showed little interest in developing the vast industrial potential of the Hadley Falls. Before mid-century Ireland's major enterprise was a small cotton mill, which employed less than seventy operatives and in 1845 produced goods valued at a modest \$60,000. Indeed, local residents viewed the falls more as a source

of salmon and shad than water power. When the fish began to run each spring as many as 1,500 horses at a time could be seen aside the falls as farmers came from throughout the region to exchange news and supplement a meat, grain, and vegetable diet.<sup>3</sup>

All this began to change during the 1840s, a decade which saw a dramatic expansion of the New England railroad network. Where in 1840 even the Southern states eclipsed the region's 512 miles of track, by 1850 the length of New England roads had increased five-fold and not only exceeded that of the South, but was only slightly less than that of the Middle Atlantic states; relative to its size, New England had more railroad mileage than any region of the country. In 1839, the Western Railroad reached the Connecticut river at Springfield and a few years later the merger of the Springfield and Northampton Railroad Company with the Greenfield and Northampton resulted in the formation of the Connecticut River Railroad, which in 1846 bridged the Connecticut at Williamansett and ran a line through Ireland Parish. Besides its cotton mill, Ireland at that time contained a grist mill, planing mill, two physicians, a shoemaker, tailor, wheelwright, painter,

blacksmith, one school, two churches, and a "tavern of modest appearances, but of wide fame." As its residents would soon realize, however, the arrival of the railroad signalled the beginning of a new era for the sleepy agricultural village.<sup>4</sup>

A group of eastern capitalists, collectively known as the Boston Associates, held a controlling interest in the Connecticut River Railroad. "Merchant princes" of Boston, the Associates comprised a group of families bound together by marriage and financial interest who by the mid-forties had already erected industrial towns at Lowell, Chicopee, and Lawrence in Massachusetts, and at Manchester, Dover, and Nashua, New Hampshire. At mid-century they controlled forty per cent of Boston banking capital, thirty nine per cent of Massachusetts insurance capital, and thirty per cent of the state's railroad mileage. Because of its interests at Chicopee, the group had long been aware of the tremendous industrial potential offered by the Hadley Falls. The construction of the railroad considerably enhanced the site's value. That a dam had not already been constructed at the location "would be inexplicable," a study later commissioned by the group observed, "were

it not obvious that the extraordinary magnitude of the enterprise required, in a corresponding degree, more than ordinary forethought, skill, and capital for its accomplishment." In 1847 the Associates decided they possessed those prerequisites and obtained an act of corporation under the name of the Hadley Falls Company "for the purpose of constructing and maintaining a dam across the Connecticut River."<sup>5</sup>

The Associates chose George Ewing as their local agent. Ewing was an official of the Fairbanks Scale Company who had been urging investors to develop the area. His first task which he accomplished in short order, was to purchase all land adjoining the proposed dam site. The only obstacle was Sam Ely, a local farmer who owned a critically placed piece of property close to the falls. Declaring that he would not sell to the "cotton lords" of the Hadley Company "if they covered the entire field with gold dollars," Ely further remarked that "he was damned if he wanted to see the corporations control everything." None of Ely's neighbors shared his aversion to the new order and he soon found himself alone. Just as local farmers welcomed the coming of the railroad because it promised to lower transporta-

tion costs, they readily acceded to the generous offers of the Hadley Company. Although Ely lashed out at surrounding farmers for abandoning him, he too sold out.<sup>6</sup>

The company next began construction of the dam. In January, 1848, a brief strike by Irish laborers in protest against a pay cut, required the intervention of Northampton militiamen and a Catholic priest from Springfield, but otherwise the project proceeded without delay. By November the dam was completed. A large crowd lined the Connecticut to witness its opening and as the last gates closed a roar of approval rose from the interested onlookers. But complications soon developed. At noon a company official telegraphed Boston that "the dam is leaking badly;" a further report an hour later evinced growing panic: "we cannot stop the leaking." The last message to Boston that afternoon simply read, "dam gone to hell by way of Willimansett." The structure's collapse did not dim the enthusiasm of the watching crowd. "Well, some of that property was mine," one local farmer reportedly remarked, "but it was worth all the money I put into it, to see it go." Meanwhile, one thoughtful observer sent off a telegram to

Springfield, warning that there was a "big freshet coming."<sup>7</sup>

A second dam, which proved more durable, was finished the following October. The year also saw the establishment of two new churches and a number of small businesses, while each week additional shopkeepers, artisans, and professionals arrived to seek their fortune at what the Hadley Company heralded as the "New City." In March, 1850, the locale also obtained a new political status when Ireland Parish became the town of Holyoke. Now that the area had a growing Irish population, the company did not wish to advertise the fact and, as Constance Green observed, "hoped that the Puritan label would lend the place dignity."<sup>8</sup>

Whatever dignity a town charter and new name gave Holyoke it was not enough to insure its continued growth. Much to the disappointment of the Hadley Company's directors no major manufacturers chose to locate there during the early fifties. Moreover, before 1852, depressed market conditions held down textile production and an 1854 treasurer's report showed the company owed more than \$1,000,000 with little revenue coming in. In order to raise additional capital, the directors divided

the company into two separate corporations: the water power and real estate operations retained the name of the parent concern, while its textile mills became the Lyman Company. Despite extensive publicity measures, the prosperity promised by the promoters of the "New City" remained elusive.<sup>9</sup>

Conditions had not appreciably improved three years later. The Parsons Paper Company, which began manufacturing in 1855, built a second mill and in 1857 the Holyoke Paper Company and a small iron-wire factory opened for business. But these were the only new mills established at Holyoke during these years and in the fall of 1857 a financial panic brought a sharp curtailment of production at the Lyman Mills and hobbled operations at other local businesses as well. Part-time employment at reduced wages made it a bleak winter for Holyoke workers. By the following spring the Lyman Company had returned to full production, but the Hadley Company was not so fortunate. Although short-lived, the panic of 1857 sent the corporation under.<sup>10</sup>

In September, 1857, the failure of the Boston selling house of Charles H. Mills and Company dealt the Hadley Company a crippling blow. Among the leading offi-

cials of the bankrupt firm was company treasurer James K. Mills and to prevent creditors from seizing the corporation's Holyoke property its assets were placed under the name of newly appointed treasurer, George W. Lyman. But this was only a stop-gap measure and the following spring creditors attached the Holyoke property. Faced with a choice between recapitalization or bankruptcy, the directors unsuccessfully attempted to market a new stock issue before finally conceding defeat. In January, 1859, the company's property was sold at public auction: investors received \$1.32 on each hundred-dollar share.<sup>11</sup>

In commenting on the company's failure, one of its directors, Alfred Smith of Hartford, wrote that "I trusted quite too much to my notion that so many Boston gentlemen would never invest so large an amount of money, without knowing what was to be done with the property, nor without backing up their investment with money to put the property to some profitable use." Smith fixed the blame for the corporation's dismal performance on its policy of absentee control: "the management of large stock capitals, at Boston, is not in accord with principles on which private business operations

are managed." Such an arrangement, he contended, prevented "that strict attention to details or to economy, which I deem dispensable." Smith refused to subscribe to the company's new stock issue but still believed that under responsible management a power project at Holyoke could yet prosper. He accordingly purchased the defunct company's property at auction and organized the Holyoke Water Power Company. Buttressed largely by local capital, derived from the proceeds of commerce, land sales, and small industrial ventures, Holyoke's industrial development began in earnest during the following decade.<sup>12</sup>

By 1870 Holyoke was no longer the agricultural backwater it had been two decades earlier. Population had increased from 3,245 to 10,733 and it was well on its way to becoming the "Paper City." Eleven paper mills employed more than 1,000 workers who produced tissue, book, collar, and the fine white writing paper that would make the city famous. A decade later the population had more than doubled to 21,915 and local industries had grown briskly. Nearly 1,900 workers now labored in its paper mills and another 4,000 produced cottons, woolens, thread, and silk. With but a few notable exceptions, the

mills were locally owned and managed by entrepreneurs who could be seen daily on the shop floor as well as in the front office. The business careers, social activities, and social outlook of these men provide the focus of the next chapter.<sup>13</sup>

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Constance M. Green, Holyoke, Massachusetts: A Case Study of the Industrial Revolution in America (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1939), 1-2, 10; A Report of the History and Present Condition of the Hadley Falls Company at Holyoke, Massachusetts (Boston: John Wilson and Son, 1853), 4. This report can be found at the Holyoke Public Library.

<sup>2</sup>Margaret E. Martin, "Merchants and Trade of the Connecticut River Valley, 1750-1820," Smith College Studies in History (Oct. 1938 - Jul. 1939), vol. XXIV, nos. 1-4, 9-10, 199-200; Edwin L. Kirtland, "The City of Holyoke," New England Magazine, New Series, 17 (Feb. 1898), 730-731; Holyoke Past and Present (Holyoke: Transcript Publishing Company, 1895), 21-22.

<sup>3</sup>Green, Holyoke, 10-11, 15-16; Kirtland, "City of Holyoke," 731.

<sup>4</sup>Edwin C. Kirtland, Men, Cities, and Transportation: A Study in New England History, 1820-1900 (New York: Russell and Russell, 1968; originally published in 1948), I, 135, 284-285; Thelma Kistler, "The Rise of Railroads in the Connecticut River Valley," Smith College Studies in History (Oct. 1937 - Jul. 1938), vol. XXIII, nos. 1-4, 70, 102; Alfred M. Copeland, ed., A History of Hampden County, Massachusetts (The Century Memorial Publishing Company, 1902), III, 12.

<sup>5</sup>Kistler, "Railroads in the Connecticut Valley," 70, 102-103; Kirtland, Men, Cities, and Transportation, I, 334; Vera Shlakman, Economic History of a Factory Town: A Study of Chicopee, Massachusetts (New York: Octagon Books, 1969; originally published in 1935), 28-47; Present Condition of the Hadley Falls Company, 4-6.

<sup>6</sup>Holyoke Transcript (HT), 17 Jul. 1888; Green, Holyoke, 19-20; Ralph H. Gabriel, The Founding of Holyoke, 1848 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1936), 14-15; Frank H. Doran, "History of Holyoke, Massachusetts from 1830 to 1873," unpublished manuscript, Holyoke Public Library, 11-12; Holyoke Public Library Scrapbook, 18:34; 3:4; Kistler, "Railroads in the Connecticut Valley," 118-119.

<sup>7</sup>Green, Holyoke, 27-28; Gabriel, Founding of Holyoke, 17; Doane, "History of Holyoke," 15; Paper World (PW), V (5, Nov. 1882), 3.

<sup>8</sup>Green, Holyoke, 29-31.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., 34-38.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., 55-60; Otis Holmes to G.W. Lyman, 19 Oct. 1857, vol. AB-7, Lyman Mills Papers, Baker Library, Harvard Business School (LMP); Holyoke Mirror (HM), 17 1858; 6 Apr. 1858.

<sup>11</sup>Green, Holyoke, 57-62; HM, 26 Sep. 1857; 17 Oct. 1857.

<sup>12</sup>Alfred Smith to G.W. Lyman, 6 Mar. 1858; 11 Mar. 1858, vol. AB-7, LMP; Green, Holyoke, 61-65, 91-94.

<sup>13</sup>Census of Massachusetts, 1860, From the Eighth United States Census, 203; Holyoke City Directory, 1869, 101-105; Green, Holyoke, 259; Census of Massachusetts, 1880, From the Tenth United States Census, 352-353.

C H A P T E R   I I  
THE UPPER AND MIDDLE CLASSES

One story goes that in the boom and bust decades of post-Civil War America a hardy breed of rugged individualists of modest backgrounds but extraordinary entrepreneurial talent made the United States an industrial power of the first rank. Popular writers celebrated these men, their achievements, and the values they embodied - hard work, thrift, self-discipline - in proclaiming this an age of the self-made man. The faith which provided the foundation for this national celebration was simple: individual labor was the source of all wealth; and hard work and self-improvement would bring material success to those willing to expend the necessary effort. Few Holyokers who had acquired a comfortable portion of this world's possessions questioned the national faith. The city's middle and upper classes seemed, in fact, only too ready to join the celebration. Editorials declared that all early industrialists had begun at some manual occupation and that one could emu-

late their success through a comparable application of industry and thrift; only the lazy and spendthrift had anything to fear in this land of boundless opportunity. At an 1871 meeting of the local debating society, both the judge and audience affirmed that "individual success is due more to talent than circumstances," after a one-sided debate in which "local illustrations were freely cited." An examination of the careers of Holyoke's leading millowners reveals that there was some basis for such self-congratulation.<sup>1</sup>

One indication that not all local manufacturers had moved effortlessly from the paternal mansion to the family mill was the degree of geographical mobility which characterized so many of their early careers. Of the thirty three men for whom sufficiently detailed career information is available, only six had grown up in the area and started out in family owned enterprises. Another thirteen had, with varying degrees of success, entered the labor market elsewhere before embarking upon profitable careers in Holyoke. The early careers of the remaining fourteen exhibited a great deal more variety. Timothy Merrick began work in a Connecticut mill at age ten before apprenticing as a shoemaker. In 1847, when

he was twenty four, he entered the employ of the Willington Thread Company and thirteen years later established a bleaching and thread company in partnership with his father-in-law at Mansfield, Connecticut. In 1868, Merrick moved to Holyoke and formed the Merrick Thread Company. Jones Davis' career paralleled Merricks. He worked at mills in Springfield, Chicopee, and Nashua, New Hampshire, before advancing to agent of the Lyman Mills in 1853.<sup>2</sup>

The sparse educational background of many manufacturers also suggests the degree to which individual effort outweighed familial sponsorship as a factor in their success. Of the twenty seven men for whom pertinent data is available, only two attended college and only one of them was graduated. An additional twelve attended high school, but only a few remained to complete their course of studies. The remaining thirteen advanced no further than the district school.

In place of an extended formal education, many manufacturers undertook managerial or craft apprenticeships. Thirteen manufacturers started out as apprentices, but for six of them this involved something more than close instruction in the mysteries of a specific

craft. They learned not so much how to fabricate or repair a given item, but how to coordinate the manifold processes of modern industry for mass production. The typical managerial apprentice spent his indenture moving from department to department within a factory. In a paper mill, he might begin in the beater or engine room, learning how the stock was prepared. Later he would tend one of the massive Fourdrinier paper machines and move on to the finishing department. In the course of his training, the apprentice became intimately familiar with the vagaries of production. He also learned who the key figures were in the process: machine tenders and beater engineers could halt production and were not easily replaced; the women in the rag-cutting or finishing departments were vastly more dispensable. Throughout the late nineteenth century managerial apprenticeship programs existed in many of Holyoke's paper mills and machine shops.<sup>3</sup>

Before drawing any conclusions about the degree to which our manufacturers were self-made men, we need also to look at their ethnic and family background. All but six were native born sons of native born parents and the immigrants in the group were from either Scotland or

England. Of the native born, at least ten came from families that traced their origins to seventeenth-century New England; most of the remaining families had settled in the region no later than the mid-eighteenth century. The manufacturers' ethnic background did not in itself aid them in their rise to entrepreneurial success, but did insure that not even the immigrants among them would be subject to ethnic discrimination, which was no slight advantage during a period of pervasive ethnic hostility.<sup>4</sup>

Also, the fathers of our manufacturers, while seldom men of great wealth, pursued substantial occupations. Of the twenty seven fathers for whom such information is obtainable, seven were merchants, and nine were either manufacturers, small businessmen, or factory managers. Another six were farmers, a number of whom owned extensive acreage or were characterized as "successful" in biographical reviews. Even fathers with less prestigious occupations - tavern keeper, shipping porter, tanner, and harness maker - followed respectable vocations.

Finally, family aid and connections were a factor in the success of a number of the manufacturers, particularly in the crucial early stages of their careers.

Not everyone had access to a managerial apprenticeship. A well placed relative or family friend often sponsored and gave general supervision to the young trainee. James and John Ramage served their apprenticeship as papermakers at a Scottish mill with which their father was "connected" and D.P. Crocker's father guided him through a similar program. A propitious marriage helped some of these men: C.H. Heywood married the niece of Jones Davis, agent of the Lyman Mills; Timothy Merrick married the daughter of Origen Hall, the nation's first thread manufacturer; and E.C. Taft married the daughter of Joseph C. Parsons, Holyoke's first paper manufacturer. Filial ties also helped, as in the case of the four Newton brothers. Their father was a successful Bernardston lumber dealer who insured that each of his sons had an extended formal education. Added to this support was the mutual aid which the brothers gave each other. A careful division of labor characterized their many business ventures: Daniel and James handled financial matters, while John and Moses supervised numerous construction projects.

What can we conclude about the careers of these manufacturers? If they are compared with the typical

mid-century Irish or French-Canadian immigrant, the advantages of family and social background loom large. Ethnicity alone insured easier access to capital. For our purposes it is most important that they saw themselves as self-made men who believed that individual effort was the key to success and who denied that a propitious set of circumstances in any way explained their own material advancement. The apprenticeship programs through which many passed reinforced this conviction.

Family sponsorship alone was by no means a sufficient condition for completion of a managerial apprenticeship. Holyoke manufacturers insisted that successful apprentices also needed "pluck" or "grit," in addition to "brains, mechanical aptitude, ambition, acute observation, (and) executive ability." Expressed at the turn of the century, such observations were not simply the self-approving pieties of men who had undergone such training during their youth. In the Holyoke mills a managerial apprenticeship required four years of hard labor, which was intended to test one's character as well as competence.<sup>5</sup>

Holyoke manufacturers who received craft training

went through a comparable regimen of character development. During the years that these men served their indentures, the traditional master-apprentice relationship was undergoing important changes, as increasingly fewer apprentices lived with their master's families. In this new and more formalized relationship the apprentice simply exchanged his labor for training, and the master no longer assumed responsibility for the moral development as well as the craft instruction of his charge. Yet problems of labor control led master artisans in many locales to establish organizations that would function as a surrogate for the vanishing family-based mode of craft training. In some communities the churches served this role. In neighboring Springfield, during the years 1824 to 1848, the Hampden Mechanics' Association was such an organization.<sup>6</sup>

Comprised of the city's artisans and manufacturers, the Hampden Mechanics' Association promoted good relations among Springfield employers. On one level, the Association sought to regulate the local labor market: members agreed not to hire apprentices who prematurely left the employ of a fellow member; and, at the completion of the training period, apprentices of members were

awarded a document from the Association certifying that they had successfully completed their course of instruction. The especially dutiful apprentice also received a medal which declared that he had "entirely abstained from the use of ardent spirits, or the intemperate use of any intoxicating liquors, during his apprenticeship, and has otherwise conducted himself in an honest, obedient, and orderly manner."<sup>7</sup>

As the foregoing attests, Association members were deeply concerned about the behavior of the city's apprentices. This concern reflected more than the anxieties of an employer seeking a pliant labor force. Association members also worried about the social position and reputation of the tradesman during a period when economic change threatened the venerable status of this social group. One member declared that "mechanics discredit themselves by bringing up their sons to the professions or to be merchants, thus showing that they are ashamed of their own trades." Such artisans, he added, by attempting to appear "above their calling, . . . are apt to think any other trade or profession is more respectable than their own." In order to maintain the tradesman's reputation and social position, master

artisans needed to devote more time and care to the training of their apprentices. The relationship between a master and apprentice, this member reminded his fellow tradesmen, should be the same as the "obligation and connection which exists between a father and a son." Masters had to be particularly observant of the company their apprentices kept. This was especially true of female companions, he observed, as too many apprentices "think, in the outset, they are shut out from what is called the first and fashionable class, and will mingle indiscriminately with those who fall in their way." As a consequence, many young trainees found that they had to assume family obligations at a point in their careers when they were ill prepared to meet them, which retarded their subsequent advancement. Thus, in addition to controlling the supply of skilled labor, the Hampden Mechanics' Association sought to ensure its own reproduction as a reputable social group.

At the school which the Association sponsored, the principal subjects included book-keeping, simple arithmetic, writing, and other skills that the apprentice would need to secure and maintain an independent existence as a petty producer in a marketplace society. The

Association also opened its library to the city's apprentices and urged its members to give their apprentices "friendly counsel" on the most appropriate texts. An 1834 report reinforced this recommendation with an arresting commercial metaphor: the library's books "like the Bills of a bank in order to do good, must be put in circulation and no one need feel a pressure for want of this currency as the Cashier has no wish to keep his funds in deposit, but discounts liberally to every applicant."

Not all apprentices observed the many strictures imposed by an organization like the Hampden Mechanics' Association; the very need of such an association is in itself evidence of that. Even fewer qualified for a temperance medal, but those that did found they could use the award as evidence they were good credit risks. Thus, the Holyoke manufacturer who began work as an apprentice was an eminently ambitious man; he was exactly the type of individual such organizations wished to develop - a person who was hard working, sober, thrifty, calculating, and self-disciplined.

Located immediately beneath the millowners in Holy-

oke's social hierarchy was a middle class of professionals, merchants, contractors, realtors, and petty manufacturers. The principal difference between this social grouping and the upper class was that it contained an emergent Irish petty bourgeoisie and thus lacked the ethnic and religious homogeneity of the manufacturing elite. The most prosperous members of the Irish middle class lived in the same neighborhoods as their Yankee counterparts and in their business activities dealt regularly with both the Yankee middle and upper classes. This was especially true of builders who received many of their contracts from local manufacturers. Yet ethno-religious differences were hardly negligible. An 1889 Bluebook contained a separate listing for "Catholic Society" and the associational lives of the Irish middle class centered around the Catholic Church and its lay associations, the Democratic Party, and such Irish nationalist organizations as the Ancient Order of Hibernians and the Land League, where they came into regular contact with Irish workers.<sup>8</sup>

By contrast, the Yankee middle class mixed freely with the manufacturing elite in its associational life. They lived in the same neighborhoods, belonged to the

same clubs, attended the same churches, and joined together on election day to vote for the Republican Party. The 1889 Bluebook offered further evidence of the close ties between the two groups by the inclusive and indiscriminate manner in which they appeared in its listings. Furthermore, both groups shared a common faith in the self-made man which left an indelible imprint upon Holyoke's institutional life during the late nineteenth century.

Before 1880, the Lyceum and debating society served as a popular winter retreat for the city's middle and upper classes. At its meetings, Holyoke's established citizens presented and refined their views on the major issues of the day. The level of discourse, with some embarrassing exceptions, was generally high, indicating that the participants took their duties seriously. The audience closely followed the proceedings and, with the judge, rendered its verdict at the conclusion of a debate. To the degree that a coherent world view emerged from these debates, it embodied the primitive labor theory of value contained in the ethic of the self-made man. At an 1871 debate, the audience refused to affirm the proposition "that capital is more powerful than

labor," even though the judge decided the question in the affirmative. The character of the debate was one reason for the audience's decision. "With one or two exceptions," the Transcript reported, "the question was discussed as if it read, Resolved, 'that gold is more powerful than labor.'" But beyond that these people would not accept any statement which implied that factors other than individual effort accounted for their own success. At the same time, they unquestionably supported the principle of private property. At an 1873 debate, the house decided unanimously in the negative "that communism as a system of property holding is correct in theory and efficient in practice." While the speakers for the affirmative cited the example of the Shakers and noted that the "Golden Rule calls for a more equal division of the good things of life," the audience found the argument for the negative vastly more compelling: "such a division would be a death blow to energy and ambitions, . . . would be fatal to intelligence, and transform men into a set of drones."<sup>9</sup>

Labor reform also elicited the attention of the Lyceum and debating society. At an 1871 debate on whether labor reform in politics should be encouraged,

Henry A. Chase, son of a prosperous local lumber dealer, asserted that "Not a man in this place who stands at the head of his business inherited his money. Everyone was born poor and worked himself upward by his own exertions. Equalization of property is the grand hobby of the labor reform party." Henry C. Ewing, son of one of the town's founding fathers, reinforced Chase's argument with the declaration that "If labor reformers should equalize property there would be some . . . who would not work." He then asked, "What would labor do without capital?" No one answered, but James Ramage, then a paper mill superintendent who would later establish his own mill, insisted that capital also had its duties to meet: "If a corporation cannot afford to pay its workmen, to support them without getting in debt, it had better take Greeley's advice and 'go West.'" Workers did not receive their fair share, he further declared, and it would be far better to have the legislature correct this abuse than to have the workers take the matter into their own hands through trade unions and strikes. As a former managerial apprentice, Ramage knew better than to underestimate labor's capacity for independent action; and as a self-made man,

American  
dream  
realized

going west

still on the way up, he had fully internalized a "root, hog, or die" business ethic. The Transcript did not record the audience's verdict on the debate, but a year later the house unanimously rejected the proposition that it was the "function of the legislature to regulate the hours of labor." In 1872, even the self-serving ameliorism of James Ramage proved unacceptable. In later years, however, other manufacturers would demonstrate that they shared the sophisticated approach to labor relations embodied in Ramage's declarations.<sup>10</sup>

Elite Holyoke's approach to public education contained a mixture of social control and social duty, informed by the self-reliant values of the dominant ethic. Early school reports declared that the maintenance of a republican form of government required that the "masses" be educated; that those who did not attend good schools would find their learning in "schools of vice;" and that it was thus "cheaper to support good schools than poor farms, penitentiaries, jails, and prisons." The same reports enjoined teachers to stress self-reliance as the only sure means to success. The town's industrial development and its attendant division of labor made good schools even more necessary. The 1863 report observed

that the division of labor tended "to dwarf, it not to crush out the power of the mind, to defeat all breadth of culture, to beget little men, the subjects of mere caprice in the social and civil actions, neither fit to govern, or to be governed, upon the basis of our free institutions." This did not mean that industrial development should be slowed, or even that greater recognition should be given to its effect on the operative; the fulsome editorial praise accorded modern machine production indicated that such reform continued, the degenerative effects of the division of labor must be countered by the "liberalizing influences of an efficient, early education. . . . Then though the hum of spindles and machinery be heard on every side, we know, that manhood will not be swallowed up in the exacting, cramping routine of daily life." The school would, in short, protect society from industrialization's more baleful effects by instilling in working class youths those values and skills which the factory tended to obliterate. At the same time, the school offered an avenue out of the mill, which the established classes had a duty to keep open for the city's workers. "We must remember," Mayor William Whiting stated in his 1878 inaugural address

"that the capital gained here is the only reliance of many a poor boy and girl, and that accordingly a great responsibility rests upon us."<sup>11</sup>

In the same year, one of the town's founding fathers, George C. Ewing, also reminded Holyoke citizens of that responsibility. Noting that many families would sink into pauperism without their children's earnings. Ewing proposed a law that would draw on state funds to pay such families the amount that their children would have earned while attending school. The suggested reform elicited little support and was soon forgotten. But in this and his other activities Ewing demonstrated that the dominant ethic also included a reform dimension. Ewing himself was an inveterate activist who managed to combine the roles of businessman, lay preacher, prohibitionist, and labor reformer within a coherent world view. Whether attacking intemperance, calling for school reform, or endorsing shorter hours in the name of working-class self-improvement, his manifold efforts were all of a piece. They reflected an unqualified belief in the dominant ethic. He once argued in an 1871 debate:

It is important that young men should be impressed with the fact that there is no royal

road to wealth and influence. Your success in life will not depend upon your capital, but upon your own individual effort. Let a knowledge of this truth put a restraint upon all immoral tendencies and prompt you to habits of activity and industry.

As it turned out, few others appeared to share Ewing's literal belief in the dominant faith; most favored an interpretation which sanctified accumulated privilege rather than one which sought to equalize opportunity.<sup>12</sup>

At the apex of Holyoke's public school system stood the high school. The town's first high school was established in 1852, but the town meeting did not regularize its operation for another decade and not until 1865 was its first class graduated. Still, the town had high expectations of its high school students. After a disappointing annual examination in 1864, Superintendent Buckland complained that "there was not that independence of thought and power of expression, which is expected in those who are soon to be men and women. The public have a right to demand that the recipients of such advantages shall ever display a spirit of eager and thorough research, of vigorous and self-reliant thought and mature and critical study." Four years earlier the school committee had appointed Buckland principal of the high school after his predecessor

resigned under fire for having given his students the questions prior to the annual examination. The complaint revealed the town authorities' special concern for the high school student. Since the high school primarily served their own children, Holyoke's middle and upper classes demanded rigorous preparation for the larger world they would soon be entering. It was especially necessary that they internalize the moral-pecuniary values contained in the ethic of the self-made man. A review of some published high school essays and orations shows that they did just that.<sup>13</sup>

In many cases the titles of these essays and orations alone indicated the values inculcated by home and school: essays entitled "Labor and Its Rewards," "Self-Denial," "Success Through Toil," and "Self-Reliance" did little to veil their prescriptive import. The necessity of hard, unremitting, and self-disciplined labor was a recurrent theme. In her essay, "The Race is Not to the Swift," Carrie Averill observed that "moral, patient industry often accomplishes more than the most brilliant tastes," while in "Perseverance," Alice Flanders declared that one would invariably find that persevering men were "more competent, reliable, and devoted

to the interests of their employees than any other class." Edward Whiting gave speculators a justly deserved flaying in an oration which concluded by asking his auditors to judge "which is preferable, the life of the unscrupulous speculator, or the life spent in honest toil and devotion to the cause of right and justice?" No one needed to poll the audience for their response to that question. Production also triumphed over finance in Matilda Hardy's essay on "Borrowing." This "disagreeable habit" was so prevalent, she wrote, because it "is so much easier to borrow than to make or purchase." The successful entrepreneur would do well to eschew the bank, she concluded, as "men are often ruined before they are well aware of the fact, simply by unnecessary indulgence in this habit."<sup>14</sup>

By the mid-seventies, the competitive and individualistic aspects of the prevailing ethic dominated the lives of high school students, locking them into an increasingly rigid meritocracy. In 1875, monthly ratings of the top ten high school students began to appear in the Transcript; at the close of the school year, the paper also published a numerical ranking of the graduating class. Not all educators approved of the trend.

"We should doubt the sanity of a clergyman who estimated the state of religion in his parish as .83 or .97," remarked Superintendent L.H. Marvel. "Is it not as great a fallacy," he then asked, "for a teacher to submit the statement of education in his school in accordance with any such arbitrary standard?"

Others apparently felt that it was not, for the practice continued. A decade later, when an anonymous writer complained to the Transcript that "I have stood low marking as long as I can," the editor unsympathetically replied that "if the writer would spend the time in study that is wasted in writing anonymous letters . . . he or she might perhaps have better marks."<sup>15</sup>

Yet the manner in which the dominant ethic influenced Holyoke's institutional life did not secure the nodding approval of everyone. In his 1881 high school valedictory address, Walter A. Tuttle, presented a damning critique of the city's school system. "The popular idea of education," Tuttle began, "supposes it to be a proposition for money-making." In the schools, he continued, "children are taught that money making is the chief aim of their existence, . . . and to so wide

an extent do these ideas prevail that studies are examined as to their practical nature before they are admitted to our high school course. Teachers are frequently called upon to explain the relation of certain studies to business life and if they do not have that use, parents protest against the so-called waste of time." Tuttle conceded that the practical side of education was necessary, but only to provide that material development which frees man for "loftier thoughts." In concluding, he asked that greater attention be given to moral education and criticized a recent proposal for the elimination of free high schools, remarking that a "city is frequently without a respectable government because of the selfish spirit of its business men."<sup>16</sup>

Walter Tuttle's indictment of the Holyoke school system exposed the harsh, utilitarian underside of the dominant ethic; it also revealed the extent to which the schools had become a caricature of the broader society. As William Whiting had stated a few years earlier, education was capital. The new marking system provided a means of measuring just how much of this capital a student had amassed. Also, increased grade competition

presumably maximized production by impelling the ambitious student to work harder and exercise an ever greater measure of self-discipline in the accumulation process. By applying the dominant ethic to schooling, Holyoke's established classes thus hoped to create a system that would produce individuals who were not only hard working, sober, thrifty, but also acquisitive and intensely competitive. Walter Tuttle's oration eloquently described the effort; it also provided evidence that the project was less than a complete success and that competition was not an imperative spur to achievement.

Holyoke's Protestant churches provided another prop to the ethos of the dominant classes. Although one local businessman was heard to quip that his sole religious and temporal belief was that "life is too short for a man to smoke poor cigars," the majority of his peers took their religious duties more seriously. In their churches, entrepreneurs received further confirmation that the world they were creating was just and, in periods of crisis, ministers provided their congregations with moral support and a comforting analysis of events. The Reverend J.L.R. Trask of the Second Congre-

gational Church ascribed the depression of 1873 to the unscrupulous manipulation of a few gamblers and speculators and assured his affluent auditors that "confidence and action will cure all," so long as one did not lose faith.<sup>17</sup>

God and the businessman seemed often to occupy coterminous spheres. This became nowhere more evident than at an 1884 fellowship meeting of the area's Congregational churches, where clergy and laity discussed the question, "From the temporal side, is the maintenance of the Christian church worth its cost?" Responding to the question, "By what evidences must Christians vindicate the Church's value?", a South Hadley Falls minister noted that the churches supplemented the school's secular education by the teaching of morality and concluded that "What is done for the church is one of the best investments a community can make for the right going forward of its interests." No one disagreed. Nor did they dispute Moses Newton, a Holyoke manufacturer, when he declared that "the church paid in a business way as well as spiritually." In support of this contention, Newton asserted that "By resting and attending church on the seventh day people can accomplish more on the

other six days." Furthermore, he concluded, "the church (indirectly) fosters interests which create demands, out of which comes the necessity of manufactures, be it of wool, silk, or paper."<sup>18</sup>

In addition to reassuring Holyoke's established classes of their rectitude, the city's churches also reminded them of their duties. Ministers periodically cautioned against the sin of display, while the Reverend Trask told his congregation that "it is the business of man to recognize evil and reform it." By a wide margin, the most recognized evil in Holyoke was intemperance. The city's first temperance society was formed in 1857 and in ensuing decades concerned citizens established a host of similar organizations, hoping to extinguish what they saw as the community's one besetting sin. As elsewhere, women dominated the Holyoke temperance movement, attacking liquor dealers in the name of home protection. For many of these reformers, intemperance was not simply an evil in itself, but the root of all evil: a diseased growth that ultimately produced a harvest of crime and poverty. From time to time, local temperance lodges achieved some success. In the 1870s, numerous reformed drunkards told the Sun-

day Evening Temperance Meeting of past sins and current prosperity: stories of the "guilt, shame, and degradation of drunkenness," vast earnings "squandered in dissipation," and "the delightful consciousness of manhood that comes to one who truly reforms" inspired the wavering tippler; they also reinforced the reformer's conviction that intemperance directly engendered broader social ills, and that by taking the pledge one could place himself on the road to material comfort as well as moral regeneration.

Not all of the city's temperance societies could demonstrate the achievement of the Sunday Evening Temperance Meeting. More typical was the experience of the Reform Club and Temperance Union. In 1877, when its supplies ran out, a number of the group's converts left with them, one man boasting that the reformers "didn't make much out of him. He had his 'nip' every day all the while." Some Holyoke clergymen maintained that upper class indifference was one reason that the temperance cause did not attain greater success. "If all our citizens in the upper walks of life would take the pledge," said the Reverend R.J. Adams of Second Baptist Church, "many a poor drunkard, seeing the res-

pectability of the blue-ribbon company, would be encouraged to take shelter in the only asylum which offers him safety." The men who would comprise this "blue-ribbon company" failed to respond. The city's middle and upper classes refused to transform temperance into a holy war. After an 1873 debate, a committee of five decided, by a three to two margin, that prohibition laws did not furnish the best means of checking intemperance. Those supporting the majority position argued that only the sale of hard liquor should be restricted, as "men will have some stimulant." This common sense approach stemmed as much from experience as any conviction of tolerance. An 1868 experiment with prohibition had failed abysmally, resulting only in increased corruption, ill feeling, and, some insisted, greater drunkenness.<sup>20</sup>

Probably the best summary of the many factors conditioning one's reaction to the temperance issue in Holyoke appeared during the course of an 1881 debate between "Peasant" and the Reverend William S. Heywood, a prominent local prohibitionist. Claiming to be a former prohibitionist himself, "Peasant" exposed the many tensions engendered by the issue in a merciless attack

on Heywood:

I read an article in which the Napoleon of the prohibition army wandered about among the dismantled guns and other wreck of war, surveyed the field of his defeat, and laid some of the things it revealed, to heart. As Waterloo was more than Wellington against Bonaparte so was the Waterloo of the prohibitionists more than license against prohibition. . . . It was tolerance versus intolerance. It was the lessons of experience against zealous bigotry.

The claim of this Napoleonic prohibitionist that God is on the side of prohibition has no weight with thinking men. It was the claim of Cotton Mather when he persecuted and hung (sic) innocent women as witches.

The prohibitory law was a 'farce.' Hotel proprietors knew in advance of the raids by state constables; . . . gold watches were presented to officials by liquor dealers; . . . it was almost impossible to obtain a conviction before a jury.

Again, - the prohibitory law allowed the rich man to buy imported liquors in 'the original packages' so that Mr. Bullion could purchase cases of imported brandy and champagne and Mr. Shinplaster could look on and see Mr. Bullion allowed by law to indulge in stimulants to his heart's content while he, Mr. S., was prohibited by the same law from even having a small of 'the critter.'

In closing, "Peasant" acknowledged the imperfections of the current license law and scorned city officials for lax enforcement. But, he added, the law had diminished whiskey consumption in favor of ale and beer and forced "intemperate men to aid in supporting the paupers in the city."<sup>21</sup>

Among Holyoke's established classes many found "Peasant"'s argument more compelling than Heywood's rejoinder that a city without a prohibitory law was one in which "the elements of barbarism held sway." They disliked intemperance; it made a mockery of the moral-pecuniary code which governed their lives. But they liked impractical experiments which only exacerbated existing evils even less. "Peasant"'s thrust at the element of class discrimination in the temperance issue also struck a responsive chord. By 1880, the chasm between classes had become uncomfortably wide and no one gratuitously sought to expand it.<sup>22</sup>

Holyoke's elite attempted to moderate class tensions in other ways as well. Although the common ethic shared by the city's upper and middle classes contained a number of harsh features, it did not preclude reform altogether. There were always some people who realized that life existed below High street. George Ewing was one, who using his own literal interpretation of the prevailing ethic, sought to bridge the growing gulf between the established and working classes. He was ultimately unsuccessful, but the effort is still noteworthy. For if his prescriptions were generally ignored, his implicit

warnings of impending class conflict were not. Likewise, James Ramage's declarations did not bring higher wages or shorter hours, but they did reflect a certain sophistication among some manufacturers that would mitigate the intensity of later struggles between capital and labor.

Finally, the church's warnings to moderate display were not the idle preachings of conscience-stricken clergy. Compared to their workers, Holyoke manufacturers did live lavishly but viewed conspicuous consumption as a vice, which heightened class tensions. These observations are important because class development does not occur in a vacuum - not in Holyoke, nor anywhere else.

As we shall see, the Holyoke working class absorbed portions of the dominant ethic, but not because it was imposed from above. Instead many workers recognized the simple utility of some of its elements. And in adopting these elements, they transformed them into something that was uniquely an expression of themselves as a class. In sum, the ideological hegemony exercised by the city's established classes was real: it manifestly shaped local institutional development. But there were limits to its

sweep: Walter Tuttle's valedictory oration provided evidence of that; so did the Holyoke working class in its development.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Holyoke Transcript (HT), 16 Jul. 1885; 20 Jul. 1872; 18 Feb. 1871. Contemporary writings on the ethic of the self-made man are examined in John G. Cawelti, Apostles of the Self-Made Man: Changing Concepts of Success in America (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965); and Irwin G. Wyllie, The Self-Made Man in America: The Myth of Rags to Riches (New York: Free Press paperback edition, 1966). For the analysis which follows, I have compiled profiles on thirty five Holyoke manufacturers, twenty seven of whom lived in Holyoke, the remainder residing in Springfield. The men chosen were either the president, vice-president, or treasurer of mills employing at least fifty workers in 1880; in most cases, they employed significantly more than that. Two local agents of mills controlled by outside capital were also included. Because these mills employed large numbers of workers, the agents exercised enormous economic power locally. In 1880, the group's average age was nearly fifty and most had been clearly among the city's largest employers for at least a decade. Collectively, they would continue to wield significant economic power for the remainder of the century. Appendix one contains a list of their names, positions, and the sources employed to construct the profiles. A number of studies aided me in shaping the questions which I subsequently asked of the data: John N. Ingham, The Iron Barons: A Social Analysis of an Urban Elite (Westport, Ct.: Greenwood Press, 1978); E. Digby Baltzell, Philadelphia Gentlemen: The Making of a National Upper Class (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania paperback edition, 1979); Herbert Gutman, "The Reality of the Rags to Riches 'Myth': The Case of the Paterson, New Jersey, Locomotive, Iron, and Machinery Manufacturers, 1830-1880," in Work, Culture, and Society in Industrializing America (New York: Vintage paperback edition, 1977), 211-213; Ronald Story, The Forging of an Aristocracy: Harvard and the Boston Upper Class (Middletown, Ct.: Wesleyan University Press, 1980).

<sup>2</sup> Many other men used Holyoke as a way station on the road to worldly success. Newspaper items frequently mentioned mill overseers who had secured an agency or begun a small business elsewhere. Membership turnover at the Second Congregational Church, the town's most prestigious congregation, provides some indication of the extent of geographical mobility in mid-century Holyoke. By October, 1858, three-quarters of the church's January, 1856 membership had departed the town. Holyoke Mirror (HM), 30 Oct. 1858. The extensive geographical mobility of these years is dealt with at much greater length in Peter R. Knights, The Plain People of Boston, 1830-1860: A Study in City Growth (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971); and Michael Katz, The People of Hamilton, Canada West: Family and Class in a Mid-Nineteenth Century City (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975), chap. 3.

<sup>3</sup> Springfield Republican (SR), 25 Mar. 1900; 17 Jan. 1904; 27 Aug. 1905.

<sup>4</sup> The standard work on ethnic conflict during the pre-Civil War decades is Ray Billington, The Protestant Crusade, 1800-1860: A Study of the Origins of American Nativism (New York: Quandrangle paperback edition, 1964; originally published in 1938).

<sup>5</sup> SR, 25 Mar. 1900; 17 Jan. 1904; 27 Aug. 1905.

<sup>6</sup> On the deterioration of the family-based mode of craft training during these years and the manner in which one city's churches assumed a role roughly comparable to that of the Hampden Mechanics' Association, see Paul Johnson, A Shopkeeper's Millenium: Society and Revivals in Rochester, New York, 1815-1837 (New York: Hill and Wang paperback edition, 1978), 38-48, 121-128.

<sup>7</sup> This and the following two paragraphs are based on materials found in the manuscript collection of the Hampden Mechanics' Association at the Springfield Public Library.

<sup>8</sup> These generalizations are based on biographical profiles which have been compiled for twenty four members of the Yankee middle class and five Irish petty entrepreneurs. Appendix two contains a list of their

names, occupations, and the sources employed to construct the profiles. Relations between the Irish middle and working classes are examined in chapters four and five. The Bluebook and Social Directory of Holyoke, Massachusetts, 1889 (Springfield: Index Publishing Company, 1889) can be found at the Holyoke Public Library.

<sup>9</sup>14 Jan. 1871; 11 Jan. 1873. No one who could be identified as an Irish Catholic participated in the lyceum's debates during the 1870s.

<sup>10</sup>HT, 2 Dec. 1871; 21 Dec. 1872.

<sup>11</sup>Holyoke Town Records (HTR), 1853, 7-8; 1854, 7; 1863, 16; Holyoke Municipal Register (HMR), 1878, 15. A typical editorial on modern machine production asked the reader to "Examine the spinning wheels and looms of our mothers . . . Look upon the coarse fabric that at length comes from this toilsome operation. When you have satisfied your curiosity in that direction, step inside of our Lyman Mills, and behold the wonderful problem that multiplication is daily solving." HM, 26 Apr. 1856. Michael Katz provides the best available analysis of mid-nineteenth century educational ideology in The Irony of Early School Reform: Educational Innovation in Mid-Nineteenth Century Massachusetts (Boston: Beacon paperback edition, 1970), part 2.

<sup>12</sup>SR, 15 Aug. 1878; HT, 14 Jan 1871; 2 Dec. 1871; 23 Nov. 1872; 23 Sep. 1878. School superintendent Kirtland also addressed the problem in his 1879 report. After tracing the relationship between poverty and truancy, Kirtland recommended the establishment of a permanent benvolent organization designed to aid children who could not attend school regularly because of family need. The proposal elicited a somewhat more encouraging response than Ewing's, but hardly dealt adequately with the problem. Report of the School Committee, 1879, 32.

<sup>13</sup>HTR, 1853, 4; 1863, 18; HT, 11 Mar. 1865; HTR, 1864, 22-23; HM, 17 Mar. 1860; 24 Mar. 1860.

<sup>14</sup>HT, 10 Jul. 1869; 17 Jul. 1869; 27 Nov. 1869. For a time the YMCA supplemented the work of the high school by attempting to reach the city's young clerks. As part of its lecture series, Horace Greeley delivered his oration on "Self-Made Men." But the institution failed to prosper and in 1871 one member resignedly observed, "How encouraging it is that our blessed Savior does not command us as much to look st the harvest as he does to sow our seed." HT, 4 Jan. 1868; 11 Mar. 1871. Allan Horlick examines the organization's presumably more successful efforts with New York City clerks in Country Boys and Merchant Princes: The Social Control of Young Men in New York (Lewisburg, Pa.: Bucknell University Press, 1975), chap. 9.

<sup>15</sup>HT, 15 May 1875; 3 Jul. 1875; 26 May 1875; 25 Mar. 1885. The dominant ethic was not the sole cause of the new trend, which stemmed more from the bureaucratization of the Holyoke schools and education generally during the period. It did, however, legitimize and encourage the trend. For more on bureaucratization of schooling during the late nineteenth century, see Michael Katz, Class, Bureaucracy, and Schools: The Illusion of Educational Change in America (New York: Praeger paperback edition, 1975); and David Tyack, The One Best System: A History of American Urban Education (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974).

<sup>16</sup>HT, 2 Jul. 1881.

<sup>17</sup>SR, 4 Jun. 1878; HT, 12 Nov. 1873.

<sup>18</sup>HT, 8 Mar. 1884.

<sup>19</sup>HM, 21 Mar. 1857; HT, 27 Feb. 1878; 9 Dec. 1871; 16 Dec. 1871. The role of women in the late nineteenth century temperance movement is examined in Ruth Bordin Woman and Temperance: The Quest for Power and Liberty, 1873-1900 (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1981).

<sup>20</sup>HT, 7 Nov. 1877; 2 Mar. 1878; 8 Feb. 1873; 20 Apr. 1889.

<sup>21</sup>HT, 28 Dec. 1881; also see 21 Dec. 1881; 24 Dec. 1881.

22 HT, 31 Dec. 1881.

C H A P T E R   I I I  
S O C I A L   R E L A T I O N S   O F   P R O D U C T I O N :  
P A P E R   A N D   T E X T I L E S

In 1856, when the Lyman Mills installed a new bell, the Holyoke Mirror observed that "We could but think how much more pleasant, to be summoned to work by the musical sounds of such a bell as this, than by the harsh discordant twang of the one to which we have listened a few weeks past." The statement revealed both the paper's boosterism and assumption that it spoke for all elements in the community. But the bell did not call the Mirror's editor to work each morning. For those whom it did summon, the throbbing resonance of the Lyman Mills' bell and others like it sounded considerably less mellifluous, tolling not of wealth and progress, but of long hours, low wages, and dependency. This chapter looks at their lives.<sup>1</sup>

In 1880, the more than 3,600 textile workers who entered Holyoke's mills each morning comprised about half of the local workforce. Six of every ten of these workers were women. Through their sweat and skill they

provided the ballast of the local economy, enriched their employers, and helped clothe the nation. Ten hours a day, six days a week, they performed the many operations necessary to transform raw cotton, wool, and silk into finished cloth. Because their productive activity formed so large a part of thier own lives and was so essential to the economic life of the city, it would be worth our while to follow them into the mills for a day and observe them at their work.<sup>2</sup>

Imagine, then, that the resounding peals of the second morning bell have just rippled through the crisp air of a cool spring morning, warning textile workers that the yard gates will be closing in another ten minutes. At the picker house of typical cotton mills, three powerfully built men weigh a bale of cotton, the first task in the process of cloth production. After weighing the bales, the pickers open them and mix the cotton in a large bin to form a "bing." This operation homogenized the raw cotton before the hands feed it into the picker, which filters out the dirt that had escaped the gin. The picker hands then take the fleece and put it through the blower, producing a long smooth sheet or "lap," ready to be wound on wooden drums and delivered

to the carding engine. Although most Holyoke picker rooms were clean and well-ventilated, this was hot and dirty work, as the operation of the picker filled the air with flying dust.<sup>3</sup>

At the carding room, the card tender takes the tangled mass of cotton that emerged from the picker room and runs it through the carding engine, which straightens out the individual fibers so that they lay roughly parallel with one another. Afterwards, male card strippers clean the fibers and other residual materials from the teeth of the card cylinders. The most skilled and highly paid carding room worker is the card grinder, who keeps the cylinder teeth sharpened and adjusted the machine so that the teeth are set at a proper distance for the grade of cotton being carded. The most important nineteenth century innovation affecting this department is the development of a revolving flat card. Widely adopted after the mid-eighties, its steel construction permitted more accurate adjustment. Employment of the revolving flat card also reduced the labor cost of carding, because it required less skill to operate and engendered greater output both per machine and per operative.<sup>4</sup>

The loosely twisted rope of carded cotton is not yet ready for spinning, but still demands further twisting and drawing. After 1860, twisting was performed on fly frames, which were longer than the speeder they replaced, and required the twister to tend a greater number of spindles. During the seventies the application of electricity to the fly-frame's stop-motion forced the operative to watch over an increased number of frames. After twisting, the cotton goes to a drawing frame and then to a roving frame, which produces a filament that is wound on bobbins and readied for the spinner. Post-war improvements in the drawing frame's stop-motion also increased the number of frames which these operatives had to tend.<sup>5</sup>

The dominant figure in the spinning department is the mule spinner. Assisted by piecers and doffers, who repair breaks in the roving and removes full bobbins of spun yarn, the highly skilled mule spinner manipulates the mule's spindles, which were mounted on a moving carriage, so that the roving is simultaneously drawn and twisted, thus producing a particularly fine and even yarn. In the post-war years, mule spinner militancy led many manufacturers to replace their mules with ring

spindles, a much less complex frame. The ring spinner's principal task is to piece together breaks in the roving, a job which could be done by women and children; they were paid about half of what the mule spinner had received. Moreover, post-war improvements in the ring frame's design permitted manufacturers to increase its speed from 5,500 revolutions per minute in 1865 to 7,500 revolutions a decade later; in subsequent years speeds reached 10,000 revolutions per minute.<sup>6</sup>

A similar phenomenon occurred in woolen spinning. After 1870, manufacturers installed self-operating frames in place of hand-operated jack spindles. In the process, semi-skilled operatives replaced the highly skilled jack spinner, reducing the labor cost of spinning by half. In 1881, when a dozen jack spinners at Holyoke's Beebe and Webber woolen mill struck in resistance to piece work, the owners immediately replaced them, commenting only that they "were intending to discharge them for cheaper help."<sup>7</sup>

The spun yarn is then wound onto bobbins or cops. The cops of mule-spun yarn go directly to the weaving room, but spoolers transfer the warp yarn from the small bobbins onto larger spools and take the latter to

the dressing room. Before the Civil War dressers wound the warp yarn onto a yardwide beam, after which dressing frames sized the yarns with a starch and tallow solution and a blower dried them. Dressers then rewound them onto another beam and, using a steel hook, drew the sized yarns individually by hand through the loom reed and harness. During the post-war years many mills divided this complex operation between warpers who wound the yarn onto beams and slasher tenders who sized the warps. The installation of slashers allowed one man and a boy to do the work formerly performed by seven or eight workers.<sup>8</sup>

Weaving is the last process in cloth production. In the weave room, a largely female workforce tend looms which weave the various yarns together according to a specified pattern. Because weavers comprise as much as half or more of the textile workforce in many mills, the operation forms a significant part of the labor cost of manufacturing, particularly in fine mills where weavers had to be especially careful. Manufacturers thus evince a lively interest in technical innovations designed to reduce the labor cost of weaving. Between 1860 and 1880 increased loom speeds led to a twenty per cent rise in

output per machine. Later improvements so routinized tasks that manufacturers could reduce the supervisory staff and assign more looms to each weaver. By 1890, most weavers operate six looms, where a decade earlier they had tended four; some weavers would later be given as many as eight or ten looms. Again, the critical innovation was an improved stop-motion, which automatically brought the loom to a halt when a thread broke or a shuttle slipped out of place.<sup>9</sup>

Holyoke's other major industry was paper. In 1880, nearly 1900 workers, comprising about twenty five per cent of the workforce, found employment in paper mills, where they produced book, collar, tissue, and fine white writing paper. Although the history of paper production leads back into antiquity, the labor process changed little prior to the mid-eighteenth century, when the Dutch developed the first beater engine. Until the introduction of the Fourdrinier paper machine nearly a century later, however, paper production largely remained a hand process. At the traditional one-vat mill, the workforce consisted of four men and a boy, who began work early each morning, stopping for breakfast and a grog break before noon. The work day lasted nine hours

and early in the afternoon when the small force had completed its daily task of twenty posts, the workers departed for the village tavern. The vat-man was the key figure in hand production. With large hands reddened by frequent dipping into warm water and pulp and shoulders prematurely rounded from long days over the vat, the pre-industrial papermaker stood out among his fellow workers. But his appearance did not detract from his prestige, for all respected the skill and strength necessary to produce a sheet of paper by holding the mold with its fiber and water at a carefully balanced level.<sup>10</sup>

All this changed during the second quarter of the nineteenth century with the introduction of the Fourdrinier paper machine. The Fourdrinier met the need for hastening the transformation of pulp into paper created by the development of the beater engine, which had substantially increased pulp production. By mid-century the vat-man and one-vat mill had become symbols of a passing era. Improved transportation facilities extended the market and manufacturers constructed ever larger establishments, frequently concentrated in favorable locales. In the post-war years Holyoke became one of

these centers. Its tremendous water power and ample supply of chemically pure water made it a propitious site for the production of the better grades of paper. In 1880, Holyoke's seventeen paper mills had an average workforce of 140 employees each.<sup>11</sup>

Manufacturers sought to create a fluid work flow in the new mills and often constructed separate buildings to house each major process. In the ideal mill, rags moved in a continuous stream from the receiving platform of the rag department through the boiler, engine, and machine rooms, and emerged as finished paper at the shipping platform of the finishing department. In addition to facilitating the work flow, the design of the new mills isolated workers from each other, exacerbating craft and sex differences. To obtain a better understanding of the divisions among paper workers, we need first to venture onto the shop floor and follow the latest delivery of rags through one of these mills.

After the stockmen remove the rags from the bales in which they had been shipped, women rag sorters differentiate them according to quality of fabric, remove any buttons or hooks, and loosen seams and hems.

Because some suppliers wet their goods in order to increase the weight, the sorter often takes a few handfuls of rags, weighs, dries, and then reweighs them in order to insure that the company has not been defrauded. In performing her job, the rag sorter has to exercise judgment to prevent the mixing of better quality rags, which she sets aside for writing paper, with fabrics of an inferior composition. It is also dirty and dangerous work as the rags are often filthy and sometimes carry disease. Health officials invariably began their investigation of smallpox epidemics at the rag rooms of the city's paper mills.<sup>12</sup>

The sorted rags go to the rag cutters, who reduce them to fragments sufficiently small that they float in the rag engine without becoming entangled in the roller, but not so minute that an excess of fiber would be lost during the willowing and dusting operation. The rag cutter also removes any impurities missed by the rag sorters. Prior to 1880, women performed this task by hand, but the subsequent introduction of the Coburn rag cutting machine largely replaced the female hand cutter. This was the first in a series of innovations which significantly reduced the proportion of

women in the paper workforce. At Holyoke, the Whiting Paper Company claimed that with the Coburn rag cutter thirty five operatives could do the work formerly performed by more than one hundred women. Where women constituted sixty two per cent of Holyoke paper workers in 1880, three and a half decades later they formed slightly less than one-third of the statewide total. Yet the hand cutter did not disappear entirely. Because the cutting machine sometimes missed unpicked seams and failed to eliminate all impurities, mills producing fine writing paper often maintained a number of hand cutters in their employ.<sup>13</sup>

At some mills, male operatives put the cut rags through a machine called the willow, which loosened their texture. In other mills, a combination willow and duster remove dust from the rags as well as loosening them. Following this operation, workmen known as "rotary fillers" place the rags in large, revolving wrought-iron boilers that eliminate any greasy substances and dissolve the starch size in cotton fabrics. The boiler operator had to be careful that the tank was not set at too high a pressure, otherwise the dirt and coloring materials would be fixed on the rags rather

than dissolved.<sup>14</sup>

From the rotary boiler the stock passes to the washing and breaking engine. Constructed on the same principles as a beating engine, with a rotary cylinder washer, beater roll, and knife-studded bedplate, this device reduces the rags to tiny fragments, while a constantly flowing stream of water carries away the dirty. When the stock is adequately "broken" and the water flow appears clear, the washer engineer adds a bleach solution and continues agitating the stock until the pulp is thoroughly saturated with bleach. He then runs the engine's contents through an auxiliary pipe into the large brick vaults called drainers, where the bleaching liquor slowly seeps away through the chamber's perforated tiles. In performing his job, the washerman has to insure that he does not break the rags so thoroughly that an excess of fiber is lost.<sup>15</sup>

Workmen next place the caked masses of pulp, now called "half-stuff," in boxes and transports it to the beating engine, where the engineer's helpers slowly fill the beater until the mass becomes so thick that it barely moves. The engineer first eliminates any lingering traces of chlorine from the pulp by adding a neut-

ralizing agent to the half-stuff. If he does not adequately neutralize the bleach, it could later render the size ineffective and corrode the strainer plates and wire gauze of the paper machine. European authorities considered beating the most important operation in paper production, because the paper's strength depends on the length and quality of the fiber which emerges from the beater engine. As one French expert explained:

Upon the management of the beating engine the character of the paper produced largely depends. What is wanted is not a mincing or grinding of the fiber, but a drawing out or separation of the fibers one from another. . . . Long, fine fibers can only be obtained by keeping the roll slightly up off the bed-plate, and giving it time to do the work. Sharp actions between the roll and the bed-plate will, no doubt, make speedy work of the fiber, but the result will be short particles of fiber only, which will not interlace and make a strong felt. . . . Practice and careful observation can alone make a good beater-man, and for the finer classes of paper none but careful, experienced men should be entrusted with the management of the beating-engine.<sup>16</sup>

In addition to supervising the reduction of the half-stuff, the beater engineer loads, sizes, and colors the pulp. The first operation involves adding sulphite of lime to the stock. This makes for the production of a stronger and smoother paper by closing the paper's pores and rendering it non-absorbent. To size the loaded

stock, the beaterman applies a resin soap solution to the pulp, followed by an alum mixture, which sets the resin free in the form of tiny particles that would later, during the drying process, cement together the fibers and alumina, making the paper non-absorbent and improving its whiteness. In completing this operation, the beater engineer needs to make sure that the resin is thoroughly dissolved, or it would form clear, transparent spots in the finished paper. Lastly the beaterman adds a small quantity of blue and pink coloring to the pulp so that it would not acquire a yellow tinge when converted into paper.<sup>17</sup>

By opening a valve at the bottom of the engine, the beaterman sends the pulp through a pipe to the "stuff-chests" - large, cylindrical vessels, twelve feet in diameter and six feet deep, usually located in the basement. The stock is then pumped into a supply box, which furnishes a uniform measure of pulp to the sand tables, where it is rinsed with water and diluted for the machine. The diluted pulp passes through a number of bronze-plated strainers with narrow slits into a vat. There horizontal agitators thoroughly mix the pulp and water and transfer it to the endless wire

cloth of the Fourdrinier. As the pulp and water proceeded along the paper machine, the water fell through the fine wire cloth, leaving only the white pulp, which a series of rollers press into consistency. Drying cylinders and the cast-iron, steam-heated smoothing rolls then flatten the paper before it passes through the final drying cylinders. During the course of these operations, which occur at a greater speed than any description of them could suggest, the machine tender has a number of important tasks to perform. He regulates the paper's thickness by coordinating the supply of pulp with the speed at which the machine is running. He also guarantees the smooth transference of the paper from the couch roll to the felt of the final drying cylinders by adjusting a series of levers that govern the pressure of the upper couch roll upon the lower roll. Finally, the tender periodically examines a completed sheet of paper to determine that it possesses the desired uniformity.<sup>18</sup>

In a final series of operations, workers finish, cut, and inspect the paper. Like the rag room, the finishing department contains a predominantly female workforce that manufacturers sought to reduce through

the installation of labor-saving machinery. In 1878, a Whiting Paper Company workman invented an automatic self-feeder, which, when applied to a calender machine, allowed one woman to watch several calenders. In the same year a local company experimented with a folding and cutting machine that, it was claimed, did the work of five women. This is not to suggest that the skilled workforce in the engine and machine rooms was entirely immune to technical innovation. The introduction of larger machines, running at increased speeds, affected workers in both departments. Yet the differential impact of these innovations is worth noting: where new machinery eliminated rags and finishing department workers, the employment of larger and faster paper machines made the tender's job more difficult.<sup>19</sup>

The men and women who performed these jobs in Holyoke's textile and paper mills comprised a patchwork quilt of nationality groups. Between 1865 and 1890 Holyoke regularly had a higher percentage of foreign born in its total population than any other city in the state; only Fall River occasionally eclipsed it. On its streets and in its factories, men and women from Ireland,

Great Britain, Canada, and Germany lived and toiled together. In leaving the lands of their birth, they took with them distinctive cultures which they did not willingly surrender here. Once in Holyoke, each ethnic group staked out its own territory and attempted to preserve its cultural heritage, while adapting to the strange ways of a new homeland.<sup>20</sup>

Before 1880, the Irish comprised the largest immigrant group. In Ireland, falling grain prices after the Peace of 1815 led landlords to turn ever greater expanses of land into pasture. As a consequence, many already impoverished peasants were driven from the land. In subsequent years, persistently deteriorating conditions reached a fateful climax in the mid-forties when the potato rot triggered the horrific famine. The 1846 repeal of the Corn Laws, which destroyed Ireland's protected position in the English market, intensified existing pressures to depopulate the countryside.<sup>21</sup>

The first Irish to settle in Holyoke hailed from the famine ravaged southern counties. Arriving shortly before mid-century, they came in search of work and quickly took jobs as laborers on the dam; they also dug the canals of the Hadley Falls Company and helped con-

struct the first mills. Some later entered the mills in hopes of establishing a more stable existence than that of a casual laborer. Many women and children also filed into factories in order to do their part in supporting an often precarious family economy. Mere survival thus became the first goal of the town's earliest Irish settlers. But amid much death they did survive and amid an even greater degree of transiency they stayed in Holyoke. As early as 1855, the Irish constituted more than one-third of the town's population.

The second largest immigrant group in Holyoke consisted of French-Canadians. Between the years 1784 and 1884, the population of French Canada increased more than 400 per cent, without a commensurate expansion of available agricultural lands. This in itself placed tremendous pressure on those who wished to maintain the family farm as the basic unit of production. But there were other problems as well. A reluctance to adopt modern farm techniques led, after 1824, to declining harvests, while during the 1830s and 1840s a severe agricultural depression struck the region. At the same time, the area's underdeveloped industrial sector offer-

ed little in the way of alternative employment.

Survival ultimately compelled movement and in the last four decades of the nineteenth century more than 300,000 French-Canadians left for New England.<sup>22</sup>

Throughout the latter part of the nineteenth century the city's two major industries constituted separate, if overlapping, labor markets for the Irish and French-Canadians. In 1880, the Irish formed thirty eight per cent of the paper workforce. By contrast, barely more than one in ten paper workers were French-Canadians. In textiles, French-Canadians comprised forty three per cent of the workforce, while only seventeen per cent of textile workers were Irish. French-Canadian predominance in textiles was not simply numerical, but, by 1900 at least, extended to all departments and skill levels. At Manchester's Amoskeag Mills, Tamara Hareven found that French-Canadians influenced job placement and assisted newcomers through the operation of a shop floor network of kin relationships. In all likelihood, they established similar arrangements at Holyoke's textile mills during the closing decades of the century. Irish textile workers initially resisted French-Canadian incursions, sometimes

with violence. But the greater access of Irish workers to jobs in the local paper industry mitigated tensions between the two groups. The higher wages paid at paper mills doubtlessly drew at least as many Irish workers out of the textile workforce as the French-Canadian influx forced out.<sup>23</sup>

Great Britain and Germany furnished smaller, but important, additions to the Holyoke working class. In 1880, five per cent of the populace were from England and Scotland. Most worked at skilled positions in the cotton, woolen, and paper mills. Possessing much the same cultural heritage as native born workers, they mixed freely together with the host population and avoided close contact with other immigrant groups. Holyoke's German community was even smaller; in 1880 Germans comprised little more than two per cent of the total population. Most worked at the Germania Woolen Mills in South Holyoke, where they established a culturally distinct neighborhood that set them apart from the city's other ethnic groups.<sup>24</sup>

Through the eighties class harmony was the principal feature of social relations within Holyoke's two

Table 1: Textile and Paper Wages, 1880<sup>1</sup>Lyman Mills (Cotton)<sup>2</sup>

<u>Position</u>	<u>Dates</u>				
	1880	1876	1875	1874	1870
Overseer	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.50
Second hand	2.10	2.00	1.84	2.00	2.25
Picker	.88	.90	.91	1.00	1.25
Card Stripper	.88	.90	.91	1.00	1.25
Grinder	1.15	1.17	1.31	1.42	1.63
Doffer	.44	.28	.30	.40	.47
Spooler	.50	.50	.61	.65	.72
Spinning Section-hand	1.50	1.50	1.57	1.70	1.69
Weaver (female)	.96	1.02	1.05	1.21	1.25
Spinner	.72	.83	.95	1.01	1.05
Common Laborer	1.37	1.25	1.25	1.28	1.33

## Whiting Paper Company

Foreman	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	3.25
Overseer in rag-room	2.00			2.50	2.00
Rag sorter	.90	1.00	1.17	1.16	1.00
Rag engineer	2.50	2.75	3.00	3.00	3.00
Rag engineer's helper	1.35	1.50	1.75	1.75	1.50
Machine-tender	2.75	2.75	3.00	3.00	3.00
Back-tender	1.25	1.50	1.75	1.75	1.67
Boss Finisher	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00
Finisher's helper	1.75	2.25	2.25	2.00	1.87
Loftman	1.50	1.85	2.00	2.00	2.00
Calenderer (female)	.90	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Folder (female)	1.50	1.75	1.25	1.35	1.75
Machinist	2.35	2.50	2.75	2.75	
Carpenter	2.35				
Laborer	1.35	1.50	1.50	1.75	1.50

Table 1 (Continued)

## Crocker Paper Company

<u>Position</u>	<u>Dates</u>				
	<u>1880</u>	<u>1876</u>	<u>1875</u>	<u>1874</u>	<u>1870</u>
Foreman	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.50
Overseer in rag-room	2.50	2.00	2.50	2.50	2.50
Rag-sorter	.90	1.00	1.25	1.25	1.25
Bleacher	1.27	1.50	1.75	1.75	1.75
Assistant Bleacher	1.15	1.40	1.50	1.50	1.50
Rag engineer	2.25	2.25	2.75	2.75	2.75
Rag engineer's helper	1.25	1.25	1.50	1.50	1.50
Machine-tender	2.50	2.75	3.00	3.00	3.25
Back-tender	1.25	1.40	1.75	1.75	1.75
Boss Finisher	2.25	2.50	3.00	3.00	3.00
Finisher's helper	1.75				
Cutter (female)	.80	.90	1.25	1.25	1.25
Calenderer	1.25	2.25			
Folder	1.25	.90	1.25	1.25	1.25
Millwright	2.75	2.75	3.25	3.25	3.25
Carpenter	2.25	2.25	2.75	2.75	2.00
Laborer	1.25	1.40	1.50	1.50	1.50

<sup>1</sup>Tenth Census of the United States, 1880:  
Statistics of Wages in Manufacturing Industries, vol.  
20, 274, 348.

<sup>2</sup>The census did not include the Lyman Mills' 1880 pay scale. In accordance with a wage increase announced in February, 1880, the figures presented here are ten per cent higher than the 1879 listing. Without further wage data it is impossible to determine the representativeness of these rates for the local textile industry. In a 1918 communication, the company agent wrote that the Farr Alpaca Company, because it offered wages that were twenty per cent higher, regularly lured away the Lyman Mills' best loomfixers and weavers. Although it is uncertain how long this condition had pertained, local firms with a strong market position based on quality production like the Farr Alpaca Company, Hadley Thread Company, and Skinner Silk Mill probably paid somewhat higher wages earlier as well. SR, 8 Feb. 1880; Green, Holyoke, 78-79, 140-143; J.A. Burke to E. Iovering, 26 Aug. 1918, vol. PD-13, LMP.

Table 2: Textile and Paper Workforce, 1900

The data for the following tables are taken from the 1900 manuscript population census and include native born workers of foreign parentage. The tables represent an attempt to locate Holyoke's two largest ethnic groups on the shop floors of its two principal industries. The 1880 census could not be employed because it did not specify the occupations of the workers listed. Nor are the below listings wholly inclusive. In some enumeration districts, census takers again recorded only the industry in which one worked, rather than the specific job a worker performed. These workers are not included in the tables. Despite this limitation, the figures clearly reveal the existence of two labor markets for the city's Irish and French-Canadians.

TEXTILES

<u>Carding</u>	<u>Irish</u>		<u>French-Canadians</u>	
	<u>M</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>F</u>
picker	2	2	4	3
carder	26	39	33	32
speeder	1	4	1	4
twister	6	29	8	33
drawer	1	16	1	4
	<u>36</u>	<u>81</u>	<u>47</u>	<u>74</u>
 <u>Spinning</u>	 <u>M</u>	 <u>F</u>	 <u>M</u>	 <u>F</u>
	36	77	153	205
	19	17	47	24
	<u>55</u>	<u>94</u>	<u>200</u>	<u>229</u>
 <u>Dressing</u>	 <u>M</u>	 <u>F</u>	 <u>M</u>	 <u>F</u>
winder	7	190	3	85
spooler	8	64	21	183
warper	3	11	2	32
beamer	17	1	1	0
reeler	1	17	2	3
	<u>36</u>	<u>283</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>303</u>

Table 2 (Continued)

<u>Weaving</u>	<u>Irish</u>		<u>French-Canadians</u>	
	<u>M</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>F</u>
weaver	45	152	298	326
<u>Finishing</u>				
	<u>M</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>F</u>
dyer	53	0	5	0
packer	1	11	3	3
	54	11	8	3
<u>Skilled</u>				
	<u>M</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>F</u>
loomfixer	13	0	33	0
mulespinner	6	0	32	0
dresser	18	3	6	0
	37	3	71	0

PAPER

<u>Preparatory Operations</u>	<u>Irish</u>		<u>French-Canadians</u>	
	<u>M</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>F</u>
rag cutter, duster, and sorter	27	476	5	15
washer	8	0	2	0
sizer	4	0	0	0
	37	476	7	15
<u>Skilled</u>				
	<u>M</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>F</u>
beater engineer	35	0	3	0
machine tender	56	0	8	0
papermaker <sup>1</sup>	132	0	26	0
millwright	3	0	0	0
	226	0	37	0
<u>Finishing</u>				
	<u>M</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>F</u>
finisher	70	105	30	9
calanderer	57	66	8	7
loftman	19	0	7	0
plater	2	31	1	4
cutter	19	74	14	9
ruler	14	12	2	2
counter	4	39	3	10
others <sup>2</sup>	15	7	9	1
	200	334	74	42

main industries. A mixture of paternalism, ethnic conflict, and craft exclusiveness diffused any sustained movement toward united class action. At times it even seemed that workers had greater grievances against each other than the bosses. Yet, amid this quiescence there existed ample cause for dissent. Why these hardships did not spark greater resistance is worthy of some discussion, for these earlier inhibitions persisted in attenuated form and remained a latent deterrent to class development.

Any investigation of the social relations of production should include some mention of what day to day operations looked like from the top. The treasurer stood at the apex of a textile mill's operating hierarchy. In addition to overseeing all financial matters, his principal duties included buying cotton and, together with the selling agent, determining the specifications of cloth output. Although treasurers frequently intervened in daily mill operations, the agent or superintendent had primary responsibility for production. Each day he attended to a host of production related concerns. The 1873 notebook of one local agent included formulas for determining horse power, the weight of

goods, and the amount of power required to drive different spindles, looms, and cards, in addition to price lists for different weaving cuts. The notebook also contained model forms for affidavits and invoices, as the agent inspected incoming cotton shipments and often sought appointment as a justice of the peace so that he could sign claims against poor cotton.<sup>25</sup>

Despite the overlap in their activities, treasurers and superintendents viewed the industry from much different perspectives. Where the treasurer saw it as part of a broader system of political economy, superintendents believed that the technical side of production was "the life and the success of manufacturing." This difference of outlook was most evident in the trade associations which each group established. The principal organization of the region's agents and superintendents was the New England Cotton Manufacturing Association, founded in 1865 by Jones S. Davis, then agent at the Lyman Mills. The organization functioned chiefly as a clearinghouse through which these officials exchanged information on the latest technological developments. Although treasurers were allowed to join after 1867, they were never really at home in the organization. In fact, the only

attempt to change the association's focus came in the nineties when a group of treasurers unsuccessfully sought to add political and economic questions to its agenda. Thus dissatisfied with the New England Cotton Manufacturers Association, the treasurers in 1880 formed their own organization, Boston's Arkwright Club. The club initially lobbied against labor legislation in the General Court, but soon expanded its concerns. With declining demand and falling prices during the crisis of the eighties, it attempted to enforce a production curtailment program. This never took hold, but the treasurers did manage to effect a number of short term price-fixing agreements at the club's monthly luncheons. Before the nineties, treasurers found these unstable accords more than satisfactory, as most believed the industry's problems were only a temporary condition.<sup>26</sup>

One reason why the crises of the seventies and eighties did not rattle the basic confidence of textile manufacturers can be found in their cost of manufacturing reports. This monthly statement served as the prism through which the treasurer and superintendent viewed the workforce. It recorded the labor cost per pound and per yard of the four major departments (carding, spin-

ning, dressing, and weaving) and permitted a comparison between the total labor cost and the total cost of production. In the two decades following 1870, technical innovations engendered increased work loads and speeds combined with a steady downward pressure on wages to reduce labor costs in all departments. In making wage reductions, manufacturers tried to undercut worker discontent by acting in concert. Although superintendents were sometimes reluctant to exchange wage data with local competitors, treasurers usually took a broader view of the matter. Furthermore, cutbacks in production often accompanied wage slashes, thus creating a tight labor market. This explains why workers at a given mill did not more actively resist the cuts: they had nowhere else to turn. But it does not tell us why deteriorating work conditions failed to produce a city or state-wide organization of textile workers. For this, we must probe more deeply into the nature of social relations within Holyoke's textile mills.<sup>27</sup>

In textiles, paternalism was the major characteristic of local labor policy. William Skinner had controlled a mill village which bore his name before coming

Table 3: Labor Cost of Manufacturing at the Lyman Mills, 1870-1890<sup>1</sup>

Total Labor Cost per yard (in cents):		<u>fine goods</u>	<u>coarse goods</u>
	1870	3.795	1.848
	1880	2.697	1.335
	1890	2.115	1.236
Spinning:	1870	.633	.538
	1880	.418	.311
	1890	.335	.245
Spooling, Warping, and Dressing:	1870	.505	.264
	1880	.366	.161
	1890	.189	.158
Weaving:	1870	1.988	.722
	1880	1.543	.609
	1890	1.209	.548

<sup>1</sup>Cost of Manufacturing reports, vols. MAE-2, 4, 5, 7. For each year indicated, an average figure was calculated from the January, April, July, and October reports.

to Holyoke in 1874, where paternalism was the principal motif of his approach to labor relations. During the seventies the Germania Mills and the Farr Alpaca Company both instituted primitive employee welfare programs. But it was the seemingly remote Lyman Mills which perhaps best appreciated the benefits of mill paternalism. At the Lyman Company, paymaster Stephen Holman

maintained a regular correspondence with a number of people in England and Scotland, who served him as labor recruiters. They included not only banks, travel agencies, and the like, but a network of former employees as well. The worker recruiters assured Holman that the women whom they recommended were both competent and of good character. In 1857, Jane Wallace wrote from Glasgow that she had drafted fifteen weavers, whom she "knew to be good girls and good weavers of fine cloth." Holman's reputation for paternalism was such that one Scottish woman wrote him inquiring whether he knew anything about her daughter, who had not communicated with her in more than a year.<sup>28</sup>

As it turned out, the Scottish weavers did not prove sufficiently docile for Lyman agent Jones Davis and in 1857 he took steps to replace them with a number of Belgian women. Two years later Davis hired Nicholas Proulx as a labor agent to direct the growing stream of French-Canadian emigration towards Holyoke. For five dollars a head, plus travel expenses, Proulx brought nearly 500 of his countrymen to work at the town's largest cotton mill. In addition to seeking out the most docile labor force available, Davis consciously culti-

vated a paternalistic presence in the workers' lives. Though a non-Catholic, he sometimes attended mass and contributed generously to the Catholic Church, urging his workers to do likewise. At annual Christmas parties, he personally distributed gifts to workers' children and reminded them that "you must not forget your duties to each other, to your parents, or, above all things else, your duty to your savior."<sup>29</sup>

The key figure in the day to day functioning of textile paternalism was the overseer. He hired workers, gave them their orders and often ruled on their petitions for better working conditions, job transfers, and individual pay increases. Manufacturers preferred to hire married men as overseers, because, as Lyman Mills agent Ernest Lovering explained, "it is easier to keep them contented." Married overseers were also less likely to make sexual advances upon female operatives, which threatened to slow production and morally affront manufacturers.<sup>30</sup>

Holyoke textile workers well understood the decisive role the overseer played in their work lives. Local newspapers contained frequent notices of operatives presenting them with gifts. Although the practice was most

prevalent at the absentee controlled cotton mills, it occurred at one time or another at most of the city's textile establishments. Occasionally overseers reciprocated. In 1873, the weavers at the Hampden Mills gave departing overseer Milo Chamberlain a watch chain. Three years later, Chamberlain, then an overseer at a Rockville, Connecticut cotton factory, obtained work at the latter mill for many of the same and now unemployed weavers. After 1880, the practice of giving presents to overseers declined: a less submissive second industrial generation found such acts degrading. Yet paternalism remained a major feature of social relations at Holyoke's textile mills. The large wave of French-Canadian immigrants who entered the mills in the late seventies were often as submissive as their more seasoned predecessors had once been and veteran workers continued to look to overseers for special favors. Also, craft exclusiveness functioned as an adjunct to managerial paternalism.<sup>31</sup>

This was especially true in weave rooms, the largest department in a textile mill, where male loom fixers exhibited fatherly oversight in their relations with female weavers. The loom fixer's duties entailed

cutting off the cloth and replacing the beam in warps that had run out, repairing broken looms, and periodically checking the looms in his section to insure that the cloth was weaving properly. He was the most skilled and indispensable worker in the department and he knew it. Indeed, loom fixers hardly considered themselves ordinary workers. An 1899 pamphlet of the National Loom-Fixers Association listed a number of do's and don't's to guide them at their work. One of its injunctions read: "Don't explain to a weaver or any one who is not a member of the union the reason why you did so and so to a loom to make it run." But a desire to guard craft secrets was not the only matter dividing loom fixers and weavers. The pamphlet also recommended that loom fixers maintain a social distance between themselves and weavers: "Be pleasant and courteous to the help, patient and forbearing, and do your duty like men. . . . Don't be partial to one or more weavers but serve all alike, without regard to sect, creed, or nationality." Lastly, loom fixers were urged to exercise the punitive role to which their superior skills presumably entitled them: "Don't hold an argument with the weaver over any part of your work, but do

your duty and if they fail to do theirs report the case to the second hand or overseer." Given these attitudes on the part of loom fixers, it is scarcely remarkable that no broad-based organization of textile workers occurred.<sup>32</sup>

In failing to mount a sustained resistance to the manufacturers' attack on wages and working conditions, Holyoke textile workers were not alone. Significantly, the only city in which such a counter-offensive occurred was Fall River, where a veteran force of English workers, steeped in militant traditions and obtuse to the wiles of employer paternalism, adamantly opposed capital's impositions. Elsewhere, employer paternalism and ethnic divisiveness undercut organized resistance. At Holyoke, textile quiescence would continue into the twentieth century.<sup>33</sup>

As in textiles, class harmony was the principal characteristic of social relations within the Holyoke paper industry, but it rested upon an uncertain economic foundation. Although paper prices soared during the war years, bringing unprecedented profits, the next few decades saw a precipitate decline, as many new mills entered the field and manufacturers installed ever larger and

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any  
faster paper machines in their establishments. The better grades of paper in which the Holyoke mills specialized were particularly affected. Between 1865 and 1880, the price of superfine writing paper plummeted fifty eight per cent and machine-finished book paper dropped fifty three per cent. In response to this situation, area manufacturers formed the Writing Paper Makers' Association, which was superseded by the broader-based American Paper Makers' Association in 1878.<sup>34</sup>

From the outset the problems of declining prices and overproduction absorbed the attention of association members. They initially proposed a number of production curtailment agreements, but, for reasons that were not far to seek, seldom adhered to them. As a Paper World correspondent noted, after speaking with some of the association's most prominent members at the 1880 meeting, such conversation brought "to light everywhere, sometimes in the most unexpected quarters, a decided tendency to exert a large share of individual independence." Accordingly, by the eighties, while curtailment agreements continued to be made, manufacturers began to search elsewhere for a solution to their woes.<sup>35</sup>

The most popular new panacea was the export trade. Senator Warner Miller of New York told the 1881 meeting that "South of us are the great non-manufacturing countries . . . (and) their trade should be ours and our government should see to developing it at once." In 1883, the association's export committee called upon the government to establish foreign depots, while individual members later recommended strengthening the navy and government subsidization of steam transport. But the campaign was no more successful than the various curtailment programs. Although paper exports rose steadily during the seventies, they peaked in 1881 at \$1,408,976; a decade later they stood at only \$1,226,686 and that figure comfortably eclipsed any of the intervening years. The Association's 1884 meeting concluded that cooperative efforts to boost exports had failed and recommended the pursuit of individual initiatives.<sup>36</sup>

As successive production limitation programs failed and hopes for increased exports proved illusory, manufacturers protected profit margins in the only other way they knew how: by slashing wages, first during the mid-seventies and again in 1884. The second round of

reductions brought a heated reaction from local paper workers, who asked what had happened to the increased profits created by the introduction of the Coburn rag-cutter and other labor saving devices. The manufacturers declared that a wage reduction was preferable to half-production because the latter would decrease pay even further and place workers in "the undesirable state of being idle one-half of the time." This met with a cold response. "PAPER MAKER" felt that he spoke for most of his fellow workers when he stated that he "would prefer to work four days for six dollars, than six days for the same amount." Yet, the manufacturers refused to rescind the reduction and little more was heard of the matter. That 1884 was a depression year partially explains worker reluctance to resist the reduction more actively. Equally important was the fact that divisions among major paper workers inhibited a concerted response.<sup>37</sup>

labor saving

idle

1884 depression

Although craft exclusiveness formed the basic line of demarcation separating beater engineers and machine tenders from semi-skilled rag and finishing department workers, differences in wages, hours, and relations with the owners reinforced the division. Rag

and finishing room workers put in a sixty hour week at wages that ranged from thirty to sixty per cent of what engineers and tenders received. With the exception of a partially successful loftmen's strike in 1882, job actions for higher wages led to the summary dismissal of strikers. This was in stark contrast to the cautious, even sympathetic manner in which manufacturers responded to the grievances of skilled workers. An 1888 speech before the American Paper Makers' Association by Warner Miller, a United States Senator and paper manufacturer from New York, highlighted the difference. "It is the almost universal rule of the paper industry," Miller stated, "that proprietors prefer that their skilled men should be owners of their homes. This is the key to the situation. In the concern that I am connected with we almost required the skilled married men at least, to own their homes." Where necessary, Miller continued, manufacturers furnished down payments which would subsequently be repaid in monthly installments. There is no evidence that Holyoke paper manufacturers followed this practice, but the statement does reflect the careful attention they gave their skilled workers on other matters.<sup>38</sup>

The major grievance of beater engineers and machine tenders concerned the long workday. Because it took from two to five hours to prepare stock for production once it cooled, paper manufacturers kept their machinery in continuous operation, twenty four hours a day, six days a week, and required engineers and tenders to work a twelve hour daily "tour," which they reasoned was not very tiresome since the workers had only to watch the machinery. The tour workers felt otherwise. In 1884 a group of beater engineers and machine tenders organized Eagle Lodge and began a movement for shorter hours that drew on a broadly conceived social and economic rationale. By closing the mills from six PM Saturday to seven AM Monday, an 1886 petition contended, tour workers would be able to spend the Sabbath with their families. "If instead of sending missionaries to Africa," one worker declared, "they were sent to the manufacturers of Holyoke, this matter of a little leisure for the men who work hard might be helped." The tour workers also maintained that the introduction of larger engines which were more difficult to manipulate and the employment of a broader variety of stock required the almost uninterrupted attention of

beater engineers during a given tour; and in the machine room, the installation of larger and faster paper machines, producing a more diverse range of papers, had appreciably increased the physical and mental strain of machine tenders. Lastly, they argued, shorter hours would reduce production and raise prices.<sup>39</sup>

The initial response of many manufacturers to the movement differed considerably from the manner in which they treated the wage demands of semi-skilled workers. Orrick Greenleaf stated that the petition had his sympathy, "for he was a working man himself once." "The paper industry has been singularly fortunate in its freedom from labor troubles," another manufacturer declared, "Let us keep it so."

In our mills the help have always been loyal to us, and we mean to keep them loyal. It is truer economy for us to keep our help loyal than to make petty savings in wages and working hours and make our men dissatisfied.

William Whiting congratulated the tour workers on the "firm yet orderly and respectable way in which the matter of short hours has been agitated. There was a laudable lack of that bragadocio which is so common in connection with such movement." Yet, with the exception

of Whiting and James H. Newton, few manufacturers reduced hours before August, 1887, when four workers affiliated with the Knights of Labor threatened a strike; and within a short while thereafter most had returned to a seventy-two hour week. As the failure of numerous production curtailment agreements had earlier revealed, a lack of unanimity among manufacturers doomed any movement that relied upon the goodwill and cooperation of the owners.<sup>40</sup>

The failure of the shorter hours movement marked a turning point in labor-capital relations within the paper industry. Heretofore, four worker relations with capital had in many ways been no less paternalistic than social relations within the textile industry. The defeat brought a new understanding of the basic antagonism between capital and labor, a recognition that some measure of struggle was necessary to secure industrial justice. As one paper worker declared during the midst of the 1887 petition campaign:

Four workers can have their wrongs reduced by becoming organized and raising a gigantic fund; we then and not until then can compel manufacturers to give us our rights. They at present take advantage of our unorganized condition, and while we remain so we may expect injustice meted out to us(;) . . . organized we are an irresistible power.<sup>41</sup>

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Holyoke Mirror (HM), 10 May 1856.

<sup>2</sup>Census of Massachusetts, 1880, From the Tenth United States Census, 352-353; Constance M. Green, Holyoke, Massachusetts: A Case Study of the Industrial Revolution in America (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1939), 47.

<sup>3</sup>Anthony Wallace, Rockdale: The Growth of an American Village in the Early Industrial Revolution (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1978), 136-137; Massachusetts Bureau of Statistics of Labor (MBSL), Fifth Annual Report, 1874, 128-149.

<sup>4</sup>Wallace, Rockdale, 137-138; Tamara Hareven, Family Time and Industrial Time: The Relationship between the Family and Work in a New England Industrial Community (New York: Cambridge University Press paperback edition, 1982), 398, 402, 406; Melvin T. Copeland, The Cotton Manufacturing Industry of the United States (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1912), 59-61.

<sup>5</sup>Wallace, Rockdale, 138-139; Copeland, Cotton Manufacturing, 62-64.

<sup>6</sup>Wallace, Rockdale, 139-143, 193-196; Copeland, Cotton Manufacturing, 66-73, 80; Hareven, Family Time and Industrial Time, 397-398, 401, 405; MBSL, Eleventh Annual Report, 1880, 67. The replacement of mules by ring spindles occurred at an uneven rate, but where the mules were retained, manufacturers increased their speed. In 1889, the Lyman Mills ordered new mules that would operate at 9,5000 revolutions per minute rather than the previous 8,000 revolutions. Ernest Lovering to F.P. Sheldon, 6 Oct. 1889, vol. PG-1, Lyman Mills Papers, Baker Library, Harvard Business School (LMP).

<sup>7</sup>Arthur H. Cole, The American Wool Manufacture (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1926), I, 361; II, 88-91; Springfield Republican (SR), 6 May 1881. An unsuccessful strike by fifty Dedham jack spinners, protesting the introduction of self-operating jacks, is reported in MBSL, Eleventh Annual Report, 1880, 24.

<sup>8</sup>Thomas Dublin, Women at Work: The Transformation of Work and Community in Lowell, Massachusetts, 1826-1860 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979), 64, 67-68; Wallace, Rockdale, 143-144; Fareven, Family Time and Industrial Time, 398-399, 406-409; Copeland, Cotton Manufacturing, 77-78. Ever on the lookout for labor saving innovations, Lyman Mills treasurer, S.L. Bush, urged the company agent to look at a slasher adopted by the Indian Orchard Company, which reportedly allowed one boy to do the work of fourteen operatives. The rumor was of course too good to be true, but the installation of slashers did significantly reduce the labor cost of dressing. S.L. Bush to J.S. Davis, 4 Jan. 1870, vol. PB-1, LMP. During the post-war years the development of a wire bobbin-holder and improved stop mechanism for warp beamers allowed manufacturers to increase the speed of these machines, Copeland, Cotton Manufacturing, 74-76.

<sup>9</sup>Wallace, Rockdale, 144-147; Copeland, Cotton Manufacturing, 80-85, 114. At Holyoke, the Lyman Mills did not assign six looms to a weaver until 1889. The practice of other mills cannot be determined, though an 1887 communication from the Lyman Mills' agent, discussing an increase from four to five looms, suggests that the company was following the lead of other local factories. E. Lovering to T. Parsons, 1 Sep. 1887, vol. PC-6; E. Lovering to F.P. Sheldon, 15 Oct. 1889, Vol. PG-1, LMF. During the eighties woolen manufacturers also significantly increased loom speeds. The introduction of the Crompton fancy loom raised loom speeds from 45 to 85 picks per minute. At Holyoke, the Germania Woolen Mills in 1882 reported purchasing twenty new Crompton looms. "As soon as the old wears out," the notice added, "new machinery of the most approved American pattern is put in." Cole, Wool Manufacture, II, 91-93; Holyoke Transcript (HT), 11 Feb. 1882.

<sup>10</sup>Census of Massachusetts, 1880, From the Tenth United States Census, 352-353; Lyman Horace Weeks, History of Paper Manufacturing in the United States (New York: Lockwood Trade Journal Company, 1916), 145-147.

<sup>11</sup>Weeks, Paper Manufacturing, 172, 190, 270-271; Green, Holyoke, 87-88. The average number of employees in each mill was computed from Federal Nonpopulation Schedules for Massachusetts: Manufacturing, 1880.

<sup>12</sup>Alexander Watt, The Art of Paper-Making: A Practical Handbook of the Manufacture of Paper from Rags, Esparto, Straw, and Other Materials Including the Manufacture of Pulp from Wood Fibre (New York: D. Van Nostrand Company, 1907), 19-22; Holyoke Municipal Register (HMR), 1881, 107; 1890, 227. Because Holyoke mills specialized in the finer grades of paper, this discussion concentrates on the treatment of rags. The preparation of wood pulp is described in Watt, Art of Paper-Making, 53-79; and C.F. Cross and E.J. Bevan, A Text-Book of Paper-Making (London: E. and F.N. Spon, 1888), 105-108. The following paragraphs also draw on the fine brief survey of paper production in MBSL, Forty Fifty Annual Report, 1914, VII, 75-81.

<sup>13</sup>Watt, Art of Paper-Making, 22-23; Cross and Bevan, Paper Making, 81; HT, 27 Dec. 1883; SR, 17 Jul. 1883; 5 Jan. 1884; Paper World (PW), VIII (1, Jan. 1884), 7. Figures on the proportion of women in the paper workforce are taken from Federal Nonpopulation Census Schedules for Massachusetts: Manufacturing, 1880; and MBSL,

<sup>14</sup>Watt, Art of Paper-Making, 24-29; Cross and Bevan, Paper Making, 84.

<sup>15</sup>Watt, Art of Paper-Making, 34-39, 89-91; Cross and Bevan, Paper Making, 88. In some mills, bleaching occurred in the beater engine.

- <sup>16</sup>Watt, Art of Paper-Making, 101-110; Cross and Bevan, Paper Making, 143.
- <sup>17</sup>Watt, Art of Paper-Making, 114-127; Cross and Bevan, Paper Making, 138. Some papers were sized on the paper machine.
- <sup>18</sup>Watt, Art of Paper-Making, 134-137, 142-143, 150-152; Cross and Bevan, Paper Making, 153-157, 176; SR, 18 Sep. 1898.
- <sup>19</sup>Watt, Art of Paper-Making, 154-157; Cross and Bevan, Paper Making, 175; SR, 20 Jul. 1878; 24 Sep. 1878.
- <sup>20</sup>Donald B. Cole, Immigrant City: Lawrence, Massachusetts, 1845-1921. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1963), 210. A convenient summary of Holyoke's ethnic composition can be found in Green, Holyoke, 367.
- <sup>21</sup>Oscar Handlin, Boston's Immigrants: A Study in Acculturation, 1790-1880 (New York: Atheneum paperback edition, 1976), 38-53.
- <sup>22</sup>Peter Haebler, "Habitants in Holyoke: The Development of the French-Canadian Community in a Massachusetts City, 1865-1910," Unpublished Ph. D. thesis, University of New Hampshire, 1976, 31-36.
- <sup>23</sup>Census of Massachusetts, 1880, From the Tenth United States Census, 352-353; Hareven, Family Time and Industrial Time, chap. 5.
- <sup>24</sup>Rowland Berthoff, British Immigrants in Industrial America, 1790-1950 (New York: Russell and Russell, 1968; originally published in 1953), 21-28; Green, Holyoke, 111-112, 367. For a survey of the conditions prompting nineteenth century German emigration, see Mack Walker, Germany and the Emigration, 1816-1885 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1964).

- <sup>25</sup>Paul McGouldrick, New England Textiles in the Nineteenth Century: Profits and Investment (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968), 21-27; Theophilus Parsons notebook, 1873, vol. AD-2a; George A. Hills to T. Parsons, 8 Dec. 1884, vol. PC-4, LMP.
- <sup>26</sup>Louis Galambos, Competition and Cooperation: The Emergence of a National Trade Association (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1966), 20-29.
- <sup>27</sup>S.L. Bush to J.S. Davis, 11 Dec. 1869, vol. PB-1; George A. Hills to T. Parsons, 8 Dec. 1884, 10 Dec. 1884, vol. PC-4; E. Lovering to T. Parsons, 20 Dec. 1887, 23 Dec. 1887, vol. PC-6, LMP.
- <sup>28</sup>Holyoke Public Library Scrapbook, 20:16-17; HT, 4 Dec. 1872; 4 Oct. 1879; Mrs. Hugh Bowie to S. Holman, 21 Oct. 1858, vol. LW-1, LMP.
- <sup>29</sup>Green, Holyoke, 48-49, 68-69; Haebler, "Habitants in Holyoke," 53-54; FM, 20 Dec. 1856; 27 Dec. 1856; Holyoke Public Library Scrapbook, 4:73.
- <sup>30</sup>E. Lovering to B.S. Bassett, 14 May 1902, vol. PE-35, LMP. Tamara Hareven has presented the best account of overseer paternalism in Family Time and Industrial Time, 50-53, 62, 132-135, 144-145.
- <sup>31</sup>HT, 25 Jan. 1873; 26 Feb. 1876. At Manchester's Amoskeag Mills, Tamara Hareven found that veteran workers resented newly arrived immigrants who behaved too obsequiously before the bosses; but she also argues that the Amoskeag's elaborate system of paternalism persisted until the 1920s when it collapsed under the weight of that decade's speedups and stretch-outs. Family Time and Industrial Time, 135, 145.
- <sup>32</sup>Hareven, Family Time and Industrial Time, 396-397; National Loom Fixers Association pamphlet, 1899, in LMP. The division between loom fixers and weavers facilitated managerial efforts to reduce the labor cost of manufacturing. In 1892, when the Lyman Mills conformed to the 58 hour law, its agent asked if it would be advisable to reduce the wages of ring spinners and loom fixers at that time. "Of course," he added, "our piece paid help, which includes the weaving, will stand a reduction and this forms a large part of the labor cost." E. Lovering to T. Parsons, 22 Jul. 1892, vol. PC-7, LMP.

<sup>33</sup>MBSL, Elevent Annual Report, 1880, 59-62.

<sup>34</sup>Weeks, Paper Manufacturing, 297; HT, 26 Feb. 1873; PW, I (8, Aug. 1880), 12-13.

<sup>35</sup>HT, 25 Oct. 1873; 28 Mar. 1874; 20 Nov. 1875; 19 Aug. 1876; 26 Oct. 1878; 5 Feb. 1879; 20 Nov. 1884; PW, I (8, Aug. 1880), 12-13.

<sup>36</sup>PW, III (2, Aug. 1881), 15; III (1, Jul. 1881), 20; VII (6, Dec. 1883), 17-18; XVI (1, Jan. 1888), 7; XIX (3, Sep. 1889), 2-4; IX (2, Aug. 1884), 18; XI (4, Oct. 1885), 8; Weeks, Paper Manufacture, 291.

<sup>37</sup>HT, 19 Jan. 1884; 26 Jan. 1884; 2 Feb. 1884; 4 Feb. 1884; SR, 21 Jan. 1884; 29 Jan. 1884.

<sup>38</sup>HT, 27 May 1882; 3 Jun. 1882; 4 Feb. 1884; 20 Mar. 1886; 4 Jan. 1886; 11 Aug. 1888; 25 Aug. 1892; PW, XVII (2, Aug. 1888), 2.

<sup>39</sup>MBSI, Forty Fifth Annual Report, 1914, VII, 9; Tenth Annual Report, 1879, 153; Green, Holyoke, 207-208; Weeks, Paper Manufacturing, 293-294; HT, 28 Jul. 1886; SR, 1 Mar. 1887; PW, XV (2, Aug. 1887), 10-11. Holyoke paper workers had first organized during the mid-seventies as the Paper Makers Protective Union. The union was chiefly a benefit society and collapsed in 1876, amidst an acrimonious dispute over the question of unemployment benefits. HT, 17 Jan. 1874; 18 Feb. 1874; 1 Nov. 1876; 6 Dec. 1876.

<sup>40</sup>PW, XV (2, Aug. 1887), 11; HT, 11 Apr. 1887; SR, 14 May 1887; PW, XIV (6, Jun. 1887), 10; HT, 1 Aug. 1887; 10 Aug. 1887; 10 Sep. 1887; Green, Holyoke, 209-210.

<sup>41</sup>HT, 29 Jul. 1887; Green, Holyoke, 210-213.

## C H A P T E R IV

### WORKER CULTURES

The world of the Holyoke working class embraced more than the workplace. Outside the mill existed the family, church, benevolent society, saloon, and other institutions which enriched working class life, and shaped the social personality of their adherents. Within these institutions workers defined themselves and created a number of distinct cultural worlds. One was a world of respectability based on the duty to family inculcated from an early age. Here young workers developed the means and values necessary to maintain families of their own. Before entering this world, however, many lingered for a time in another: the raucous, hard drinking world of saloon culture.

Saloon culture emerged as a separate working class culture during the course of the industrial revolution. In the pre-industrial world work and leisure were inextricably mixed. Periods of conviviality, in which the master often joined his workmen in a few bowls of rum or some equally heady brew, punctuated each day's work.

Workers regularly observed "St. Monday," beginning a week-end's revelry on Saturday afternoon and not commencing work again until Monday afternoon. Election day, fire and militia musters were holidays marked by gambling, drinking, and not a little fighting.<sup>1</sup>

The spread of industrial production changed all this. The capitalists who spearheaded the industrial revolution demanded a more disciplined workforce. Apprentices now received temperance medals, rather than lessons in how to drink. Schools and evangelical churches inculcated a new industrial morality which stressed hard work, temperance, and self-discipline. Intensified competition forced an increasing proportion of employers to require such behavior of their workers. Those that did not risked falling into the growing army of wage labor. Yet not all workers conformed to the new industrial morality. Some persisted in following the more casual lifestyle of the previous era. As capitalist production first divided traditional crafts and later obliterated them altogether through the development of machinery, such men often refused to enter the new factories and sought casual labor in the interstices of the emergent industrial economy. At mid-century in Holyoke,

the immigrants who had only recently left the pre-industrial southern counties of Ireland comprised the group most resistant to the new industrial morality.

The laborers who built the dam and dug the canals formed the backbone of saloon culture within the early Irish community. But as the initial wave of construction abated, many of those who did not move on sought work at the city's mills, where they encountered the new industrial morality. Beginning at 4:40 AM, a succession of bells punctuated the workday, telling workers when to get up, when to eat, and when they might return home in the evening. Not all mill operatives immediately internalized the new morality. In 1881, one South Holyoke mill discharged eight workers when they failed to appear the day following pay day. But it was not among factory workers that saloon culture flourished. The dangers alone of such work made clear headedness imperative. Rather, it was among those who continued a more casual occupational existence that saloon culture flourished. As late as 1897, the Transcript complained of laborers who chose to work irregularly for the city at \$2 a day rather than enter the mills where they could obtain an assured weekly wage of between

\$7.50 and \$10. These men simply would not accept the disciplined routine of factory work. They remained a small but regular part of the working class and their lives revolved around the saloon.<sup>2</sup>

The dominant faction within the Democratic party also centered its activities on the saloon. Characterized by the Transcript as "Rumsellers who never did an honest day's work," but sought the votes of local workmen, these politicians most assiduously courted the laborers. During the closing decades of the nineteenth century the wages of municipal laborers became one of the most heated issues in local politics. Democratic aldermen regularly fixed the scale above the local market rate for that grade of labor. The policy enraged local capitalists, who saw it as a violation of one of life's verities: to ignore the dictates of the market, they argued, only invited catastrophe. Furthermore, the practice encouraged workers to leave the mills, where they received less for a day's work. In return for this aid, laborers became the shock troops of the Democratic machine. They yelled the loudest at party rallies and on election day worked to get out the vote. As a supplement to this more routine work, they occasionally shower-

ed stones and mudballs on a Republican parade.<sup>3</sup>

Successive waves of young, unmarried workers joined the laborers as the mainstays of saloon culture. Although no one was fated to enter this cultural world, the city's truants passed through a fitting apprenticeship. Holyoke school authorities considered truancy a major problem, and in some cases, parents abetted truant children. One woman boasted that her children had not attended school in two years and that no one could make them go. Yet, by the mid-seventies, when this statement was reported, such declarations represented a minority opinion. Only a few months later the Transcript insisted that "all classes of parents" actively assisted the truant officer, "even those who at first were strongly opposed to him." The truants themselves were seldom as accommodating. In one 1877 incident, a group of boys stationed a safe distance behind the truant officer, could be heard "reviling him with insulting words." A decade later, after the courts decided that a truant officer could not arrest a boy without first obtaining a warrant, a group of eight five "incorrigible and defiant truants" regularly assailed truant officers investigating their neighborhood with

"derisive and defiant talk."<sup>4</sup>

School authorities offered a number of explanations for the prevalence of truancy: child labor, parental neglect, and the group life of the youths themselves. The 1890 school committee report blamed the "older boys, fifteen and sixteen years old, that neither work nor attend school, 'only the school of idleness and vice,' (and who) entice the younger ones away and encourage them to play truant and commit depredations upon property, or else train them to a life of idleness." In its indictment the report reflected a growing late nineteenth century concern with the activities of youth gangs. In 1900, the Holyoke Sunday correspondent of the Springfield Republican observed that gangs had recently become more organized, establishing their own clubhouses. "The roaming of 'de gang' haphazard about the streets was bad enough," he wrote, "but the selecting of a rendezvous where matters could be deliberately planned, was a step in advance of the haphazard method of mischief." The observation revealed more than middle class fears. Gang membership constituted an important part of growing up for working class youth.<sup>5</sup>

By the eighties, if not earlier, the gang had become an established fixture in the lives of working class youths. In that decade, gangs exhibited a clear ethnic basis, as rival groups of Irish and French-Canadians regularly beat each other senseless. At times gangs seemed to recognize that their activities stemmed from a culture of their own making and they did not lightly accept or tolerate outside interference. In 1889, when three newspapermen attempted to stop a rock-throwing battle between rival gangs of Irish and French-Canadians, "they no sooner interfered than they were made the object of the vengeance of both sides."<sup>6</sup>

Moving from the streets, poolrooms, and back alley clubhouses of the city, the gang later reconstituted itself within the saloon. In the process, it acquired new pursuits. Drinking was the most obvious of these, and one's capacity for drink became a further test of the young worker's manhood. In 1883, one saloon staged a competition to determine which of its regulars could drink the most within the shortest period of time. As a prize, the young man who won the contest received a leather medal with a star in the center, surrounded by the words, "For the biggest drunk in Holyoke." At these

events, saloon regulars laughed at themselves and the shocked reaction of the dominant culture.<sup>7</sup>

In embracing drink as a new activity, the gang did not forsake its former pursuits. Gambling and fighting were also integral parts of saloon culture. Here exotic competitions like cock fighting supplemented the more customary games of chance. With the rise of organized boxing matches, one could vicariously indulge in a favorite pastime, while making a bet on the side. Local boxers like John Scully, whose great dream in life was to go "bare knuckles to a finish, for a purse of \$25 or \$50 a side" with a South Hadley Falls slugger named Hickey, could find ready support in the city's saloons. Some did not confine their martial enthusiasm to witnessing staged contests.<sup>8</sup>

Saloon culture contained a host of colorful, if not very pleasant, characters like "Shack Nasty" Jim Sullivan. One day at the circus Jim knocked down three men and chased any number of women around, until one of the circus employees stopped him - "with a blow from a sledge-hammer of a fist." The Irish did not have a monopoly on such desperadoes. Fred Barney, "the fighting Frenchman," almost killed Eugene Sullivan in one saloon

brawl. Barney received four months in the county jail for the assault, but it did not deter him from nearly chewing off the ear of one of his countrymen in a subsequent encounter.<sup>9</sup>

Within the world of saloon culture work related ethnic tensions erupted into open violence. In one incident, a local contractor secured a group of French-Canadian strikebreakers to replace thirty Irish laborers seeking a pay increase. Before the French-Canadians could begin work, however, the Irish laborers, who had awaited their arrival in ambush, assaulted them with a barrage of rocks. At the city's mills, numerous disputes between Irish and French-Canadians were later settled in the streets. And where the Irish had once attempted to protect their neighborhoods from the arbitrary intrusions of Yankee policemen, French-Canadians later sought the same protection against a predominantly Irish police force. One evening in 1890 Officer Ryan manhandled a disorderly French-Canadian youth who had dilatorily responded to Ryan's order that he go home. The young man's friends, who had initially departed, soon returned with reinforcements and attacked Ryan. But before they could disable him, another policeman happened

upon the scene and together with Ryan clubbed the crowd into submission.<sup>10</sup>

Although principally a man's world, some women also made their mark in saloon culture. Catherine Moran managed a small drinking establishment on the Patch and actively participated in its brawls, splitting a policeman's nose with a tea-pot in one fight. In 1879, a visiting fourteen-year old girl from Westfield, who obviously did not know Catherine Moran, refused to move when Moran ordered her from the steps of a tenement where she had been sitting. Incensed by the girl's temerity, Moran threw her into the street and then beat her "black and blue" with a broomstick. Occasionally an unseasoned youth failed to realize that not all Holyoke women closely observed the prescriptions of female decorum. On a Sunday evening in 1882 one such young man recklessly thrust himself against all the young women who passed him on the sidewalk. To his regret, he tried it once too often. The last woman whom he insulted that evening struck him with a solid blow "straight from the shoulder," dropping him where he stood.<sup>11</sup>

For all its boisterousness and rowdiness, saloon

culture held a certain appeal for many workers, if only as a brief escape from life's burdens and worries. But the escape could be no more than brief, for the culture's activities conflicted too sharply with other responsibilities, the principal one being the duty workers had to their families. Many of those who remained habituated to saloon culture became a reproach to their class. Frequent newspaper articles about wife-beating, desertion, and non-support reflected more than the middle class biases and fears of their authors; they also spoke of a serious problem which plagued working class life and was as much a source of fear to the majority of workers who sought some form of respectability as it was to the middle class journalists who reported it and the women and children who were its victims. One could always jest about the other excesses of saloon culture, but when it impinged upon family life, it became subject to the attacks of the whole community - workers as well as middle class reformers. In the end, the young worker who wished to establish a family of his own had to leave the saloon and the old gang behind. Even where workers did not totally sever these connections, the break was real nevertheless. Henceforth, the emotional focus of

their lives lay elsewhere.<sup>12</sup>

In sum, saloon culture contributed little to class development. Arguably, its partisans did possess an incipient sense of class consciousness which made them resistant to upper and middle class intrusions into their world. But this consciousness remained still-born, ethnically isolated, and often geographically confined to a single neighborhood. It was a consciousness that was acutely aware of the differences, but obtuse to the commonalities between it and other groups; the road to class cohesion was not paved with the stones and brickbats of intra-class ethnic violence. As the unquestioning foot soldiers of a Democratic machine more interested in the self-aggrandizement of its leaders than ameliorating the abysmal social conditions of working class life, the culture's adherents contributed even less in the political sphere. Finally, by appearing as a threat to the family, saloon culture threatened the very existence of the working class. It was this last perception which drove many workers to seek some cultural alternative upon which to base their lives.

Working class respectability had at least two faces. The first, a Yankee artisanal form, derived from an

earlier era of craft production. Where the adherents of saloon culture, when challenged by factory production, attempted to maintain pre-industrial work rhythms and lifestyles, the respectables embraced the new industrial morality and its emphasis on self-improvement. The other form of working class respectability, a Catholic trade unionist variant, emerged during the closing decades of the century. After 1860, the Catholic Church and later the trade unions conducted a cultural assault on the peasant traditionalism of Irish immigrants. By the turn of the century, if not earlier, these attacks had reduced saloon culture to a marginal place in local working class life. In the process of its development, Catholic trade unionist respectability absorbed the earlier Yankee artisanal variant, while incorporating many of its characteristics.

The rise of factory production shattered a number of traditional crafts. By mid-century in such industries as paper, textiles, and shoes, most workers had become factory operatives, engaged in routinized, if sometimes still complex, productive tasks. But the rise of the factory system did not destroy all crafts at the same time; nor did it make factory operatives of everyone

pursuing the trades which it did transform. Many craftsmen avoided the factory for decades. The ambitious and the fortunate established themselves as petty producers; others worked in small shops alongside such independent proprietors. Independent production marked the pinnacle of ambition for many Yankee artisans, providing the autonomy which they cherished above all else. At mid-century, in a young and growing town like Holyoke there existed ample opportunity for those possessing the requisite skills and capital.

In 1850, besides one small cotton mill, Holyoke contained nineteen craft-based shops which employed less than six workmen. Brickmakers, shoemakers, harness makers, blacksmiths, coppersmiths, and others conducted small, independent enterprises. As more mills were built in subsequent years, a host of small supporting businesses grew up around them. Some did not remain small for long. Thomas Kelt arrived in Holyoke in 1859 and established a foundry and machine shop which soon employed thirty workers. Before coming to Holyoke, Kelt had worked at the Whitin Machine Shop for thirteen years, where he had acquired a reputation as a gifted

craftsman based on his skill in turning a wide range of castings.<sup>14</sup>

Whatever their ambitions, not all Yankee artisans found their position agreeable. In 1850, one group formed a local chapter of the New England Industrial League and sought a ten hour day, in order to have additional time for education and self-improvement. But the Holyoke chapter did not maintain a long existence. The extensive geographical mobility of the period coupled with the wide range of opportunity available in a growing town like Holyoke precluded the careful nurture such a movement then demanded. Moreover, a number of local institutions bridged the narrow gap between the Yankee artisan and his employer.<sup>15</sup>

One was the fire company. Unlike some antebellum cities where fire companies served as an extension of saloon culture, Holyoke companies functioned as models of respectability. The resolutions of Engine Company #1 stated that anyone appearing intoxicated in uniform would have his uniform taken from him; and only those "well known by the community as a good respectable citizen and not addicted to intoxication" could parade with the company. One Sunday in 1861 the Mechanics Engine

Company staged an annual ball, while other companies invited artisan-firemen from neighboring communities to their dances. In 1861, the Mechanics Company formed a baseball team and bested a local Irish squad in its first encounter, 31-15.<sup>16</sup>

The Yankee artisan also found relaxation in the rituals of the Masonic order. Like the social affairs of the fire companies, the masons provided a means of staying in touch with artisans in surrounding communities. Nearly twenty five members of the local lodge, the Transcript reported in 1863, "made a friendly call upon their brother craftsmen in Chicopee." The order looked after the dead as well as the living. When S.C. Oliver, the foreman of the blacksmith shop at the Holyoke Machine Company, died, his obituary noted that he "was a man of much personal worth and a member of the Masonic fraternity, and was buried Thursday with masonic honors." No respectable Yankee artisan could ask for more.<sup>17</sup>

The most important event in the lives of this generation of Yankee artisans was the Civil War. Of the first thirty six volunteers at Holyoke, twenty four were either artisans or skilled factory operatives. Many others sub-

sequently went, and those who did not gave their unqualified support to the Union cause. When R.P. Crafts, a local Democrat, refused to allow the establishment of a recruiting office at the Hook and Ladder Company's room at the Exchange building, the company voted to vacate the premises. Another expression of the Yankee artisan's commitment came from Thomas Kelt, the machinist who had established a foundry at Holyoke. Upon a brief return visit to Holyoke from Newark, where he had moved in 1863, Kelt reported finding some Newarkers a little "copperish," particularly the "blue noses;" but he was trying his best to "instill into their veins some of the good old Massachusetts loyalty." Regarding the war's impact on this generation of workers, Alan Dawley and Paul Faler have written that the "mythology that came from the Civil War tended to persuade workers that their power and destiny were inextricably linked to the military heroes, civilian leaders, and existing frame of government that had won the war. It was not necessary for bourgeois ideologists to go about preaching a 'false' consciousness to working people who risked their lives to bring down the slave power." There is no evidence that Holyoke's artisans constituted an ex-

ception to this generalization. For more than a decade after the war's end there was no revival of the feeble strains of pre-war protest.<sup>18</sup>

In the decades following the Civil War, petty entrepreneurship remained a viable alternative for some artisans. The 1880 manufacturing census showed fifty seven establishments employing ten workmen or less. In these shops, machinists, blacksmiths, coppersmiths, tailors, printers, and others practiced their craft free from the grinding routine of the factory. On the whole, such establishments exhibited a remarkable degree of stability. A decade later, thirty remained in operation, a few having grown considerably in the interim: the Perkins Machine Shop now employed twenty men rather than five, while the workforce at Watson Ely's lumber company had expanded from ten to forty. Another eleven businesses survived at least four years before going under. As late as the eighties, the Yankee artisan who hoped to establish his own business was not living in a fool's paradise - the material basis existed for such hopes.<sup>19</sup>

Economic growth thus sustained hopes of independent production. Yet corollary developments mitigated

the promise and transformed the community in ways which some Yankee artisans found hard to accept. The growing concentration of capital meant that proportionately fewer artisans now operated their own shops. Also, by the late seventies, the power rental arrangements of the Holyoke Water Power Company clearly favored the large mills, making it even more difficult for the aspiring petty entrepreneur. In an 1879 letter to the Transcript criticizing local boosterism, "ARTISAN" gave vent to the growing discontent of Yankee craftsmen. "The indiscriminate 'hollering' for everybody to 'come to Holyoke' without regard to their character or reputation is stupid," he wrote. The city already had "enough of tramps, enough of loafers, enough of swindlers, but not enough of honest men, laborers, artisans, skilled workers, sound business establishments, etc." The complaint contained an apt summary of the forces then impinging on the artisan's world: immigrants who had not internalized the new industrial morality; speculators who did not engage in productive labor; and, one suspects, the whole process of industrial growth which in the end threatened his very existence.<sup>20</sup>

Yankee artisan respectability entailed more than

playing a productive role in society. It also embraced a host of behaviors disseminated by the home and school. In addition to its role in teaching basic cognitive skills, the school proved a conveyor of values which complemented the work of the home. The published essays of some local grammar school students, although written late in the century, shed some light on this facet of the classroom. In an essay entitled "Habits," Isabel Kagwin outlined the more conventional forms of behavior:

We ought to stand erect and keep our heads up and not drag our feet and stamp when we walk.

We should speak plainly and pleasantly and we should not run our words together. We should talk low.

We should not get our mouths full of food at once. We should chew our food well before swallowing it. We should not talk while eating.

Another student offered some observations on social relations. In an essay entitled "Good Habits," Alice Russell wrote that "However rude others are, we ourselves should form the habit of being polite. Form the habit of giving a person his or her proper name. Never interrupt two persons speaking." She concluded that "We should never put anyone lower than ourselves, nor think ourselves above others."<sup>21</sup>

Although some of the recommended "habits" may seem amusingly quaint, they occasioned little mirth on the part of Yankee artisans. For the symbols of respectability - be it a masonic funeral, marching erect with the local fire company, or simply chewing one's food properly - were integral components of his sense of self-esteem and reinforced a conviction of self-worth that made him fiercely protective of what he deemed to be his rights. These same symbols also led him to doubt the worth of anyone outside of their compass. And while the Yankee artisan would agree that "We should never put anyone lower than ourselves," he would add that the deportment of some Holyokers marked them as inferior.

Beyond the symbols, it was the Yankee artisan's role as producer that formed the core element of his notion of respectability and conditioned his attitude toward class relations. At Holyoke during the post-war years, the cooperative projects of the Sovereigns of Industry provided the most visible expression of the producer ideology. The first Massachusetts chapter of the Sovereigns was formed in 1874 at Springfield. A group of Holyoke cooperators, formerly organized as the

Holyoke Cooperative Association, established a local council shortly afterwards. Acting in concert with the Patrons of Husbandry, the Sovereigns made bulk purchases of commodities, which they sold at a small mark-up designed to cover operating expenses. The organization's stated purpose was to "establish a better system of economical exchanges, and to promote on a basis of equity and liberty, mutual fellowship and cooperative action among the producers and consumers of wealth throughout the world."<sup>12</sup>

A secret society, steeped in ritual, the Sovereigns admitted "Any person engaged in industrial pursuits, not under sixteen years of age, of good character, and having no interest in conflict with the purposes of the order." The vagueness of this standard - which seemed to accept all but lawyers, politicians, liquor dealers, and some merchants - reflected the organization's attitude toward class relations. Pitting itself against the "personal and class pursuit of selfish interest," the Sovereigns sought to abolish the "monopolized privileges" of the "aristocratic classes." At the same time, however, it denounced any form of class struggle. Much in contrast to the adherents of saloon culture, who were unable

to recognize their friends, the Sovereigns had difficulty locating its foes. Nevertheless the organization remains noteworthy. As an early response to the increasing inequities and functional disorder of late nineteenth century industrial capitalism, the Sovereigns served as a local precursor to the Knights of Labor and demonstrated a growing willingness on the part of Yankee artisans to see their plight as part of a larger struggle.<sup>23</sup>

The heritage of Yankee respectability did not prove unreservedly beneficial to the early labor movement. It provided the confidence and organizational skills which the movement dearly needed, but also reinforced tendencies which confined the early movement to a narrow organizational base. In the mid-eighties building tradesmen, metal workers, cigarmakers, and other skilled workers formed the main body of Holyoke trade unionism. Yet it is easy to focus upon the exclusiveness of the early movement and to forget that it brought together Yankee and Irish Catholic workers who only a short time before had despised each other. At Holyoke, as elsewhere, the Irish had less than enthusiastically supported the war effort. This alone placed a formidable barrier between the two groups. To understand how they were able to unite during

the eighties we must take a closer look at the Catholic variant of working class respectability.<sup>24</sup>

Jay Dolan has written that many mid-century Irish immigrants had not been to mass or taken the sacraments for years and only became closely affiliated with the Catholic Church after arriving in this country. It is not now possible to determine the spiritual condition of Holyoke's first Irish immigrants, but if a significant number had drifted away from their religion, the city's first Catholic pastor, Father Jeremiah O'Callaghan, was just the priest to reclaim them. After nearly a quarter of a century at Burlington, Vermont, O'Callaghan came to Holyoke in 1854 and established St. Jerome's parish. Born in County Cork, Ireland, in 1780, he spoke fluent Gaelic and often delivered sermons and heard confessions in his native tongue. An unpretentious man, Father O'Callaghan mixed freely with his parishioners and despite the financial needs of a struggling young parish, he adamantly refused to charge pew rents or employ other means of extracting from his congregation more than they would willingly contribute. He also posed as a feisty and articulate defender of the Church and by extension, the entire Irish community.<sup>25</sup>

In the winter of 1857 Father O'Callaghan attacked the practice of bible reading in the public schools. In response, a Mirror editorial set the tone of the subsequent debate by characterizing O'Callaghan's criticisms as a "foolish and pitiable spurt of Catholic bigotry." A further claim by the local Presbyterian minister that Catholic priests exploited the poor and used the confessional for purposes of extortion placed the exchange on an entirely new level and allowed O'Callaghan the necessary topical breadth for the full employment of his forensic powers and a more inclusive expression of his social concerns. "The cap he has prepared for me," O'Callaghan retorted, "fits his own head." "For if report be true," he explained,

pew selling with all its abominations - regard for the rich, contempt for the poor, respect of persons, are practiced without disguise in his meeting house; and he would not accept his office, nor even open his lips, before the society had guaranteed him a fat salary.

Where the Catholic priest attended the sick and administered the sacraments, Protestant ministers apparently had no greater duties than to lounge around all week reading newspapers and concocting "foul and filthy slanders." Now fully warmed to his subject, O'Callaghan

added that Protestantism's shortcomings extended beyond its contempt for the poor and the craven behavior of its clergy. The true measure of its moral vacuity could be found in its endorsement of usury, a matter of no small concern to O'Callaghan, who reportedly refused absolution to money-lenders and had once been suspended from his clerical office for his outspoken views on the subject. In concluding, he observed that the "laboring classes" were fast becoming the "slaves and serfs of rag money makers," and called for the formation of a popular movement that would "concentrate upon one issue - NO BANKS."<sup>26</sup>

Father Jeremiah O'Callaghan was one of those maverick priests who have forever been the bane of a conservative Catholic hierarchy. His social critique clearly drew on the anti-bank ferment of the Jacksonian era, but probably had its roots in Irish anti-landlordism. Addressing a congregation that had only recently escaped the oppression of British landowners, his manifest piety, concern for the poor, and attacks on privilege secured him the intense loyalty of his parishioners. When an 1860 Mirror article erroneously reported that he had returned to Ireland, a member of his congregation noti-

fied the paper that as much as some "higher church dignitaries" desired his departure, he was still in Holyoke: "true to duty - true to his convictions of right - true to the poor and unfortunate and true to his God." O'Callaghan passed away a few months later, but even in death he remained a source of contention. "JUSTITIAE" corrected the Mirror's report that the Bishop of Boston had attended O'Callaghan's funeral: "The Bishop is a man who takes more pleasure in visiting the living than the dead; and the better persons live the more he is inclined to call upon them." "JUSTITIAE" also complained that Father O'Callaghan's successor had not honored his last wish: "that his bones find a resting place in that church which he erected, and presented free to his people, but which alas! is free no longer."<sup>27</sup>

O'Callaghan's successors belonged to a generation of Catholic clergymen aptly called "brick and mortar priests," who evinced as great a concern with temporal matters as the priest's traditional duties of visiting the sick and hearing confessions. Neither pew rents, nor money-lenders ever elicited their scorn. This complicates any assessment of Father O'Callaghan's im-

pact on Holyoke's Irish Catholics. Their later attraction to greenbackerism may have been influenced by his social preachings. More important than any of his specific prescriptions, though, was O'Callaghan's rejection of Catholicism's static, neo-feudal view of society as a place where the Church mediated between the benevolent rich and the hard working poor, teaching each its rights and duties: the poor that this was a world of wearisome toil, where poverty and suffering were part of God's design, before which one could only submit with resignation; and the rich that they held their wealth in trust, and were enjoined by God to expend it in a socially beneficial manner. His forthright encouragement of social change made it difficult for any of his successors to counsel social resignation without evoking the contempt of their parishioners.<sup>28</sup>

O'Callaghan's most prominent successor was Father Patrick J. Harkins, who served as pastor at St. Jerome's for nearly half a century until his death in 1910. In the first decade alone of his pastorate Harkins demonstrated why many referred to him as "the builder:" in 1867 he secured land for a cemetery; the following year he built a convent and school; and later he acquired

the land for a church and school at South Hadley Falls and Holyoke's Sacred Heart Church. Of these projects, Harkins' greatest interest was in school construction. The school would not only introduce Catholic youths to the mysteries of their faith, but also inculcate a respectable mode of behavior. From the outset of his long pastorate Harkins took a daily walk about the city and quickly concluded that intemperance was a serious problem among Holyoke's Irish, sapping their health, undermining their morality, and marring their reputation. As late as 1900, he denounced local comedians who parodied the Irishman as a "coarse, drinking, fighting buffoon," thus perpetuating a stereotype he spent much of his life trying to eradicate. Harkins saw the school as one of his most potent weapons in what became a life-long personal war against saloon culture. By 1880, parochial school students constituted thirty five per cent of the total school population, a figure that rose to nearly forty per cent a decade later.<sup>29</sup>

The statements of nineteenth century Catholic educators reflected a keen awareness of the predominantly working class composition of parochial schools. In

1866, the Second Plenary Council of Baltimore voiced one of the most frequently heard criticisms of public education when it warned parents that giving their children a public school education would leave them discontented with their social position. In the classroom, school readers urged children to accept their station in life, reinforcing the message with numerous stories about the saintly resignation of the Church's early martyrs. In part, these injunctions issued from a fear of social disorder. They also stemmed from a concern with family life. By encouraging the poor to rise out of their class, said one Catholic spokesman, the public school made "the young discontented, ashamed of their parents, and eager for show and display." Such an education, this writer continued, was "adapted to the children of the middle and wealthy classes and is in no respect a suitable preparation for a life of toil." Public school ridicule of Catholicism, others contended, further undermined the family. Any questioning of their religion led children to lose respect for their parents and often resulted in anti-social acts, as the child's moral development depended more on the parents' character than any schooling the youth

might receive.<sup>30</sup>

It is easy to dismiss these declarations as self-serving cant, concerned more with the welfare of the church than that of the family. But they should not be ignored altogether, without recognizing that most Catholic parents were immigrants and without considering the attitude of public school authorities toward these parents. A number of educators maintained that immigrant parents were unfit to raise their own children, at least not without the aid of the public school. "With the old not much can be done," said one mid-century contributor to the Massachusetts Teacher, "but with the children, the great remedy is EDUCATION." In Holyoke at mid-century, school authorities regularly assigned the blame for classroom disturbances to a "want of proper and salutary home restraints and discipline." An 1867 Transcript editorial recommended against abolishing corporal punishment until there was "less laxity in family discipline." Within the classroom, teachers sometimes humiliated immigrant parents. In 1888, one parent wrote to the Transcript that a local teacher "had the ill-breeding to expose before the whole school his mis-spelling of a word in a note

he had written" for his child. The same teacher also sent children to the school basement, "because their breath smelled of onion and cabbage." It is against this background, as well as the Church's own needs, that its statements concerning education must be judged. For it was within this context that immigrant parents made decisions about the respective merits of public and parochial schools.<sup>31</sup>

The principal mission of the parochial school was to introduce children to Catholic doctrine. Instruction in the workings of the sacramental system was especially important, as it not only formed the core of church practice and justified the priest's role, but also served as a means of social control. The keystone in the arch of sacramental control was the practice of confession. What should be understood about the sacrament of Penance is that it was not, at least so far as the Church was concerned, a mere shame mechanism, allowing the penitent momentarily to externalize his sins so that he could cheerfully sin again. Public school textbooks sometimes portrayed the sacrament in that manner:

As for old Phelim Maghee, he was of no particular religion. When Phelim had laid up a good stock of sins, he now and then went over to Killarney, of a Sabbath morning, and got

relaaf be confissing them out o' the way, as he used to express it, and sealed his soul up with a wafer, and returned quite invigorated for the perpetration of new offenses.

The passage presents more than just another reason for Catholic antipathy to public education. It also touches upon a deep concern of Catholic educators. Because confession could easily degenerate into a routinized device for sin disposal, the Church emphasized that the remission of sins had to be accompanied by a conviction, on the penitent's part, that he would not sin again. If confession was to function as an effective agent of control, Catholics had to be made to feel uneasy with sin and to understand that absolution required a continual searching on one's soul, an ongoing interior battle with the forces of evil. To inculcate Catholic youth with this understanding demanded careful catechistical work by dedicated teachers.<sup>32</sup>

It is not easy to assess the actual impact of Catholic schooling. On one occasion Father Harkins maintained that parochial school students were clearly more obedient than their public school counterparts. But his regular denunciations of youth excesses and active support of a 1900 cuffew law suggest even he sometimes

had his doubts. In large part, the parochial school's influence on youth behavior depended on the degree to which it elicited submission to the sacramental system. For obvious reasons any conclusions on this matter must be conjectural. Some youths responded to Catholic sacramentalism with cynicism and unhesitatingly rejected the Church's admonitions when they conflicted with life's pleasures. The confessional held no terrors for these youths; it was simply irrelevant to their lives. Others deeply internalized the Church's teachings and for the sake of a spotless soul sublimated worldly temptation through a disciplined regimen of work, study, and the like. The majority probably fell somewhere in between. Catholic sacramentalism placed some restraints on their behavior without dictating it altogether. But this could be enough to nudge one toward the world of working class respectability.<sup>33</sup>

Beyond the parochial school a number of lay organizations served as an institutional expression of the culture of Catholic working class respectability. The first of these was the Holyoke Catholic Mutual Benevolent Society. Founded in 1857, it provided sick members \$3 a week, unless the illness was "induced by

intemperance or other immorality." The most prominent later organization was the St. Jerome's Temperance Society, established in 1869 by Father Harkins as another instrument in his war upon saloon culture. Within a year the organization had more than 500 members, 150 of whom belonged to the juvenile branch. The early formation of a debating society and reading room indicated that self-improvement was a major concern. In terms of class, the society had a mixed membership. Builders, grocers, foremen, and professionals joined with papermakers, textile workers, machinists, and building craftsmen to take the pledge and engage in the society's various activities.<sup>34</sup>

Existing sources do not provide a clear occupational profile of the society's working class members. This is unfortunate because it involves the important matter of just which workers comprised the culture of Catholic working class respectability. And despite the paucity of good occupational data, the question demands some attention. We can start by noting that, in 1880, the culture was Irish and it was male, but this is scarcely sufficient given the differences in skill level, income, and lifestyle among Irish workers. An 1875 Bureau of Labor

Statistics study found that where metal workers and building craftsmen relied on the earnings of children under fifteen for less than one per cent of total family income, this source provided twenty four per cent of the family budget of unskilled mill operatives.

Differences in total annual income were reflected in the manner in which each group lived. Unskilled mill operatives expended slightly more than half the amount building tradesmen and metal workers paid for housing. In a mill town like Holyoke this determined whether one lived in a relatively spacious and clean apartment or in one of the tenements described in the 1875 report:

The sanitary arrangements are very imperfect, and in many cases, there is no provision made for carrying the slops from the sinks, but they are allowed to run wherever they can make their way. Portions of yards are covered with filth and green slime, and, within twenty feet, people are living in basements of houses three feet below the level of the yard. One large block, four stories high, and basement, has eighteen tenements, with ninety rooms, occupied by nearly two hundred people; and yet there are only two three-foot doorways on the front, and none on the back, with an alley-way in back of only six feet in width. At present there is some spare room at the front, but it is uncertain how long it will remain so. There are also quite a number of six and eight tenement houses, with only one door at front and none at back, overcrowded, dirty, and necessarily unhealthy. Our agents visited some tenements having bedrooms into which neither air nor light could penetrate, as there were no windows and

no means of ventilation, and some of them were actually filthy.

Within the home, skilled workers were far more likely to have carpentering on the floor, and it was only in their residences that one could find that ultimate symbol of working class respectability, a piano. They also spent more on clothes and owned sewing machines so that they could be kept in a suitable state of repair. These distinctions did not prevent mill operatives from joining an organization like the St. Jerome's Temperance Society, where ethnicity, religion, and behavior were more important than occupational status. In this sense, the culture of Catholic working class respectability contained an admirable potential for inclusiveness. Yet, the absence of mill operatives from the early labor movement suggests that they were second-class citizens in this cultural world.<sup>35</sup>

Although the middle class dominated the leadership ranks of the St. Jerome's Temperance Society during its early years, by the eighties an equal number of working class members could be found among the group's officers. Within the society, there was initially little social distance between its working class supporters and an emergent Irish middle class. Many shared the same back-

ground and experience. For example, Maurice Lynch, an up and coming contractor and the organization's vice-president, was born in County Kerry, Ireland in 1837 and came to the United States a decade later when the potato rot devastated the region. As a boy he sold apples at the Lyman Mills' gate and later apprenticed as a brickmaker. After operating a grocery store for a short while, he formed a successful contracting business in partnership with his brothers. Although he had little formal schooling, Lynch placed a high valuation on learning and saw that each of his children received an extensive education. In addition to being a model of self-improvement, he also led the society in its struggle to obtain greater independence from the controlling hand of Father Harkins.<sup>36</sup>

In 1875, Father Harkins assigned the brickwork on a new Holyoke church to a local Yankee contractor rather than the Lynch brothers, because, he remarked, their previous efforts had been "unworkmanlike." To protect his reputation, Lynch felt compelled to disclose the details of a recent rift between Harkins and the members of the St. Jerome's Temperance Society. Harkins was an agreeable man if one submitted to his opinions, Lynch

explained, but those who dared disagree with him were soon "marked out for slaughter." His own troubles with Harkins began when some members of the society demonstrated a capacity for independent thought. After Harkins had "declared war against the society," the organization reciprocated and ultimately defeated Harkins in the battle for control. The Lynch incident was only one skirmish in a struggle that continued for another six years. In 1877, when the society asked Harkins to resume his position as spiritual director, he demanded that he be given full control and that the members again take the pledge before him. They refused, calling the conditions "an infringement upon their self-respect and their rights as a society." A few years later the organization further clarified its position: "the priest is to be respected and obeyed in all that pertains to the church, (but) when it comes to outside matters, (Laymen) have a right to do as they think best; and when the priest comes into their society he is but one of them, although from courtesy they call him spiritual director."<sup>37</sup>

Most members of the St. Jerome's Temperance Society also took an active interest in Irish nationalist acti-

vities. Long after they had departed their native land, Irish-Americans remained preoccupied with the liberation of Ireland from British oppression. In 1869, a band of local Fenians joined in an ill-fated invasion of Canada. During the eighties the Land League acted as the principal expression of Irish nationalism. Through picnics, parades, indignation meetings, and torchlight processions the League both advanced the cause of a free Ireland and served as an important center of social activity. At its meetings supporters sang traditional Irish ballads and listened to members recite essays on current events and English, Irish, and American history and literature. The recitations, "A CONSTANT NATIONALIST" noted, reflected the note of self-improvement which permeated the organization and "set men thinking, reading, writing, and then speaking."<sup>38</sup>

Initially the League had two branches at Holyoke. The Parnell League, headed by Father Harkins, supported the parliamentary aims of Charles Stewart Parnell: the formation of a peasant resident proprietary which would allow Irish tillers to purchase the land they farmed, and the establishment of Home Rule under conditions similar to those which existed from 1782 to 1800. In addi-

tion to raising funds for Irish relief, the organization petitioned Congress to embargo all British imports. The Michael Davitt League began in 1878 as the Thomas Francis Burke Skirmishing Club. Its officers included labor leader P.J. Moore and it stressed the need for land redistribution. In 1881, the organization united under the banner of the Davitt League, but not before Father Harkins had engaged the Davitt leaders, a number of whom also belonged to the St. Jerome's Temperance Society, in yet another dispute. The stated reason for the conflict was Harkins' objection to the activities of the women's branch of the Davitt League. Characteristically, he took to the pulpit to declare the conviction that "women ought to do their part through the men" and to denounce the women who joined the organization. When "LAND LEAGUER" issued a public rejoinder, asking "Why are women condemned in certain parishes for joining this movement and streams of vituperation and ridicule heaped on their devoted heads, while in other parishes they are lauded to the skies?," Harkins temporarily withdrew from League activities, tacitly acknowledging defeat.<sup>39</sup>

Harkins probably also objected to the more pro-

nounced radicalism of the Davitt League, which endorsed the writings of Henry George and asked the sister of Irish World editor, Patrick Ford, to address the first meeting of the united organization. As politically conscious spokesman of the Irish-American working class, Ford sought to join League activities with "the war of the great army of the disinherited of all lands, for their Heaven-willed possessions." His sister's presence at the meeting led Father Lawrence Walsh, treasurer of the American League, to boycott the gathering, much to the anger of League members.<sup>40</sup>

Yet the Land League was by no means the "first class socialistic movement" which the local Socialist Labor Party claimed it to be. At Holyoke, the close ties between Irish respectables and the immigrant middle class fixed the parameters of Irish radicalism and engendered an approach to class relations that closely resembled the producerism of Yankee artisans. This was most evident in the enthusiastic support which Irish workers and petty entrepreneurs accorded the Greenback-Labor Party. As David Montgomery has noted of greenbackism in general, a basic assumption of the Holyoke movement was that "employer and employee were natural allies,

exploited alike by the financier." The state's leading greenbacker, Ben Butler, further enhanced the doctrine's appeal for the Irish by linking it to Irish nationalism. Massachusetts Irishmen applauded Butler's vitriolic denunciations of the British no less lustily than they did his attacks on "monopoly and aristocracy." As with Yankee artisan producerism, however, the monopolists were never clearly defined. The producerism of Irish respectables also eschewed class struggle and approached strikes warily, positions which the Catholic Church did much to reinforce.<sup>41</sup>

Whatever their problems with Father Harkins and other priests, Irish respectables remained loyal to the Church. Indeed, the conflict at St. Jerome's might be seen as but a small part of a much broader upheaval that during the closing decades of the nineteenth century led the Church to reassess its traditional social outlook. In the face of the widespread labor unrest that began during the late seventies, pious admonitions to submit meekly to God's will seemed absurdly anachronistic. By the eighties, some Catholic spokesmen had begun to appraise labor in a new light. The working class had finally come to recognize its power, wrote one contri-

butor to the American Catholic Quarterly Review:

the power and the force that lie in numbers. It has sore grievances; . . . intelligence and energy at its head. The intelligence may be used as a false light; the energy may be mis-directed. But there they are and stand, living forces in the world, never more to be expelled.

In addition to voicing a new awareness on the Church's part, the passage reveals another concern: who would lead the growing labor movement? Deeply worried about the spread of socialism, but recognizing the need for reform, Catholic leaders wanted social change without class struggle. Their statements on labor leadership, strikes, and government intervention in the economy indicated the manner in which they sought to deal with the dilemma.<sup>42</sup>

On the question of labor leadership, Catholic spokesmen counseled the selection of conservative men who would avoid violence and do nothing that would threaten private property. John Talbot Smith, a frequent contributor to the Catholic World on labor matters, asked workers to look outside the ranks of labor and to seek "the advice of all good men in the community." The same desire to avoid class struggle and preserve the existing structure of class relations characterized

Catholic declarations on strike policy. Others declared that restrictions should be placed on their conduct, one priest stating that strikes were permissible so long as the strikers did not "prevent men working at lower wages than they themselves are willing to accept." The most popular approach condoned strikes, but urged the prompt submission of grievances to arbitration, where a presumably neutral panel would settle the dispute. The popularity of arbitration among Catholic leaders reflected the persistence of traditional notions about the dynamics of class relations. Where the Church had once mediated between the benevolent rich and the hard-working poor, it now encouraged surrogates to assume a similar role in dealing with capital and labor. One of these was the arbitration panel; another was the government.<sup>43</sup>

Once workers found sober, conservative men to lead them and developed efficient organizations, John Talbot Smith advised, they should "practice strict obedience to their leaders, then frame laws which will root out abuses, and bring them to the legislatures." Besides its potential role in quelling class conflict, the Church looked to government for legislation protecting

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the working class family. Catholic spokesmen supported tenement house reform and laws abolishing child labor. Some endorsed the eight-hour law, particularly for women and children, though men too needed time for something more than labor and sleep if they were to fulfill their religious and family duties. The Church's concern here was in no sense gratuitous, as the mother assumed a role of paramount importance in the Catholic scheme of social and moral order. "In no faith but the Catholic," wrote "An American Woman" in the Catholic World, "is the mother taught to believe . . . that she will be saved with her or she must perish with them." The Church urged women to stay at home and heartily supported social reforms that facilitated their remaining there.<sup>44</sup>

In his 1891 encyclical, Rerum Novarum, Pope Leo XIII gave authoritative approval to all the principal measures suggested by American churchmen to resolve the conflict between capital and labor: the right to form trade unions, the need for a "just" wage, and state intervention to protect labor from capitalist abuses. The encyclical also made clear the Church's support for the prevailing structure of social relations. In attacking

ance lay in the degree to which it inhibited conservative bishops from interfering with the reform activities of their subordinates. At Holyoke, it merely confirmed a course that Father Harkins had chosen years earlier when at the outset of his long pastorate he had declared that he would earnestly support any "legitimate effort to alleviate the condition of the laboring class in our community." Following his death more than forty years later, the local labor journal observed that "No clergyman in the city, probably, has on so many occasions fearlessly and with candor, discussed from his pulpit conditions of our economic life, pointing a way to better things through a correction of the evils. Yet, Harkins and other priests did not maintain their influence with the immigrant working class simply through their occasional support of some reform initiative. More important was an acute awareness of their parishioners' most basic hopes and fears, and an ability to articulate these concerns.

Father Harkins probably never better demonstrated that awareness than in a 1901 sermon condemning high school social events held at a local hotel:

naturally the pride of every student is aroused, the poor man's son and daughter endeavoring to appear as well dressed as the children of those

financially stronger, but no better otherwise. The danger to these children is to view life from . . . ballroom, rather than from the practical schoolroom and more useful store, shop or trade. I do not wish to decry the professionals, but I desire to speak for the majority, whose future life will deal mostly with the weekly wage and the direct care of children. The education of today is not only useless and outrageous in the burden it imposes on the people of the public schools, but it has the extremely dangerous quality of giving wrong impressions regarding the hereafter . . .

I must refer . . . to a certain class of young girls who can be seen nightly in hallways on High street, and on streetcorners hobnobbing with things dressed in trousers, a wide expanse of shirtfront, a necktie and a hat. These girls do not form the acquaintance of these things in the parochial schools. . . . Suffice it for me to say I regret most painfully that these girls value the acquaintance of these things more highly than they do the manly young men who wear overalls when at work and who are attentive to all the duties imposed by church, family and state.

The passage speaks volumes as to the reasons why the Catholic Church was able to maintain some measure of hegemony over substantial elements of the immigrant working class and suggests something about the nature of that influence. By casting the most basic - indeed visceral - questions of sexuality and family in a framework of social class, and then by reducing class to a matter of mere consumption open to the most devastating parody, Harkins encouraged his working class auditors

to conceptualize and deal with social relations in a pre-political manner. The passage also reveals how a shrewd and sensitive priest translated the often crude class formulations of Church spokesmen: at the parish level injunctions to remain content with one's station in life were transformed into expressions of the dignity and self-worth of working people. Indeed, the Catholic Church fostered the development of the working class as a class in itself by celebrating the dignity of labor. At the same time, however, by its unequivocal denunciation of class struggle, strident anti-socialism, and pre-political emphases, the Church sought to retard its maturation as a class for itself.

To return to the culture of Catholic working class respectability, its principal features were a commitment to self-improvement and a concomittant sense of dignity and self-worth which led workers to take an increasingly more expansive view of what they deemed to be their rights and to seek out ever greater areas of autonomy in their social lives. These workers warmly endorsed the Church's position on the family, committed as they were to a Victorian family ideal in which women remained at home caring for the children. Their

attitudes on class relations approximated the producer ideology of Yankee artisans. It is sufficient here to note that as these attitudes developed during the closing decades of the nineteenth century, they would be influenced, though not determined, by the culture's close relations with the immigrant middle class and the Church's incessant injunctions to eschew any form of class struggle.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>This and succeeding paragraphs draw extensively on the work of Alan Dawley, Paul Faler, Bruce Laurie, and Herbert Gutman. The chapter as a whole constitutes an attempt to chart the later development of the ante-bellum working class cultures which they so discerningly analyzed. See Paul Faler, "Cultural Aspects of the Industrial Revolution: Lynn, Massachusetts Shoemakers and Industrial Morality, 1826-1860," Labor History, 15 (1974), 367-394; Alan Dawley and Paul Faler, "Working-class Culture and Politics in the Industrial Revolution: Sources of Loyalism and Rebellion," Journal of Social History, 9 (1976), 466-480; Bruce Laurie, Working People of Philadelphia, 1800-1850 (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1980); Herbert Gutman, "Work, Culture, and Society in Industrializing America, 1815-1919," in Work, Culture, and Society in Industrializing America (New York: Vintage paperback edition, 1977), 3-78.

<sup>2</sup>Holyoke Transcript (HT), 21 May 1881; 14 Apr. 1897; Constance M. Green, Holyoke, Massachusetts: A Case History of the Industrial Revolution in America, 47. Beyond the barroom, saloon culture had no fixed institutional bases. This complicates the task of securing reliable demographic information on its habitués. To meet this problem, I had hoped to check the Holyoke Police Court records for age and occupational data on those arrested for drunkenness or assault in selected years between 1870 and 1900. I could not, however, obtain access to the records. In lieu of this admittedly imperfect approach, I can only offer the findings of some surveys of different subject populations. An 1881 investigation conducted by the Bureau of Labor Statistics found that, compared to other occupational groups, laborers comprised the largest proportion of those arrested for assault: 434 of a total sample of 1,498. The nearly 300 people listed as unemployed or who did not give an occupation constituted the only group who even approached this number. The figures for those arrested for disturbing the peace were strikingly similar. Massachusetts Bureau of Statistics of Labor (MBSL), Twelfth Annual Report, 1881, 505-506.

A 1904 Bureau study of absence after pay day revealed that textile workers formed one of the most temperate groups, with only one per cent of the sample missing work. The study contained no separate listing for laborers. A similar investigation later that year produced much the same results. One conclusion stressed by both studies was that intemperance was not a serious problem among Massachusetts workers and that temperance reformers had wildly overstated their case. The studies support my argument along two lines. They show that factory operatives were more likely than other workers to avoid the saloon. They also lend weight to my contention that, as the century progressed, saloon culture assumed an increasingly marginal role in working class life. MBSL, Bulletin, 32 (Jul. 1904), 212; 34 (Dec. 1904), 352-355.

<sup>3</sup>HT, 13 Sep. 1876; 28 Jan. 1884; 13 May 1892; 16 Oct. 1872; 4 Nov. 1876; 19 Nov. 1888.

<sup>4</sup>HT, 20 May 1876; 21 Oct. 1876; 5 Dec. 1877; 21 Apr. 1886. In an essay on the saloon, Jon Kingsdale has also argued the existence of a bachelor subculture among its regulars. His principal evidence is a 1908 Boston study on drunkenness. "The 'Poor Man's Club': Social Functions of the Urban Working-Class Saloon," American Quarterly, 25 (Oct. 1973), 486, 489.

<sup>5</sup>Report of the School Committee, 1890, 34; Springfield Republican (SR), 4 Mar. 1900; 14 Sep. 1902.

<sup>6</sup>HT, 9 Mar. 1883; 7 Apr. 1884; 9 Sep. 1889.

<sup>7</sup>HT, 19 Sep. 1883.

<sup>8</sup>HT, 1 Jun. 1891; 11 Jul. 1888.

<sup>9</sup>HT, 26 Jul. 1873; SR, 5 Aug. 1879; 11 Aug. 1879; 21 Apr. 1884.

<sup>10</sup>HT, 22 May 1872; 13 May 1890. Earlier instances of Yankee policemen who invited assault by a too stringent enforcement of the new morality in the city's Irish community can be found in Folyoke Mirror (FM), 8 Jun. 1861; HT, 1 May 1872.

<sup>11</sup>HT, 30 Dec. 1871; 13 Aug. 1879; SR, 4 Jul. 1882.

<sup>12</sup>A portion of the many reported cases of non-support and demestic violence can be found in HT, 26 Jul. 1873; 3 Aug. 1881; 26 Jul. 1883; 21 Oct. 1884; SR, 18 Feb. 1878; 19 Mar. 1881; 13 Jun. 1881; 18 Feb. 1892.

<sup>13</sup>Bruce Laurie and Mark Schmitz, "Manufacture and Productivity: The Making of an Industrial Base, Philadelphia, 1850-1880," in Theodore Fershberg, ed., Philadelphia: Work, Space, Family, and Group Experience in the Nineteenth Century (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981).

<sup>14</sup>HM, 16 Apr. 1859; 20 Aug. 1859; 26 Sep. 1863; Federal Nonpopulation Census Schedules for Massachusetts: Manufacturing, 1850.

<sup>15</sup>Green, Holyoke, 46; SR, 9 May 1850.

<sup>16</sup>HM, 29 Oct. 1859; 12 Jun. 1861; 15 Mar. 1856; 23 Feb. 1860; 23 Jun. 1860; 28 Jul. 1860. Antebellum fire company expressions of saloon culture are explored in Bruce Laurie, "Fire Companies and Gangs in Southwark: The 1840s," in Allen F. Davis and Mark H. Haller, eds., The Peoples of Philadelphia: A History of Ethnic Groups and Lower-Class Life, 1790-1940 (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1973).

<sup>17</sup>HT, 30 May 1863; 17 Oct. 1863.

<sup>18</sup>HM, 8 Jun. 1861; HT, 19 Dec. 1863; 26 Dec. 1863; 12 Dec. 1863; Dawley and Faler, "Workingclass Culture and Politics," 476.

<sup>19</sup>Federal Nonpopulation Census for Massachusetts: Manufacturing, 1880; Holyoke City Directory, 1882, 1884, 1890.

<sup>20</sup>HT, 16 Jul. 1879; Green, Holyoke, 97-98.

<sup>21</sup>True Light, VI, 3 (Jun. 1895), 8-9; VI, 10 (Jan. 1896), 8-9.

<sup>22</sup>FT, 11 Sep. 1875; MBSL, Sixth Annual Report, 1875, 460; MBSL, Eighth Annual Report, 1877, 98-99; Norman Ware, The Labor Movement in the United States, 1860-1890: A Study in Democracy (New York: Vintage paperback edition, 1964; originally published in 1929), 16.

<sup>23</sup>MBSL, Eighth Annual Report, 1877, 98-112; For a discussion of the historical roots of the producer ideology and some of the variant forms in which it has been expressed, see Laurie, Working People, 75-79, 174-177.

<sup>24</sup>In a letter to the Transcript criticizing the draft law, M.C. Quinn wrote that "I am aware there has existed at the South a kind and paternal feeling for men of my race and creed at a time when, fanatical, abolition, New England was giving our churches to the flames." At St. Jerome's, however, Father Sullivan urged his congregation to comply with the law. FT, 21 Jun. 1863; 25 Jul. 1863. Earlier, a chapter of the Know-Nothings had attained a brief popularity. HM, 12 Apr. 1856.

<sup>25</sup>Jay Dolan, The Immigrant Church: New York's Irish and German Catholics, 1815-1865 (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1975), 57; HM, 2 Mar. 1861; HT, 24 Jan. 1893; Wyatt Harper, The Story of Holyoke (n.p., 1973), 81; P.J. Lucey, History of St. Jerome's Parish, Holyoke, Massachusetts (n.p., 1931), 29-36, 116-124. This discussion of Holyoke Catholicism focuses principally on the Irish church. A treatment of French-Canadian Catholicism can be found in Peter Faebler, "Habitants in Holyoke: The Development of the French-Canadian Community in a Massachusetts City, 1865-1910," University of New Hampshire, Ph. D., 1976.

<sup>26</sup>HM, 3 Dec. 1857; 26 Dec. 1857; 30 Jan. 1858; 27 Feb. 1858; 20 Mar. 1858; 2 Mar. 1861; HT, 24 Jan. 1893.

<sup>27</sup>HM, 22 Dec. 1860; 9 Mar. 1861; HT, 24 Jan 1893.

<sup>28</sup>Dolan, Immigrant Church, 64-65; SR, 17 Aug. 1878. Evidence of the persistence of the traditional Catholic social outlook can be found in S.J. Hecker, "The Duties of the Rich in Christian Society," Catholic World (CW), 14 (1871-1872), 581; "Who Shall Take Care of the Poor," CW, 10 (1868-1869), 711-712, 739; George D. Wolff, "Socialistic Communism in the United States," American Catholic Quarterly Review (ACQR), 3 (1878), 559-561; Dolan, Immigrant Church, 122-124; Aaron I. Abell, American Catholicism and Social Action: A Search for Social Justice (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1963), 53, 72. Some Catholic spokesmen even found cause for cheer in the world's poverty. Having so little of what makes life pleasant, one writer remarked, the poor "are forced by a happy kind of necessity to find everything in the Church and their religion." "The Duties of the Rich in Christian Society," CW, 15 (1872), 291.

<sup>29</sup>SR, 19 Jan. 1890; 22 May 1904; 2 Jul. 1890; Report of the School Committee, 1880; 1890, 42; Lucey, History of St. Jerome's, 91-93. On one morning walk, Harkins encountered a local Irishman who offered him a drink. Outraged, Harkins gave the man a verbal lashing, only to evoke a counter-barrage of profanities. HT, 8 Oct. 1869.

<sup>30</sup>Neil G. McCluskey, S.J., ed., Catholic Education in America: A Documentary History (New York: Teachers College, 1964), 83; Dolan, Immigrant Church, 126; "Unification and Education," CW, 13 (1871), 5-6; George D. Wolff, "Socialistic Communism in the United States," ACQR, 3 (1878), 531-533; Rev. A.F. Hewitt, "What Shall Our Young Do?", CW, 38 (1883-1884), 670-671; Edward McSweeney, "Heartless, Headless, and Godless," CW, 46 (1887-1888), 436-439; quotation in "Rapid Increase of the Dangerous Classes in the United States," ACQR, 4 (1879), 255; "The School Question," CW, 11 (1870), 103; "Aspects of National Education," CW, 31 (1880), 398-408.

<sup>31</sup>"Immigration," Massachusetts Teacher, 4 (1851), 290; Holyoke Town Records (HTR), 1852, 8; 1855, 6-7; HT, 8 Jan. 1867; 22 Mar. 1888.

<sup>32</sup>McCluskey, ed., Catholic Education, 71. The Church also sought to use access to the sacraments as a means of controlling the social behavior of Catholics. In 1875, The Roman Congregation of the Propaganda of the Faith ruled that the clergy had a duty to refuse absolution to parents who sent their children to a public school without sufficient cause. When a Rhode Island priest invoked the sanction, a writer in the American Catholic Quarterly Review defended his action. "The priest who denies the sacraments to bad Catholics, by no means interferes with family affairs," said this commentator. "When parents forget their duties towards members of the family, they commit a sin; and this sin cannot be pardoned without repentance and atonement." At Holyoke, instances of sacramental intimidation appear to have been rare. On one occasion Father Phelan withheld absolution from members of Sacred Heart's temperance gymnastic club, because they undertook an outing after he had voiced his disapproval of it. The Bishop quickly revoked the sanction, Rev. P. Bayma, "The Liberalistic View of the Public School Question," ACQR, 2 (1877), 266; SR, 12 Aug. 1885; 14 Aug. 1885; 16 Aug. 1885.

<sup>33</sup>HT, 7 May 1906; 5 Mar. 1900; 26 Dec. 1900.

<sup>34</sup>HM, 10 Oct. 1857; HT, 25 Feb. 1870; SR, 22 Sep. 1894. Generalizations on membership are based on an occupational study of the society's officers, using Holyoke city directories.

<sup>35</sup>MBSL, Sixth Annual Report, 1875, 370, 386, 392, 429, 436.

<sup>36</sup>SR, 18 Jan. 1902.

<sup>37</sup>HT, 31 Jul. 1875; 19 Sep. 1877; 12 Nov. 1879. The dispute finally reached a head in 1881 when Harkins' regular pulpit denunciations of the society prompted an equally vituperative response. "When a priest prostitutes his sacred office, and desecrates the altar of God by using language suitable to the region of Billingsgate, why is he surprised that men use their pens to rebuke the scandalous and unseemly exhibition?," asked "Catholic" in a letter to the Transcript. "Is it for this," "Catholic" further queried, "that he is paid so liberally, supported so sumptuously, and housed so grandly by the poor Catholics who can ill-afford the numerous and heavy contributions laid on them?" The conflict abated soon after, though Harkins did not quickly forget the struggle. In 1884, at a ceremony commemorating the fifteenth anniversary of the St. Jerome's Temperance Society, he commended the group for establishing a cadet corps and reminded the members that "You were boys once yourselves." He was unable to refrain from adding that "Some of you I fear are 'boys' still." HT, 16 Apr. 1881; 8 Sep. 1884.

<sup>38</sup>Green, Holyoke, 114-115; HT, 27 Jul. 1881; 2 Sep. 1881; 22 Oct. 1881; 9 Jul. 1883; 31 Aug. 1883.

<sup>39</sup>HT, 31 Jan. 1880; SR, 21 Jun. 1878; 8 Feb. 1881; 21 Feb. 1881; 15 Mar. 1881; 9 Apr. 1881. This section also draws on Dennis Clark, The Irish in Philadelphia: Ten Generations of Urban Experience (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1973), 132-137; James J. Green, "American Catholics and the Irish Land League, 1879-1882," Catholic Historical Review, XXXV (1949), 19-42; and particularly, Eric Foner, "Class, Ethnicity, and Radicalism in the Gilded Age: The Land League and Irish America," in Politics and Ideology in the Age of the Civil War (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), 150-200.

<sup>40</sup>HT, 9 Jul. 1883; SR, 1 Mar. 1881. The Ford quotation is from Foner, "The Land League and Irish America," 161. George was a frequent target of Catholic publicists. See, for instance, Rev. Henry Brann, "Henry George and His Land Theories," CW, 44 (1886-1887), 828.

<sup>41</sup>HT, 12 Apr. 1884; David Montgomery, Beyond Equality: Labor and the Radical Republicans, 1862-1872 (New York: Vintage Paperback edition, 1967), 444; SR, 17 Aug. 1878; HT, 24 Sep. 1884; 27 Oct. 1884; Fans L. Trefousse, Ben Butler: The South Called Him Beast! (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1957), 218-221. Patrick Ford, the most prominent spokesman of the radical wing of the American Land League, also supported the Greenback-Labor Party in 1876 and 1880. Foner, "The Land League and Irish America," 159.

<sup>42</sup>John McCarthy, "Mr. Mallock and the Labor Movement," ACQR, 12 (1887), 110; Abell, American Catholicism and Social Action, 47; James E. Roohan, American Catholics and the Social Question (New York: Arno Press, 1976), 103-118. It should be noted that Catholic traditionalists staunchly opposed church leaders who supported social change. The differences between the two groups are detailed in Robert Cross, The Emergence of Liberal Catholicism in America (Chicago: Quadrangle paperback edition, 1968; originally published in 1958).

<sup>43</sup>John Talbot Smith, "Workmen Should Not Only Act But Think," CW, 47 (1888), 843; Rt. Rev. James O'Connor, "Capital and Labor," ACQR, 8 (1883), 493; John Conway, "America's Workmen," CW, 56 (1892-1893), 495-496; Abell, American Catholicism and Social Action, 82-83, 283. Worcester's Catholic weekly, The Messenger, argued that arbitration was "the result of Catholic practice and teaching" in an article that listed disputes ranging from Attila's invasion to the revolutions of 1848 which had been mediated by Popes and other leading Catholics. Messenger, 21 Sep. 1889.

<sup>44</sup>John Talbot Smith, "Workingmen Should Not Only

<sup>45</sup>A translation of Rerum Novarum can be found in Etienne Gilson, ed., The Church Speaks to the Modern World: The Social Teachings of Leo XIII (New York: Doubleday and Company paperback edition, 1954), 205-240; Lillian Parker Wallace, Leo XIII and the Rise of Socialism (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1963), 254-276; Abell, American Catholicism and Social Action, 75-76; "The Pope and the Proletariat," CW, 53 (1891), 635-644.

<sup>46</sup>Henry J. Browne, The Catholic Church and the Knights of Labor (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 1949), 356, Abell, American Catholicism and Social Action, 187; HT, 23 Oct. 1869; Artisan, 9 Dec. 1910.

<sup>47</sup>HT, 15 Apr. 1901. Editorials in The Messenger regularly celebrated the dignity of labor. An 1889 labor day statement declared that "labor had made the world what it is, the labor of head and hand, the furnace-fire in the brain of the inventor and painter as well as the toil of the day-laborer and the tradesman." Another editorial entitled "Only a Workingman" asked "What title is greater or what one of the orders of peers is fit to rank before it." Messenger, 31 Aug. 1889; 12 Oct. 1889.

C H A P T E R V  
WORKING CLASS POLITICS, 1873-1890

Although the depression of the seventies did not strike with the devastating force of later crises, business failures, wage reductions, and unemployment created a general sense of questioning among all groups in the community. The 1877 railroad strike, though it only indirectly affected Holyoke, led the Transcript's editor to recall an earlier era when farmer's wives and daughters produced their own cloth, shoemakers and tailors conducted their trades with the aid of a few journeymen and apprentices, and rural laborers could look forward to owning farms of their own. Those days were irretrievably gone, he observed, and the great danger now was "that we shall have a permanent operative class." A new structure of class relations was emerging, and if the recent strike had demonstrated anything, it was that capital could not rely on force alone to meet labor's demands. Perhaps, he concluded, the laws dealing with taxation, education, the "proceeds of labor," and the "distribution of property" needed revision. No subse-

socialism, Leo condemned the doctrine of class struggle as irrational and declared that labor and capital were mutually dependent with reciprocal rights and duties. He also strongly supported the right to hold private property, because it provided a necessary incentive for human effort and buttressed the father's paternal authority. Furthermore, he urged the state to adopt policies that would encourage frugal workingmen to become property owners and thus narrow the growing chasm between capital and labor. Yet, despite its profoundly conservative intentions, Rerum Novarum marked a radical break with the past. By encouraging the formation of trade unions, it explicitly rejected Catholic neo-feudalism and brought the Church abreast of contemporary social realities. Well into the twentieth century it would serve as the doctrinal basis for American Catholic social action.<sup>45</sup>

Rerum Novarum caused few immediate changes. In fact, Henry Browne has written, only a minority of the American hierarchy supported its positive proposals; the major concern then and for decades afterwards of Catholics involved in the labor movement was to suppress socialism. In practical terms, the encyclical's import-

quent Transcript editorial would evince such uncharacteristic skepticism, but neither would the questions it raised go away. This chapter looks at the emergence of the Holyoke working class as a political force and how it sought to deal with these questions.<sup>1</sup>

Most of Holyoke's principal mills survived the depression of the seventies. Battered, but still solvent, local manufacturers could even take some satisfaction in the belief that the one major enterprise to go under, the Boston-owned Fampden Mills, offered further evidence that an absentee-controlled firm could never prosper at Holyoke. The demise of a host of small shops and mercantile establishments was an entirely different matter. During the first months of 1877 unparalleled bankruptcies darkened numerous storefronts in the central business districts, as creditors scrambled to salvage what they could from the broken concerns. In March, when the Second Congregational Church announced a twenty per cent reduction on pew-rents, matters appeared ominous indeed. But the Church's sale proved better than expected and in time a number of the bankrupt businesses secured new lines of credit and resumed operations. A moment of crisis had passed.<sup>2</sup>

The crisis for Holyoke workers began four years earlier and continued unabated into 1878. On any given day at the city's fruit and vegetable stands, wrote the Transcript's editor during the late summer of 1873, one could see "a drove of poverty stricken children, often girls, clad only in one or two ragged and dirty garments, down on their hands and knees in the gutters, greedily picking out of the mud and dirt and eating the bits of spoiled and decaying fruit which have been thrown out as worthless." Not all working class families suffered such privation, but the wage reductions of that winter coupled with intermittent periods of unemployment during the next four years placed serious pressures on the family economy of even the best paid workers.<sup>3</sup>

As long as hard times persisted workers remained defenseless against wage reductions. Strikes invariably proved fruitless. In March, 1874, when more than 200 weavers and spinners left the Lyman Mills because of a wage cut, the agent received more than a dozen applications a day from unemployed workers seeking to fill their places. Nor were semi-skilled textile operatives the only workers so vulnerable. Two years later

a walkout by machinists at the Massachusetts Screw Company, protesting the second fifteen per cent wage decrease within six months, brought the same consequences: in only a few days the superintendent was barraged by applications from more than twice the number of workers needed to replace the strikers.<sup>4</sup>

As workers realized that little could be done about wage reductions so long as the inflated rolls of the reserve army of the unemployed provided a ready pool of strikebreakers, they sought to reduce unemployment by petitioning municipal authorities for public works projects. The initial response was chilling. In his 1876 inaugural address, Republican mayor W.B.C. Pearsons articulated a public works philosophy that drew on some of the most hidebound features of the dominant ethic:

Some insist that we should provide work for the poor, make a place, where poor people can have a chance to earn a few dollars. I trust that we shall do nothing of the kind. Better would it be for us to provide them a living, than enrage in an enterprise that was not of benefit to the people; better still would it be, if those out of employment could get places upon the lands that lie spread all over this great country, waiting for the husbandman.

Rather than dampening the enthusiasm of the petitioners,

the rebuff only sharpened their political awareness. At a September, 1876 meeting of the unemployed, Dennis Glavin urged his auditors "to follow the petition into the council room, and 'spot' every man who voted against it, and to remember him." That winter Holyoke had a new Democratic mayor and in February the city council voted \$15,000 for a sewer project. Few additional expenditures followed, as Mayor Crafts proved nearly as penurious as his Republican predecessor, but Holyoke workers had a fleeting glimpse of what their united effort could accomplish.<sup>5</sup>

That winter also saw the formation of a German-speaking chapter of the Workingmen's Party of the United States (WPUS), and in March, following a series of addresses by P.J. McGuire, a New York City carpenter then working as a party organizer, fifty native born, British, and Irish workers established an English-speaking branch; by October the two groups had more than 200 members. Committed to the abolition of the wage system and the creation of a classless society, the WPUS sought to establish a viable socialist movement through the formation of trade unions. The party's platform called for an eight-hour day, child labor law, legislation making

employers liable for all accidents, and a demand that all industrial enterprises "be placed under the control of the Government as fast as practicable and operated by free cooperative trade unions for the good of the whole people." Party leaders especially stressed the importance of the eight-hour day. As P.J. McDonnell, editor of the Labor Standard, observed, the issue was not only a popular recruiting tool, but made workers aware that "the very system of wage labor is wrong because it compels the workers to do more or less work which is not compensated."<sup>6</sup>

At Holyoke, the producer alternative, greenbackism, proved more popular among Irish workers, who followed Ben Butler in attributing the depression to the misguided and self-serving hard money policy of "coupon clippers." Differing analyses of the depression marked a major dissimilarity between the two groups. Where greenbackers believed returning prosperity demanded only the reignition of latent productive forces among a vaguely defined strata labelled the industrial or producing classes, the WPUS saw overproduction as part of the problem and looked to wage earners alone for salvation. The Labor Standard thus found greenbackism inade-

quate and complained that financial reformers paid no attention to the hours question. The greenbackers' goal - to stimulate production - was praiseworthy, one contributor observed, but "without some such break-water as an eight-hour law. . . a tidal wave of production will sweep over the land and swamp every aspiration of the laborer and citizen for a broader and fuller life." Yet the differences between greenbackism and the WPUS can easily be overstated. At a Butler rally in Fall River, the general's supporters carried placards reading "Nine Hours and No Surrender" as well as "Who Shall Us, Money or the People:" and Patrick Ford, spokesman of Irish nationalism who supported the Greenback-Labor Party in 1876 and 1880, also called for an eight-hour day, income tax, and an end to interest on money.<sup>7</sup>

With the gradual return of prosperity in 1878, WPUS membership declined and the organization faded from the local scene, but within four years the party's successor organization, the Socialist Labor Party (SLP), formed a local chapter. Germans dominated the SLP and during the first years of its existence the party was confined to German Holyoke. Although it subscribed to the doctrine of class struggle, the SLP explicitly re-

puddied violence and sought to work amicably with other labor organizations. By 1885, it began to perform on a larger stage. As the economic crisis of the eighties deepened, interest in trades unions revived and the party played a major role in forming the Trades and Labor Assembly, where it championed a broad reform program that included demands for a government issued currency as well as the eight-hour day and the right of legal incorporation for all labor organizations.<sup>8</sup>

Despite the SLP's role in establishing the Trades and Labor Assembly, it played a subordinate part within the body. The assembly's most prominent spokesman was P.J. Moore, an officer of the St. Jerome's Temperance Society, founder of the Land League, and leading figure in the Knights of Labor. Moore traced labor's predicament not to its differences with capital but rather to competition which forced employers into reducing prices and wages. Such an approach to class relations mirrored that of the Knights' state leadership. A.A. Carlton, head of District Assembly 30, although forced to support a number of strikes, never tired of decrying such actions: "judging from some of the reports in the Journal

(of United Labor)," he wrote, "many Districts as well as Locals imagine that to strike is our highest aim and to win a strike the greatest victory that could be achieved. Instruction seems to be badly needed." The Knights' desire to avoid confrontation in turn elicited the support and applause of regional Catholic spokesmen. Worcester's Irish Catholic weekly, The Messenger, regularly carried notices of Knights' activities and counseled workers to adopt the organization's position on strikes: "They are an important element of the workingman's ammunition in industrial warfare, but like gunpowder, unless handled carefully, are likely to do more damage to workingmen themselves than to those against whom they are fighting."<sup>9</sup>

Rather than direct economic action, District Master Workman Carlton urged the formation of cooperatives and political activity to secure legislation favorable to workers. At Holyoke the Knights undertook few cooperative projects, but the Trades and Labor Assembly did support the Knights' legislative program. More a pressure group than a political party the Assembly instructed workers to support the party and candidates most committed to labor's cause. Its principal legis-

lative aim was an arbitration law that would force capital to the bargaining table without having to endure periods of protracted conflict. Desiring social change without class struggle, the Assembly reflected the attitudes on class relations of the Yankee and Catholic respectables who dominated its membership.<sup>10</sup>

The Assembly's local platform also reflected its cultural orientation. At an 1885 meeting, it demanded reform of the city's poor relief system and called for the initiation of a city hospital and farm. At the latter institution the dependent poor could engage in productive labor that would restore their sense of dignity and thus allow them to resume an autonomous social existence. Other demands included the construction of a public bathhouse, the elimination of library fees, and school reform. Workers showed particular concern about the condition of the elementary schools. In protesting the school committee's policy of placing the least experienced teachers in overcrowded elementary schools, one assembly spokesman articulated the organization's assessment of public education:

The Trades and Labor Assembly . . . don't care much about the high school. The greatest influence can be had on the little children. Instead of crowded rooms for little children we

want more room, and the best teachers. . . .  
The high school needs only the poorest kind  
of teachers. (There) the examination is the  
chief thing. Instead of that it is made a  
buncombe.

These disparaging comments are explained in part by the fact that few workers' children could yet look forward to a high school education. But the critique cannot be fully understood unless viewed against the backdrop of the self-help philosophy which lay at the core of working class respectability. Throughout the eighties numerous groups of Holyoke workers established a host of reading rooms, debating clubs, and literary associations. At these institutions, they extended their education through an interchange of ideas, unencumbered by high school "buncombe." Beyond providing fundamental cognitive skills, the public schools were superfluous to this world.<sup>11</sup>

In sum, the SLP, Knights of Labor, and Trades and Labor Assembly institutionally represented the Holyoke working class during the decade in which it became a political force. Their collective membership, however, comprised only a fragment of the local working class. German workers from a broad range of occupations joined all three groups, but only the more skilled Irish work-

ers participated, and French-Canadians were virtually unrepresented. The producer ideology of the Knights, which also dominated the Trades and Labor Assembly, permitted the convergence of Yankee and Catholic respectables, but it engendered a confused perception of class interest. The line distinguishing working class respectability as an autonomous expression of class interest from a caricature of middle class values sometimes became blurred. At such moments class consciousness was transformed into self-consciousness. When George Ewing, a local businessman who dabbled in labor reform, told an off-color story before a meeting of the Trades and Labor Assembly, "WORKINGMAN" scolded him for reciting in the lower wards what he would not repeat in wards six or seven. His reason for criticizing Ewing indicated just how concerned "WORKINGMAN" was with what people thought in those wards: "It doesn't help our cause to have citizens get the impression we like that sort of thing." All this takes on added significance when we recall that the Assembly sought political expression through the two major parties, where an immigrant middle class mediated its demands.<sup>12</sup>

In August, 1887, when the tour workers at the Whiting Mills were informed that their hours had been reduced, before they even returned home, a group of them walked up to High street to share the good news with Jeremiah Callanan at his grocery store. "There was no reason that they should hasten to Mr. Callanan's store," reported the perceptive special Sunday correspondent of the Springfield Republican, "except that he would rejoice with them in their victory and be sure to enlighten them out of the abundance of his political experience as to the effects of this move." How many times this scene was repeated at Callanan's store or others like it is impossible to determine, but the political significance of men like Callanan can scarcely be overstated. They functioned as a link between Catholic respectables and the two major parties, just as a corps of bartenders connected the Democratic machine with saloon culture. Born in County Cork, Ireland, in 1841, Callanan arrived in the United States while an infant and grew up on an Agawam farm where he learned the trades of cigarmaker and carpenter. After serving with the Union army in the Civil War, he worked as a carpenter and served on the Holyoke police force be-

fore entering the grocery business. An ardent Irish nationalist, who had accompanied local Fenians on their invasion of Canada, Callanan was also a leading member of the St. Jerome's Temperance Society.<sup>13</sup>

The impetus for early Irish initiatives into local politics during the late seventies came from the St. Jerome's Temperance Society. During these formative years, it functioned as "school of oratory" for numerous aspiring politicians and orchestrated several naturalization drives to increase the number of Irish voters. Although the society fielded a string of middle class candidates, working class members felt confident that they would be fully represented. As one wrote, responding to criticism of his countrymen's increasing political activity, the Irish would reclaim in the political arena part of what they had lost at the city's factories:

The Patch in Holyoke is in every sense a better location than Quality Avenue, and if the honest industry of the people had received its just reward, the houses on the Patch would have equalled those on Quality Avenue . . .

You say we rule or ruin, and own no mills. The St. Jerome society is my evidence to the contrary, and in addition you could not run your mills, except we did the work from which you realize your profits. . . . And in conclusion let me say we have not ruled Holyoke, but in the future we shall.

endeavor to do so.<sup>14</sup>

In 1880, the increasing aggressiveness of Irish respectables caused a split in the Democratic Party. Led by Jonathan Allen and the ubiquitous P.J. Moore, the Irish faction established the Andrew Jackson Club "for the purpose of self-improvement in a literary as well as a political sense." Allen was a contentious and feisty lawyer who sometimes "accompanied an argument with a blow as the most fitting answer to insolent ignorance." An active Irish nationalist, who had once spent five months in a British prison, he was a popular figure in the city's Irish community. In 1880, Allen's Irish minions secured the mayoral nomination for James J. O'Connor, a Harvard-educated physician, who as City Physician had demonstrated an acute awareness of the manifold health hazards in the lower wards and urged their amelioration. He was narrowly beaten in the ensuing election.<sup>15</sup>

The other faction, led by veteran party warhorse, Roswell P. Crafts, formed the Thomas Jefferson Club. Dedicated to the proposition that the "best government is that which governs least," the club declared itself opposed to "class legislation, special privilege, and

monopoly under the Federal and state governments, and to intrigue, incapacity, and extravagance in municipal affairs." An unstable coalition of old ward healers like Crafts and proto-Mugwumps interested in placing the "best men" in office, the group was held together by a commitment to reduced government and a mutual detestation of the Irish. In 1880, they watched from the sidelines as the party's nominee, Dr. O'Connor, went down to defeat. The following year Crafts obtained the Democratic mayoral nomination and, despite the fact that Irish respectables refused to support him, won in an election so close that it necessitated a recount.<sup>16</sup>

An incident that summer, involving the Irish political leader, Jonathan Allen, demonstrated the degree of bitterness that had arisen between the factions. In one of his lesser actions after assuming office, Crafts decreed a curfew law which prohibited anyone from remaining at Hampden Park after 10 PM. Allen decided to test the law and the mayor by refusing to leave the park at the appointed hour. As if to publicize his defiance, Allen struck the police officer who ordered him to leave, an act which prompted the latter to reciprocate with a few blows. Seeing that a crowd had now gathered,

Allen remarked to the arresting officer that he would "pay dearly for his night's work." In response, the officer struck him again, as many in the crowd cried "shame." Allen subsequently received a small fine, but two days later Crafts rescinded the curfew. The incident was a fitting prelude to the 1882 Democratic caucus.<sup>17</sup>

The 1882 Democratic caucus was one of the most raucous in the city's history. The mayoral contest pitted the Irish faction's James E. Delaney against the incumbent mayor, Roswell P. Crafts. The Delaney supporters initially attempted to make Jeremiah Callanan permanent chairman without consulting the Crafts group. When this maneuver failed, they stacked a seven-man nominating committee with six Delaney stalwarts and Callanan assumed the chair. Maintaining some semblance of order was another matter altogether. Throughout the day, amid a bedlam of noise, Callanan could be heard shouting "Sit down, you crank" and other expressions that reflected his exasperation. When, during the course of an endorsement speech, one Crafts supporter rhetorically asked, "Why do I support Mr. Crafts," a shrill voice from the audience instantaneously responded, "Cos ye don't

know noting d\_\_n ya." The balloting finally took place and Delaney won by a decisive margin. Afterwards, however, two Crafts men reported finding 300 of their candidate's ballots stuffed in a toilet located in a room adjoining the one in which the count had occurred and various men could be overheard explaining how they had managed to vote two or three times. In the election, Crafts again won, running as an independent.<sup>18</sup>

The following year the Irish faction finally defeated Roswell Crafts, who had secured the Republican nomination, and placed James Delaney in the mayor's chair. They did it, though, with strong support from an unexpected quarter. In the closing days of the campaign, some of the city's leading manufacturers and merchants publicly endorsed Delaney. In telegraphing his support from Washington, Congressman Whiting stated his conviction that Delaney's administration would be "economical and above reproach." The reasons for this turnabout are not entirely clear, but appear to stem from a confluence of long-standing grudges and current anxieties. Many Holyokers saw Crafts as an unscrupulous politician who actively sought the saloon vote. Few Holyoke manufacturers were prohibitionists, but they

did desire that some checks be placed on local liquor interests. At a hearing on unlimited licensing the following spring, representatives from the city's twenty largest mills voiced their collective concern that such a measure would reduce worker efficiency and lead to higher taxes by causing increased crime and pauperism. Older Republicans also remembered Crafts' lukewarm support of the war effort and recoiled at the thought of supporting such a person as the party's standard bearer. During the campaign, James Ramage, a paper manufacturer and Democrat, played on these fears in his endorsement of Delaney:

Why should you resort to the extreme measure of putting at the head of your ticket the rankest Democrat of all. Do you fear the Irish vote? Your candidate will out-Irish the most rabid Irishman. Do you fear the rum element? Your candidate has allowed their Sunday business to go on for the last two years with only one or two feeble pretenses to stop it.<sup>19</sup>

Yet, at least some of these men had supported Crafts during the two previous elections. When, then, made the 1883 election different from earlier campaigns? As Ramage indicated, two years of Crafts' rule had alienated some of his previous supporters. Beyond that, though, the election signalled a grudging recognition of

the inevitability of Irish rule. Each year more and more Irish were becoming naturalized citizens and adding their names to the voting lists. Before they united behind a class conscious worker candidate like P.J. Moore or an agitator like Jonathan Allen, it seemed best to accept a safe nominee like James Delaney. As a former clerk at the Holyoke Water Power Company and the son of the city's most prominent contractor, Delaney could be counted upon not to rock the boat. His reelection the following year, with continued strong support from wards six and seven, suggests that he did not. By 1885, however, the Irish working class respectables who comprised the core of Delaney's support had united with Yankee artisans in the Trades and Labor Assembly and were looking for a new candidate.<sup>20</sup>

At a joint meeting of the Trades and Labor Assembly and the Knights of Labor in November, 1885, the delegates rejected Delaney in favor of Edward O'Connor, a High street clothing merchant. When the former brickmason and president of the St. Jerome's Temperance Society chose not to run, the workers selected Dr. James J. O'Connor, the Irish respectables' unsuccessful 1880 candidate. Hoping for a more vigorous enforcement of the

liquor laws, the Republicans also supported O'Connor, who defeated Delaney, again running as the Democratic nominee. The following year the city's labor organizations again endorsed O'Connor by "an almost unanimous vote." The two elections clearly demonstrated the cultural divisions among Holyoke workers. As the leading spokesman of working class respectability, P.J. Moore depicted the 1886 election as a contest between the forces of righteousness and rapacity:

Common report has it that a supreme effort will be made at the coming city election to change the (liquor) policy of the present administration by removing the present executive officers. . . . It is deemed not only prudent but expedient that steps be taken at once to organize the friends of law and order into a working body, so that we may be able to resist the encroachments of men who are banded together, not for the public good, but for private benefit.

Whatever Delaney's initial intentions, he had soon come to depend on the support of the saloon interest, which in 1885 organized as the Holyoke Retail Licensed Liquor-Dealers Protective Union. As it pooled its funds to defeat O'Connor, the Union disingenuously maintained that its principal purpose was to curb drunkenness by "moderation in the use of strong drink." It also encouraged those like the man who argued against O'Connor's

class. At this crucial moment, however, a majority of the club's membership refused to sunder its ties to the middle class and take the necessary step forward. As a consequence, it played a diminishing role in municipal politics over the course of the next few years.<sup>22</sup>

Yet the political interventions of working class respectables were not entirely fruitless. From 1885 to 1888, they sent Jeremish J. Keane to represent the lower wards in the state legislature. A member of the St. Jerome's Temperance Society, Keane doubled as a bricklayer and bookkeeper at the Lynch Brothers construction business. In securing the 1885 Democratic nomination, he defeated "Captain" John H. Wright, a favorite among the saloon crowd, who had parleyed his role as commanding officer of local forces in the 1869 Fenian expedition into a successful political career. In the legislature, Keane worked tirelessly for his working class supporters, pushing through an 1888 measure which prohibited fines for imperfect weaving and introducing a four workers' bill which, had it been approved, would have required shorter hours.<sup>23</sup>

Keane, however, was the bright exception in a poli-

tical record that was otherwise barren of accomplishment. James J. O'Connor fought the good fight against the saloon interest, but did little else for the working class respectables who supported him. In the end, the question remains, why did these workers choose not to form an independent labor party? In part, the answer lies in their relatively narrow organizational base. By 1890, French-Canadians comprised twenty per cent of the city's total population. Few of these workers belonged to either the Knights of Labor or the Trades and Labor Assembly. Underrepresented politically, they viewed politics through a narrow ethnic prism. An 1889 meeting at the French-speaking carpenters' union, attended by "nearly every French citizen in Holyoke," decided that French-Canadians should give their "undivided support" to any of their countrymen running for political office. Nor did all Irish workers belong to labor organizations, as even a cursory glance at the line of march in one of the period's labor day parades revealed. The main body of these processions comprised metal and building tradesmen, joined by lesser delegations of cigarmakers, printers, clerks, and barbers. The only unskilled workers to participate were from the

laborers' union and they were closely allied with the Democratic machine, which saw to it that municipal laborers received a wage rate well above the regional scale. The skilled tour workers and mule spinners alone represented the majority of the local workforce who labored in the paper and textile mills. A closer look at the city's most militant and class conscious textile operatives, ward three's German workers, shows the extent to which the labor movement failed to penetrate this segment of the workforce.<sup>24</sup>

On February 4, 1886, nearly 100 German weavers walked out at the Skinner Silk Mill, demanding weekly pay, the reinstatement of a fired co-worker, and the dismissal of David Goetz, an arrogant and abusive overseer, who was allegedly partial in distributing work. They also claimed that the warps from which they wove contained two to ten yards more yarn than the 200 yard cut for which they were paid. The mill's owner, William Skinner, who before coming to Holyoke had operated a mill village which bore his name, was perhaps the city's most self-consciously paternalistic manufacturer. Initially, he refused to admit that his workers had any real grievances and blamed the strike on "the employees

of another mill, who are connected with the socialists." Skinner soon realized that he was mistaken and two weeks later sat down with arbitrator C.H. Litchman to try to reach a settlement. Although Litchman was affiliated with the Knights of Labor, his declaration upon arriving at Holyoke that "A genuine understanding and kindly feeling between master and man, tends more to settle the vexed question of capital and labor than all the industrial organizations in existence" apparently convinced Skinner that this was a man of unusually good sense. On February 20, Litchman announced an agreement that, with the exception of the demand that Goetz be discharged, met most of the strikers' grievances. But because Skinner absolutely refused to re-hire fifteen weavers, whom he considered the strike's organizers, the dispute continued.<sup>25</sup>

In the weeks that followed the strikers received active support from both the SLP and the Knights of Labor. In late February, the SLP contacted the New York City Central Labor Union and secured the assurances of seventeen organizations representing 4,000 tailors that they would boycott Skinner's products. At a March celebration commemorating the establishment of the Paris

Commune, the socialists raised \$100 for the strikers. District Assembly 30 of the Knights also endorsed the strike in March, raising morale and leading "A STRIKER" to exult that "It is no easy matter to fight the Knights of Labor." The following month P.J. Moore secured the District Assembly's approval of a resolution calling for a boycott of Skinner's products. The strikers themselves were by no means passively awaiting their fate. After investigating Goetz's background, they claimed to have evidence that "he has been living in open and notorious adultery with a woman when he had a lawful wife and two children in New Jersey." They also accused the "Mormon overseer" of sexually harassing women workers at the Skinner mill and, in March, had him brought to trial for striking a woman operative. Goetz was subsequently acquitted, but the various accusations levelled against him revealed the bitterness which the strike had aroused. Ultimately, Skinner won out and the strike ended without any concessions on his part. Besides showing the extent to which the city's labor organizations reinforced one another, the strike had a curious postscript which revealed much about the political failure of the Holyoke labor movement during

the eighties.<sup>26</sup>

In 1888 the Democratic party nominated William Skinner for Congress. Immediately upon hearing of his selection, the Knights reminded local workers of the events of two years previous and noted that Skinner had not only refused to discharge Goetz, but still retained him in his employ. At the same time, the Textile Workers Progressive Union, then organizing at Holyoke, issued a circular accusing Skinner of systematic robbery: He is "not only a Skinner by name, but is one of those merciless, never-having-enough, always grinding and grinding down, skimmers of human flesh and blood." Though it considered the language too "forcible," the Trades and Labor Assembly approved the circular. Skinner lost the election, but swept Holyoke's working class wards, taking the predominantly German ward three by a 341-122 margin. It was only in wards six and seven, where the city's manufacturers considered Skinner unreliable on the tariff, that he lost. The continuing effectiveness of mill paternalism partially explains the result. During the strike workers indicated that they found little fault with Skinner and blamed Goetz almost entirely for their

problems. The vote also demonstrated just how little headway the labor movement had made among Holyoke textile workers.<sup>27</sup>

Additional reasons for the failure of working class respectables to launch an independent labor party can be found in the general tone of class relations. Given the producer ideology's aversion to class struggle and its flexible definition of class interest, class development was contingent on upper class behavior to a larger degree than might elsewhere have been the case. On more than one occasion the Holyoke upper class averted potential conflict by demonstrating a shrewd awareness of class relations. We have already seen how it sought to direct the developing political power of the Irish into safe channels through its intervention in the 1883 election.

It also remained circumspect in its social activities. In 1883, a group of the city's younger men of wealth formed a club comprising Holyoke's "first families." Styling itself the Arlington Club, the group's badge of membership was "a small gold pin with the monogram 'A.C.'" Over the next few years it sponsored a series of lavish entertainments for its select mem-

bership.<sup>28</sup> The principal event of the 1885 season was a reception at city hall for Governor Robinson, which the club hoped would be a "representative gathering of the best people in the state, political, professional, manufacturing, and mercantile." In the days preceeding the reception, area notables badgered club members for tickets and local newspaper coverage was, to say the least, effusive. A few days after the event, however, the Transcript had second thoughts and asked just who were the "very best people" and what made them so? Although the rich "are positively, yes, comparatively good," the editor continued, they did suffer the temptations of speculation, deception, and display. He concluded that the "superlative excellence in every city of the country can be found more often among the middle class than in wealth or poverty." The unspoken, but even less subtle, response of the city's Irish middle class politicians came in the form of a rental fee for the use of city hall far in excess of that charged less notable organizations. When club president J.G. MacKintosh protested the bill's unfairness and refused to pay, City Solicitor Terence B. O'Donnell filed suit against the club. In passages laden

with sarcasm, he later explained his action in his annual report: "'With malice toward none and charity toward all,' it is obviously the duty of all officers charged with the collection of claims due the city to at least try to collect them from all classes of supposed debtors, and to try to collect them by suit if necessary." The upshot of it all was that the club paid the bill and the Holyoke upper class did not stage another social event comparable to the Governor's reception for another eleven years; and that was a charity ball. The middle class thus not only functioned as a cushion between the upper class and working class, but also reminded the local bourgeoisie when it was getting out of line.<sup>29</sup>

A final factor inhibiting the formation of an independent labor party was the close ties between Catholic working class respectables and the immigrant middle class. The two groups went to the same churches and belonged to the same clubs. As children of the famine, they shared similar backgrounds and experiences, and together gave expression to this common heritage through their support of Irish nationalism. Where conflict arose between them, a common acceptance of the producer

ideology mitigated its intensity. During an 1888 mason's strike, Maurice Lynch told his striking workers that "if forced to it he was still able to do a good day's work." When the strikers showed some skepticism, he challenged any of them to a week-long competition in which the loser would pay the victor's wages. No one accepted Lynch's challenge, nor did it end the strike; but it did demonstrate the degree to which producerism provided working class respectables and the middle class a common language.<sup>30</sup>

By the late eighties, however, there were signs that the bond was beginning to dissolve. Some workers were sufficiently dissatisfied with middle class political leadership to suggest the formation of an independent labor party. The mere fact of building trades' strikes pitting local construction workers against immigrant contractors revealed increasing tensions between the two groups. Also, a second generation immigrant middle class was emerging from the high school which spoke a new and unfamiliar language. In an 1884 senior oration, Patrick Shea chose "the World Owes Me a Living" as his topic, and proceeded to lash the "insolent, shiftless, people who take this for their motto

and prey upon the community." John C. Sullivan followed with a critique of the jury system in which he declared it "preposterous for men who can hardly write their own name to be placed in the position to decide on questions that require the best judgment and intellect." Four years later, J.F. Farley more fully articulated the ideology of the "new" immigrant middle class:

When one enters (the high school) all distinctions of birth, race, wealth, or dress, are laid aside and one's position in his class depends solely upon his own intellect and energy, as his seat in school depends upon his behavior. There is no aristocracy save that of brain and deportment. . . . I have heard it stated that no boy or girl of my own most honored and respected race could have a fair chance in that school. . . . It is absolutely and absurdly false.<sup>31</sup>

In Mary Doyle Curran's novel about Holyoke, an elderly Irishman wistfully recalled a time when the city's Irish "were all the same" and lived peacefully together in the lower wards. "You will never see those days again," he lamented, "for they are gone. . . and it's the Fill that did it, the Fill with its pot of gold and Irishman fighting Irishman to get at it." As the decade of the eighties closed, that earlier time had not yet entirely vanished, but it was quickly fading.<sup>32</sup>

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Holyoke Transcript (HT), 11 Aug. 1877.

<sup>2</sup>Constance M. Green, Holyoke, Massachusetts: A Case History of the Industrial Revolution in America (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1939), 138-139; Springfield Republican (SR), 6 Mar. 1877; 31 Mar. 1877; 4 Apr. 1877. Bankruptcy notices can be found in SR, 6 Jan. 1877; 12 Jan. 1877; 5 Feb. 1877; 15 Feb. 1877; 23 Feb. 1877; 24 Feb. 1877; 1 Mar. 1877; 10 Mar. 1877; 2 Apr. 1877.

<sup>3</sup>HT, 2 Aug. 1877; 5 Nov. 1873; 8 Nov. 1873; 2 Dec. 1873; Independent Journal, 11 Nov. 1873; HT, 31 May 1876; 25 Dec. 1878.

<sup>4</sup>HT, 7 Mar. 1874; 7 Jun. 1876.

<sup>5</sup>Holyoke Municipal Register (HMR), 1876, 11-12; HT, 11 Sep. 1876; 20 Sep. 1876; 14 Feb. 1877. Not all Holyoke Republicans shared Pearsons' views. In his 1879 inaugural address, William Whiting, the city's leading paper manufacturer, declared that "We can look for a decrease of disbursements for the poor not until the business of the country improves to such an extent as to keep employed the surplus labor." HMR, 1879, 8.

<sup>6</sup>Howard H. Quint, The Forging of American Socialism: The Origins of the Modern Movement (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Company paperback edition, 1964; originally published in 1954), 13-15; Stuart Kaufman, Samuel Gompers and Origins of the American Federation of Labor, 1848-1896 (Westport, Ct., Greenwood Press, 1973) 56-78; Labor Standard, 24 Mar. 1877; 18 Nov. 1877; SR, 15 Feb. 1885; 26 Feb. 1877; 1 Mar. 1877, HT, 1 Aug. 1877; 3 Oct. 1877. The McDonnell quotation is from Kaufman, Origins of the AFL, 71. In a letter to the Labor Standard, E.F. Sullivan, recording secretary of the English-speaking chapter of the WPUS, wrote that the Holyoke sections fully endorsed its editorial policy. Labor Standard, 14 Jul. 1877.

<sup>7</sup>SR, 17 Aug. 1878; Hans L. Trefousse, Ben Butler: The South Called Him Beast! (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1957), 239; Labor Standard, 25 Nov. 1877; 7 Jul. 1878; 9 Nov. 1878; Eric Foner, "Class, Ethnicity, and Radicalism in the Gilded Age: The Land League and Irish America," 159, in Politics and Ideology in the Age of the Civil War (New York: Oxford University Press paperback edition, 1980).

<sup>8</sup>SR, 14 Oct. 1882; 15 Feb. 1885; People, 7 Apr. 1888.

<sup>9</sup>HT, 29 Oct. 1885; Journal of United Labor, Feb. 1884, 639; 25 Mar. 1885, 947; 25 Sep. 1885, 1087; Messenger, Sep. 1887; 6 Oct. 1888; 14 Apr. 1888. When the Congregation of the Holy Office decided against condemning the Knights, The Messenger exultantly declared that "This action puts a quietus on the statements that the Church looks askance at, if she does not openly discourage, all attempts of the working classes to organize for the amelioration of their condition." Messenger, 14 Jul. 1888.

<sup>10</sup>Journal of United Labor, 10 Aug. 1884; HT, 29 Oct. 1885. The legislative program of District Assembly 30 also called for a weekly pay measure, an employers' accident liability act, and a bill to establish a \$300,000 fund that would provide workingmen with low-interest loans for homes. Journal of United Labor, 25 Feb. 1885, 921.

<sup>11</sup>HT, 15 Oct. 1885; SR, 11 Nov. 1882; HT, 12 Jan. 1886; 22 Feb. 1886; 23 Feb. 1886; 9 Feb. 1887; 28 Mar. 1887; 18 Dec. 1891.

<sup>12</sup>HT, 16 Oct. 1885.

<sup>13</sup>SR, 14 Aug. 1877; HT, 11 Jan. 1894.

<sup>14</sup>SR, 28 Oct. 1894; 25 Oct. 1881; HT, 15 Feb. 1879. The letter to which this correspondent was responding, "How We Came to Rule the City," was allegedly written by an Irishman and appeared in Holyoke News, 6 Feb. 1879.

<sup>15</sup>SR, 13 Nov. 1880; 26 Nov. 1880; HT, 2 Jul. 1877; HMR, 1880, 119; Holyoke Public Library Scrapbook, 15:70; SR, 7 Dec. 1880.

<sup>16</sup>SR, 18 Nov. 1880; 22 Nov. 1880; 11 Nov. 1881; 5 Dec. 1881; 6 Dec. 1881; HT; 7 Jan. 1882. Commenting on his 1878 mayoral campaign, the Republican observed that the "way ex-mayor Crafts went the grand rounds of the city's liquor shops. . . in search of votes provokes much comment." SR, 29 Nov. 1878.

<sup>17</sup>SR, 26 Jul. 1882; 27 Jul. 1882; 28 Jul. 1882; 30 Jul. 1882.

<sup>18</sup>SR, 30 Nov. 1882; 3 Dec. 1882; 5 Dec. 1882; HT, 2 Dec. 1882.

<sup>19</sup>SR, 4 Dec. 1883; 9 Dec. 1883; HT, 19 Apr. 1884; 28 Nov. 1883. Ramage also voiced the feelings of many of his fellow manufacturers on the temperance question: "I have never pretended to be a prohibitionist, but I shall gladly welcome the day when licenses to sell liquor shall be restricted." Delaney favored higher license fees and a reduction in the number of licensees. HT, 1 Dec. 1883; 21 Mar. 1884. Father Phelan at Sacred Heart also intervened in the contest by questioning the mayor's moral integrity after Crafts approved a license for a saloon located in the vicinity of Phelan's church. HT, 3 Nov. 1883.

<sup>20</sup>A ward by ward breakdown of the vote in the three elections can be found in SR, 6 Dec. 1882; 5 Dec. 1883; 3 Dec. 1884.

<sup>21</sup>HT, 18 Nov. 1885; 30 Nov. 1885; 10 Nov. 1886. 13 Nov. 1886; 15 Nov. 1886; SR, 30 Nov. 1885; 3 Dec. 1885; 6 Dec. 1885; 14 Nov. 1886; 27 Nov. 1886; 10 Nov. 1886; 15 Nov. 1886; 5 Dec. 1886; HT, 21 Nov. 1885; SR, 19 Sep. 1886. O'Connor's ongoing battle with local saloon interests over the cost and number of licenses to be issued is covered in SR, 2 May 1886; 1 May 1887; 5 Jun. 1887; 28 Jul. 1887; HT, 28 Jul. 1887.

<sup>22</sup>SR, 27 Nov. 1887; 28 Nov. 1887; 3 Dec. 1887; HT, 23 Nov. 1887; 25 Nov. 1887; 28 Nov. 1887; 29 Nov. 1887; 2 Dec. 1887.

<sup>23</sup>HT, 22 Oct. 1885; 29 Oct. 1885; 28 Sep. 1886; 7 Nov. 1886; 7 Nov. 1887; 14 Feb. 1888; 4 May 1889. During these years Holyoke sent two representatives to the General Court: one represented wards one through four, while the other was elected by the city's three remaining wards.

<sup>24</sup>HT, 25 Nov. 1889; 1 Sep. 1890; 31 Aug. 1891; 1 Apr. 1892.

<sup>25</sup>HT, 5 Feb. 1886; 8 Feb. 1886; 9 Feb. 1886; SR, 8 Feb. 1886; 9 Feb. 1886; HT, 19 Feb. 1886; 20 Feb. 1886. The only textile strikes of the decade to meet with even partial success were conducted by the German operatives at the Germania Mills. HT, 12 Jul. 1882; 25 Apr. 1885. Skinner had carefully recruited these weavers three years earlier. HT, 18 Jan. 1882. A biographical sketch of C.H. Litchman can be found in Norman Ware, The Labor Movement in the United States, 1860-1890: A Study in Democracy (New York: Vintage paperback edition, 1964; originally published in 1929), 20-21.

<sup>26</sup>HT, 27 Feb. 1886; 20 Mar. 1886; 11 Mar. 1886; 23 Apr. 1886; 2 Mar. 1886; 4 Mar. 1886; 18 Mar. 1886; 19 Mar. 1886; 29 Mar. 1886.

<sup>27</sup>HT, 17 Oct. 1888; 27 Oct. 1888; 29 Oct. 1888; 6 Nov. 1888; SR, 11 Nov. 1888; 9 Feb. 1886.

<sup>28</sup>SR, 28 Dec. 1884; 1 Jun. 1885; HT, 11 Feb. 1885.

<sup>29</sup>SR, 1 Feb. 1885; HT, 5 Feb. 1885; 14 Feb. 1885; 17 Feb. 1885; 16 Sep. 1885; 18 Sep. 1885; 17 Dec. 1885; HMR, 1886, 81-83. The Arlington Club gradually faded out of existence. HT, 12 Oct. 1894.

<sup>30</sup>HT, 8 May 1888.

<sup>31</sup>HT, 28 Jun. 1884; 23 May 1888.

<sup>32</sup>Mary Doyle Curran, The Parish and the Hill (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin Company, 1948), 49.

## C H A P T E R VI

### DEPRESSION DECADE

Despite the appearance of touring Social Gospelers who denounced competition and warned of growing class conflict during the early nineties, local ministers still consoled affluent parishioners with the belief that their rectitude insured the continuance of a benevolent social order ruled by pious paternalists like themselves. Second Congregational Church minister Reverend E.A. Reed was one such divine. While Reed cautioned against conspicuous consumption, he reassuringly added that "large sums were being used for the good of the needy and the feeling of brotherhood was growing stronger every day." At the Second Baptist Church, Reverend Boothe told of a local manufacturer who always tried to avoid working his men on Sunday and prayed for them whenever he did. As it turned out, the Social Gospelers had a surer grip on current realities. Indeed, a few days after the Boothe sermon, "REX" wrote that after a careful canvass of the community the manufacturer of whom Boothe spoke proved "difficult to locate and the

majority have decided that he died some years ago."<sup>1</sup>

An 1891 molders' strike at the Holyoke Hydrant and Iron Works offered perhaps the clearest expression of mounting class tensions within the city. Eighteen molders walked out in June, after the company had refused to discharge non-union employees and recognize the union's 1:8 apprentice ratio. The recently formed Central Labor Union (CLU) immediately extended its support by ordering a boycott of the firm's castings. As the strike continued into August and the company hired a force of strikebreakers, broad elements of the working class community moved into the streets with the strikers. Over 2,000 strikers and sympathizers converged on the company and verbally assaulted the replacements, some of whom found themselves "being used as footballs by the infuriated crowd." The policemen sent to restore order performed their task without enthusiasm; one reportedly stated that "I would not arrest a striker if I saw him hit a scab." Even though few strikebreakers later chose to brave the crowds, the company held out and defeated the molders. Yet the unprecedented outpouring of community support for a small group of skilled workers indicated a growing class consciousness among

Holyoke wage earners and their families. At that year's labor day parade, ironmolders carried placards reading, "WHAT A TRAITOR IS TO HER COUNTRY A SCAB IS TO LABOR" and invoking the ethic of the Knights of Labor, "AN INJURY TO ONE IS THE CONCERN OF ALL."<sup>2</sup>

During the early nineties the building trades formed the most militant element in the Holyoke workforce. As the ground thawed out each spring and construction began, contractors and workers faced off against each other in what by 1890 had become an annual ritual. The workers required a response to their demands by May 1, a carefully selected deadline that allowed them a few months to accumulate savings in the event of a strike. In late April each side declared its resolve to stand firm and local newspapers carried the gloomy forecasts of realtors who invariably predicted a poor building season if the workers did not relent.

In 1892 the carpenters sought \$2.25 for a nine hour day and a closed shop. One builder acceded to their demands after a brief December strike, but the city's remaining contractors proved considerably less compliant that May. When James Fowles' carpenters protested against working with non-unionists, he flew into a rage and just

narrowly escaped a beating after throwing their tools into the street. Most contractors reacted more calmly and formed a Building Association whose constitution prohibited members from granting a closed shop. The organization also obtained the assurances of local businessmen that if a general strike ensued its members would not be held responsible for unmet contracts.<sup>3</sup>

In response, the carpenters warned local businessmen that they should first consult their own interests before entering the dispute. Merchants, especially declared ex-alderman Michael Manning, should assess the respective numerical strength of the two sides and ask whether they received more from a "score of Shylocks" or the city's 2,000 trade unionists. It was no idle threat. The CLU promptly extended its support to the carpenters and a host of individual unions later expressed their solidarity: the painters refused to work on buildings constructed by non-union carpenters; the molders sought the International's permission to refuse to make castings for builders employing non-union carpenters; the bricklayers' union petitioned the International for authority to decline to work beside non-union carpenters; the printers levied a weekly assessment for the strikers'

support; and in late May the brickmasons, mason tenders, and plumbers threatened a walkout if the strike was not soon settled. Such expressions of solidarity probably encouraged a compromise settlement reached a month later in which the builders acceded to the carpenters' wage and hour demands, but held firm against a closed shop.<sup>4</sup>

During the early nineties wage and hour disputes also idled textile machinery at the Farr Alpaca Company, Lyman Mills, and Merrick Thread Company. Threatened strikes were narrowly averted at the Skinner Silk Mill and Hadley Thread Company. But with the exception of the mule spinners, textile operatives remained unorganized. Textile manufacturers had greater resources at their command than the small concerns faced by building craftsmen and easily fended off work stoppages with modest concessions.<sup>5</sup>

At the city's paper mills, machine tenders and beater engineers continued to press for shorter hours and during the summer of 1893 began to achieve some success. By August, twenty three of the city's twenty six paper mills had eliminated Sunday night work to appease the tour workers; and in succeeding months the three holdouts also fell into line. Beyond the tour workers;

however, there were few signs of activity among paper workers during the early nineties.<sup>6</sup>

Despite the dearth of organization in textiles and paper, this was still an expansive period for Holyoke trade unionism. The CLU, formed in 1891, coordinated local union activity. It comprised three delegates from each union with at least ten members and by the spring of 1892 represented 1600 workers from seventeen unions. Although the Republican characterized its leaders as "conservative men, who believe that arbitration is the best way to secure the benefits for which the laboring men are asking," there were indications that some of the rank and file viewed the world differently. One faction, the Transcript observed, considered CLU president John F. Sheehan too conservative and preferred "someone who will throw the labor classes into conflict with the corporations." When "STRIKER" implied that Sheehan had betrayed the molders during the Holyoke Hydrant and Iron Works dispute, ex-alderman Manning called him a "cowardly cur," who only attacked Sheehan because he was a Republican. But the differences within the CLU appear to have run deeper than Manning's remark suggests.<sup>7</sup>

A closer look at the carpenters' strike sheds further

light on the split. There were no breaks in the strikers' ranks throughout the dispute, but different attitudes towards class relations lurked beneath the facade of solidarity. At the strike's outset one union official disclaimed any desire "to injure any contractor for they realize how necessary capital is to labor" and union organizer Shields applauded the formation of the Building Association. There should be a "mutual understanding" between builders and carpenters, Shields declared: "The master builders should organize for their protection, not to attempt to put down labor unions but for the protection of contracts."<sup>8</sup>

Not all the striking carpenters subscribed to this view. A letter to the Transcript from "NOT A MEMBER OF ANY UNION" decrying the closed shop because it deprived workers of their freedom brought this response from one striker:

We know we are not getting all the profit there is in the business, but you wait until we get every carpenter into the union, and see if we don't, or make the contractor sick. . . . We should also like to know by what particular right or privelege the contractor presumes to buy lumber that is not chopped by union choppers, drawn by union teamsters, sawed by union sawyers, planed by union planers, and approved by our walking delegate whom we pay to do nothing but go around and find out what they can about the contractor's business and report to us so we can regulate the things. We would like to know what

right Ranger (a local contractor) or any other man has to raise the price of planing without giving us the extra he charges. We should like to know what right your correspondent had to claim American freedom unless he belongs to our union anyways.

In addition to the writers ringing defense of trade unionism, his emphasis on a labor theory of value is also worth noting: where union leaders wished to formalize existing patterns of class relations under the safe rubric of business unionism, this striker expressed sentiments that struck at the very existence of the profit system. It was, to be sure, a minority view, but it indicated that the Socialist Labor Party (SLP) maintained a more than normal presence in the local labor movement and had woven a few Marxist threads into the fabric of Holyoke trade unionism.<sup>9</sup>

Whatever their approach to class relations, CLU leaders did not hesitate to employ political leverage to advance labor's cause. When in 1891 Daniel O'Connell replaced twenty three French-Canadian laborers with lower paid Italian help, the CLU voted to withhold support from any party nominating O'Connell for office that fall. O'Connell did not seek reelection to his ward five council seat, but his son did. Accordingly, the CLU threatened to oppose the entire Democratic ticket, which

frightened enough party members into defeating O'Connell at the nominating caucus. This was by no means the extent of CLU political intervention. During the molders' strike, it induced the water commissioners to delay ordering new hydrants from the Holyoke Hydrant and Iron Works. When the Street Railway Company refused to grant its laborers a closed shop and pay a "fair rate of wages," the CLU instructed its delegates to contact their aldermen and urge them to oppose any extension of the company's privileges. Frank Rivers lost a sewer contract when alderman Jeremiah Callanan accused him of underpaying his workers. Although an attempt to prevent an anti-union contractor from receiving the bid on two school-houses failed, this did not diminish the CLU's accomplishments. As the Transcript observed, such "aggressive action" attracted workers and was one of the main reasons for the organization's growth during the early nineties.<sup>10</sup>

Another spur to organization was the annual late summer observance of labor day after 1890. The day began with a parade that by 1892 counted more than 1,500 workers in its line of march, followed by field events and baseball games, and concluded with a picnic, at which the

cultural divisions separating Holyoke workers momentarily dissolved in a sea of beer and whiskey. When police raided the 1891 celebration, some later suggested that it cost Mayor Griffin his bid for reelection. After 1890 even local entrepreneurs did their part to make the day a success. At the CLU's urging, merchants decorated their stores in 1891 and by the following year most mills shut down for the occasion, allowing textile and paper operatives to enjoy the day's festivities. For the 1893 celebration, the CLU issued an eight page program filled with advertisements of local merchants and the Transcript announced that it would not publish that day.<sup>11</sup>

Yet, petty entrepreneur support of labor day was a deceptive mirror of relations between Holyoke workers and the middle class during the early nineties. In addition to the mounting conflict between contractors and building tradesmen, the increasing use of boycotts forced small businessmen to reconsider where their interests lay. A few sided with labor. During the carpenters' dispute some Irish and French-Canadian merchants contributed to the strike fund. Others vacillated and maintained a prudent silence. But whichever side one chose

the fact that they had to choose at all was a reflection of the transformation of relations between labor and the petty bourgeoisie.<sup>12</sup>

Strained relations between workers and the middle class also cast a pall over once unquestioned social verities. When the CLU voted in March, 1892, to extend its boycott of the Holyoke Hydrant and Iron Works, "TRUTH" condemned the union as a "secret tribunal" and defended the company's owner, C.E. Torrance, as "one of our most intelligent and industrious citizens, who, like all of our manufacturers, with hardly one exception, was a few years ago an employee himself." But the 1890s were not the 1870s and "TRUTH"'s recourse to the dominant ethic only revealed its increasingly vacuous and anachronistic character. As P.J. McGuire told a group of striking carpenters a few months later, the "day for individual effort" had passed: "Now is the age of co-operation."<sup>13</sup>

Boycotts did much to foster the spirit of cooperation among workers. In addition to its embargo of the Holyoke Hydrant and Iron Works' castings, the CLU placed a local subsidiary of Forbes and Wallace on the unfair list when the parent concern employed non-union painters

on a new building at Springfield. It threatened similar action against any store which did not accede to the Friday night closing demand of the clerks' union. At the same time it instructed its members to confine their purchases to union-made goods. During the early nineties cigarmakers inspected saloons to insure they stocked union-made cigars only. United Garment Workers officials checked the clothes in local stores for the union label, and the CLU enforced a national boycott of Ehret's beer. As Norman Ware argued more than a half-century ago, prior to the consumer revolution of the 1920s there were a wide range of identifiably working class commodities. Boycotts thus fused consumer consciousness to class consciousness, reinforcing and developing the latter in the process, and gave expression to the molders' labor day placard: "AN INJURY TO ONE IS THE CONCERN OF ALL." Boycotts lifted the phrase above the platitudinous and infused it with real meaning.<sup>14</sup>

In sum, Holyoke workers in 1893 were more organized and more cohesive than ever under the aegis of the Central Labor Union. The previous decade's producerism was giving way to a militant trade unionism and even the

majority faction within the CLU, which sought a compromise with capital, did not hesitate to take its case into the streets when its demands were resisted. CLU sponsored boycotts, labor day celebrations, and massive strike demonstrations touched the lives of all working people. Catholic spokesmen also noticed the difference. Although The Messenger still counseled patience and warned that strikes "should not be undertaken lightly," it conceded that "Until the masters mend their ways it seems cruelty itself to argue against the stand taken by men who cry out for more bread to eat or more time to rest from the chains of toil." "Strikes are a very dangerous evil," declared another editorial which concluded with the admonition, "but when you do strike - win." They did not know it then, but Holyoke workers would celebrate few victories during the next five years as the city entered the worst depression of the nineteenth century.<sup>15</sup>

At Holyoke a general tightening of credit marked the onset of hard times. Having failed to market an issue of municipal bonds, City Treasurer Pierre Bonvouloir observed in early August that "It is not now so

much a question of paying a high rate of interest, but of getting money at any rate." That same week the city's savings banks, fearing a panic, invoked a by-law which required depositors to give notice of withdrawals; a meeting of grocers considered demanding cash for all purchases. It soon became apparent that the economy faced more than a liquidity crunch.<sup>16</sup>

"Every day one learns something new about the closing of mills and very little about any of them starting up again," the Republican reported in mid-August. During the month local paper mills curtailed production by more than half. Those making fine writing paper were especially hard hit, as business reduced clerical departments and shifted to cheaper lines of stationery. The response of the American Paper Makers' Association gave little assurance of an upturn: in September it announced an indefinite postponement of its next convention when it became clear that few members could or would attend the fall gathering. If capital was demoralized, labor was destitute. For most workers, half-production meant smaller paychecks; for those employed at mills which returned to full output during the winter, prosperity was a cruel hoax. Their

employers sharply cut wages. In January the Nonotuck Paper Company offered its employees a choice between half-time or five days pay for six days labor: the hard-pressed workers accepted the latter option.<sup>17</sup>

The city's textile manufacturers wasted even less time lightening pay envelopes. Early August found Lyman Mills agent Ernest Lovering hard at work on a plan to slash wages without precipitating a strike. If the company closed down for two to four weeks and posted notices "to the effect that work would be resumed at a 10% reduction," he suggested in a letter to treasurer Theophilus Parsons, "I think this reduction would come more easily, . . . giving the help a chance to size up the situation." Lovering also thought it best to wait for Lawrence and Fall River to act first, "as then, we should not be considered as promoters." The Hadley and Merrick Thread Mills, he added, seemed willing to cooperate. A month later Lovering proudly reported that the workers had accepted the pay cut with "no complaint," and in mid-September the Hadley Mills announced a similar cut after an extended shutdown, observing that wage decreases in eastern textile centers had "enabled those corporations to underbid the Hadley Company."

Other mills followed in subsequent months. After a two-week shutdown in October the Farr Alpaca Company resumed operation on a four day schedule and with a ten per cent reduction in wages.<sup>18</sup>

Before it ended the depression would exact a staggering toll in human misery. The costs began mounting early. Increasing deprivation soon overwhelmed the resources of the municipal relief department and in October local Protestant churches organized a relief association, comprising the pastor and two delegates from each church. Conjoining organizational rigor and cold calculation to Christian compassion, the group established an executive committee, divided the city into districts, and appointed district visitors to weed out "professional paupers" as they determined the "worthiness" of relief applicants. In January a group of Catholic women met at former mayor Sullivan's home to plan a fundraising fair for the St. Vincent DePaul Society. The following month they formalized their activities by establishing the Catholic Aid Association.<sup>19</sup>

As the depression deepened during the winter months not everyone became discouraged. At a Union Thanksgiving service, Presbyterian minister G.A. Wilson admitted that

"It may appear inconsistent that people gather to thank God for benefits, when all around are sufferings and wants." but added that "God has provided enough." Less intemperance and fewer strikes, explained Wilson, would reduce waste, further human brotherhood, and lead the way to better times. In his annual address Mayor Farr assured Holyokers that the city had experienced less distress "than has been the case in almost any other city of like size and character." Yet in December the Transcript felt compelled to issue a plea for greater charity, because of reports it had received of the "most pitiful poverty." The following spring a passerby found the body of an infant in the second level canal. "The lungs showed that the child had breathed," reported the Republican, and it "was either suffocated and thrown into the canal, or was wrapped up while alive and drowned." Depression engendered destitution was by no means the only explanation for the tragedy: it might have been the act of a young woman destroying an illegitimate child. But after the awful depression winter of 1893 no one could be sure - despite the assurances of Mayor Farr and the Reverend Wilson that all was well.<sup>20</sup>

As 1894 progressed there were few signs of improve-

ment. In February, Holyoke paper workers suffered the first general wage reduction in a decade. With the exception of a brief strike at the Dickinson Paper Company following an especially deep cut, workers grudgingly accepted the decrease. Among the owners, the August meeting of the American Paper Makers' Association lacked bodies, ideas, and enthusiasm.<sup>21</sup>

In textiles, only the German operatives at the Germania Woolen Mills mounted serious resistance. The Germania slashed wages twenty per cent after a three week shutdown in February; it was the second cut in two months. By September the mill had returned to full production and the workers believed a restoration was in order. When the company refused, nearly 200 operatives walked out. The owners then offered to restore half of the February decrease in return for a ten per cent increase at the company's tenements. The workers initially refused, but, with another harsh winter approaching, came to terms three weeks later. Beyond the Germans, only the more skilled operatives defended themselves; some even demanded improved wages. The mule spinners at the Lyman Mills, for example, sought a ten per cent increase. Agent Lovering remarked that the

spinners treasury was still "well supplied with funds," but feared other departments would insist on a comparable raise if he acceded. Moreover, he anticipated that New Bedford and Fall River would soon slash wages and thus decided to reject the demand. A short while later he could report that all was "quiet" among the mule spinners: "The men I wanted to get rid of are gone, and will not get a chance to come back."<sup>22</sup>

A strike in May by the printers at the Transcript, protesting the discharge of three union leaders, demonstrated the continuing vitality of Holyoke trade unionism in the early years of the depression. Within days the loftmen, painters, and plumbers asked members to discontinue patronizing Transcript advertisers and the CLU unanimously voted to support the printers. The strike soon affected the entire community as some petty entrepreneurs and local millowners lined up behind publisher W.G. Dwight. One "prominent paper manufacturer" offered to buy ten copies of the Transcript daily and threatened to withdraw his patronage "from any of the local merchants, who, under the pressure, take their advertisements from the paper." When the strike continued into September the city council approved an ordinance

requiring that all city printing be done in union shops and amid charges of "class legislation" overrode Mayor Whitcomb's veto of the order.<sup>23</sup>

This was not the only occasion on which Democratic city councillors intervened on labor's behalf during the year. In January they overrode Mayor Whitcomb's veto of an order maintaining municipal laborers' wages at \$2 per day, despite Whitcomb's insistence that "Holyoke should (not) pay more than the market price for any commodity, labor included." Also, a March order required the city to employ union carpenters and in June a demonstration by the laborers' protective union demanding increased expenditures for public works prompted a \$20,000 appropriation by the council.<sup>24</sup>

Although united on labor measures, local Democrats remained divided along cultural lines. Patrick W. Shea joined Jeremiah Callanan as the principal spokesman of Catholic respectables during the early nineties. Born at Dingle, Ireland, in 1865, Shea was a one-time textile operative, who trained as a pipe fitter and later opened a shoe store. Posing as the "democratic labor nominee" and a steadfast opponent of the liquor interest, Shea first secured an aldermanic seat in 1891 by defeating

T.J. Dillon, a ward four liquor dealer, in a raucous and slanderous contest that left neither candidate's reputation untainted. During the campaign, a statement by "WARD FOUR WORKMAN" criticizing the liquor dealers who currently sat on the city council expressed the sentiments of Shea's supporters:

Do they think we working men are going to be led astray in two ways, just to drink their stuff and not have them legislate for us? I hope the laboring men of ward four will rise in arms and say it is about time that the monopolists and liquor dealers of ward four shall not dictate to them by electing as the standard bearers P.W. O'Shea for alderman, Thomas J. Sears, Michael J. Casey, and Frank Blanchette as their councilmen.<sup>25</sup>

The party's saloon faction was headed by Michael Connors, a ward three cigar manufacturer known to friend and foe alike as "Mikeleen." During the mid-eighties he had unsuccessfully run for alderman as a candidate of the Trades and Labor Assembly. After a brief sojourn to California, where he participated in Dennis Kearney's anti-Chinese movement, Connors returned to Holyoke and secured the ward three aldermanic seat. He was the consummate ward politician. Generous to a fault - even when it meant digging into his own pocket - Connors could, it was said, "sell cigars where no one else could give

them away." Within ward three his ties to the saloon interest did not impair his standing with the German community and he was just as comfortable addressing a Socialist Labor Party gathering on the need for shorter hours as he was on the street, where he mobilized a neighborhood youth gang as the "Connors Guards."<sup>26</sup>

Connors relations with working class respectables were often less amicable. Appearing before a group of French-Canadians during the 1894 mayoral contest, which pitted James J. Curran, a Connors' henchman, against Henry A. Chase, Mikeleen charged the Republicans with buying votes. But rather than decry the practice, he alienated respectables in the crowd by urging them to accept the bribes. As one of his auditors remarked:

He came right up and told us to sell our votes to them and take the money and not vote for them afterwards, but to keep the money. We could have it to buy beer or to 'rush the growler.' Now does Mikeleen Connors think that we are a lot of bums. . . . We are democrats and we believe in the (liquor) license commission, as it is, and would not have Mikeleen run it, and we were waiting to see if Mr. Curran was in favor of it. As he is not, we know who is the right man for mayor, and that is Mr. Chase.

Curran subsequently lost the election largely because, as the Republican observed, "the old split in democratic

ranks is still there."<sup>27</sup>

Cultural issues bulked large in city-wide elections because Democratic mayoral candidates generally avoided direct class appeals in order to broaden their base of support. In ward-based city council contests, on the other hand, Republicans could not defeat nominees pledged to support labor, despite the bitterness which marked some Democratic caucuses. By 1894, the political power exercised by labor spokesmen from the lower wards had engendered a sharp reaction among the established classes. "In the past year," declared the Transcript, "the union labor men have dominated city politics and domineered over the city fathers." But that fall the election of state senator Marcienne Whitcomb, who as mayor had consistently vetoed the "class legislation" of the "Labor Lords," led the Transcript to rejoice that the "Union Labor nightmare" was at an end. Whitcomb did not disappoint his well-wishers. As a first step toward reuniting political authority with economic power, he introduced a bill that would empower the governor to appoint a police commission for the city and included a provision that would allow local authorities to appoint an indefinite number of special police-

men upon "apprehension of riot, tumult, mob, insurrection, etc."<sup>28</sup>

Whitcomb and his local partisans justified the measure as a necessary antidote to police complicity in the liquor traffic and departmental involvement in local politics. Under the current "rum controlled regime," Whitcomb argued, patrolmen ignored liquor ordinances and police tenure often depended more on how many votes an officer controlled than how he performed his duties. Unmentioned, but no less important reasons for restraining police activity included the department's conspicuously lax oversight of picket line activity, which had outraged the Transcript during the printers' strike as it had other employers during previous disputes. Some patrolmen also evinced a flagrant lack of deference toward their social betters. Agent Ernest Lovering of the Lyman Mills had his skull creased by a police billy the following winter for disobeying an officer's orders and the Transcript complained that other patrolmen lacked a due "regard for superior power." All this had contributed to a local resurgence of nativism, as a chapter of the anti-Catholic, anti-immigrant American Protective Association briefly flour-

ished during the mid-nineties. Not all the bill's supporters belonged to the APA, but its obvious appeal to the organization may explain why a position urging its passage contained no Catholic signatures, even though French-Canadians had more reason than anyone to resent the sometimes overbearing behavior of a largely Irish police force.<sup>29</sup>

Not all of Holyoke's upper class supported the police commission bill. Governor Greenhalge vetoed the measure primarily because its opponents included William Whiting and William Skinner, the city's two wealthiest millowners. Whiting's stated reason for opposing the bill was that it would defame the city of Holyoke, while Skinner, an old Democrat, objected to state intervention in local affairs. These explanations may not fully encompass the reasons why Whiting and Skinner chose to break with their class on the measure, but they do possess the ring of truth. As a former Congressman, Whiting seemed to feel that his name was in some way synonymous with that of the city and that any slight to Holyoke's reputation diminished his own; and no one ever questioned Skinner's attachment to the principle of local autonomy.<sup>30</sup>

At that year's municipal elections the split among the established classes caused by the Whitcomb bill coupled with the divisive affect of APA activity allowed the Connors' machine to place James J. Curran in the mayor's chair. Divisions within the city's monied classes proved short-lived, however, and the following spring they formed a cohesive phalanx in an effort to obtain a new city charter that would strip ward-based labor spokesmen of their political power. This time William Whiting, who always appreciated the difference between half-way measures and innovations that involved a real transfer of power, stood among the movement's leaders, declaring that "local government ought to be run on the same plan as a mill, by a Board of Directors presided over by a President." The reformers chose an opportune time to act. The nearly moribund CIU prevented local unions from giving the charter the deliberate and organized consideration such a measure deserved and otherwise would have received. This was all the more unfortunate in that by depicting the new charter as a reform measure designed to clean up city politics its supporters disarmed potential opposition among respectables. As it turned out, ward poli-

ticians mustered support from the protective laborers' union alone and failed to prevent the charter's passage.<sup>31</sup>

The new charter provided for a uni-cameral city council with twenty one aldermen, fourteen of whom would be elected by the city at large. It also augmented the mayor's appointive authority in an effort to curtail machine patronage, especially its control of the board of license commissioners. In its first year of operation the charter worked better than its most sanguine promoters could have hoped. The new board of aldermen contained eleven Republicans, ten of whom occupied at large seats, and a Republican won the mayoral contest. In 1897, Michael Connoers secured the mayor's seat by donning the robes of respectability and running as a "reform" candidate, but the era of Democratic control had ended. The immediate future belonged to Republican "reformers."<sup>32</sup>

The Socialist Labor Party was the only working class organization to prosper during the depression years. Limited largely to Germans, its base of operations was the Turnverein Vorwaerts, which after seceding from the middle class dominated Turnverein in 1890 became the focal

point of a well rounded socialist culture within ward three. In addition to fielding one of the best gymnastic teams in the region, Holyoke's socialist Turners also distributed poor relief, staged socialist Christmas plays, and held periodic balls as they sought to best their middle class rivals socially as well as ideologically. At times their influence within the German community assumed hegemonic proportions. When Lutheran pastor August Bruhn announced plans to establish a parochial school, he quickly retreated after the Turners objected that the project would undermine the public school system and the "republican form of government" which it buttressed.<sup>33</sup>

In 1893, the SLP formed an English-speaking section in an attempt to broaden its base. At the same time it stepped up its activities within the local labor movement. In 1894 the CLU formed a political club at SLP urging and that October voted by a narrow margin to endorse plank ten of the AFL political programme which called for "the collective ownership by the people of all means of production and distribution." The following year John H. Connors, Mikeleen's younger brother, not only won election to the city council on the SLP

ticket, but became president of the CLU. At that September's labor day festivities, party leader Moritz Ruther was one of the principal speakers. But the 1895 parade had only one-third as many marchers as those of previous years and the following September there was no parade at all. By 1896 hard times had reduced the Holyoke labor movement to a shadow of its former self.<sup>34</sup>

After showing signs of resurgence throughout much of 1895, the economy went belly up the following spring. Numerous mills reduced hours or shut down for weeks at a time; some closed their doors as bankruptcies mounted. The most notable local failure, the Albion Paper Company, elicited a mixed reaction from the Holyoke business community. Local entrepreneurs, who empathized with one another in the crunch, still shed no tears for the company's owner, E.C. Taft, who had expended his wealth in the most extravagant manner. For the local upper class, this violation of their more staid sumptuary norms was bad class relations as well as bad business. Thus, while it offered no cause for cheer, the Albion failure did provide local manufacturers grim reassurance of their own rectitude. Millowners also parleyed hard times into

political advantage. In the 1896 elections, normally Democratic Holyoke went overwhelming for McKinley in part because manufacturers told workers that a vote for Bryan was a vote for unemployment.<sup>35</sup>

For most workers continued hard times meant unmitigated misery. Many gladly accepted part-time work at the almshouse farm and at year's end the Overseers of the Poor reported that aid applications exceeded those of any previous year in the city's history:

Many strong and able-bodied men and women, able and willing to work for the first time applied for aid, forced to do so because of their inability to procure employment to support themselves and families.

Children could be found doing their part to aid ailing families in the city's back alleys, rummaging through garbage boxes and trash bins, hunting for potato parings and rags. Some workers took to the road, hoping that better times awaited them elsewhere. Where some Polish and German textile operatives returned to Europe, the police docket records a marked increase in the number of "tramps," many of whom were ordinarily secure "artisans or mechanics." A few gave up altogether. Kate Sullivan left her house one August morning presumably to attend mass at St. Jerome's. She never reached the

church and later that day a passerby found her body in the river. No one knew for sure whether she had committed suicide or drowned while bathing; relatives remarked that she had been deeply despondent since losing her job at the Farr Alpaca Company some months earlier.<sup>36</sup>

During the first half of 1897 most mills still ran part-time with intermittent shutdowns. By September, though, a few textile mills had returned to full production and William Whiting observed that a growing demand for better grades of paper foreshadowed the arrival of "better times." "People who have been using cheap paper buy better as times improve and they can afford it." Yet as the year closed prosperity still eluded many workers. In its annual report the Overseers of the Poor stated that relief applications reached an alltime high and wearily concluded that the "causes which have made it necessary for so many able-bodied men and women to apply for assistance are well known to all, and need not be explained by us."<sup>37</sup>

The crisis did finally abate, though few workers would soon forget it. Nor would they forget the vigorous labor movement, which for them was one of the de-

pression's more conspicuous casualties. And as they began once again to work regularly they also recalled the many concessions forced upon them during the previous few years. The thoughts and ideas engendered by these recollections would inform their actions during the immediate post-depression period.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Holyoke Transcript (HT), 27 Sep. 1890; 4 Oct. 1890; 22 Aug. 1892; 6 Jun. 1892; 14 Mar. 1892; 15 Mar. 1892.

<sup>2</sup>HT, 9 Jun. 1891; 27 Jul. 1891; Springfield Republican (SR), 2 Aug. 1891; HT, 6 Aug. 1891; 7 Aug. 1891; 8 Aug. 1891; 10 Aug. 1891; SR, 7 Aug. 1891; 8 Aug. 1891; HT, 7 Sep. 1891. The molders were not the only strikers to elicit such support. That spring when striking laborers marched through the lower wards to close down the building projects of recalcitrant contractors, the Transcript reported that "people crowded to the windows and wished them 'good luck,' and showed other expressions of sympathy." HT, 6 May 1891; 7 May 1891.

<sup>3</sup>HT, 24 Dec. 1891; 28 Dec. 1891; 3 May 1892; 5 May 1892; 6 May 1892; 11 May 1892; 14 May 1892; 28 May 1892; SR, 11 May 1892; 14 May 1892.

<sup>4</sup>HT, 11 May 1892; 5 May 1892; 7 May 1892; 27 May 1892; 24 May 1892; SR, 25 May 1892; 28 May 1892; 26 Jun. 1892.

<sup>5</sup>HT, 1 Jul. 1891; 19 Jul. 1892; 25 Jul. 1892; 1 Aug. 1892; SR, 3 Aug. 1892; 27 Sep. 1892; HT, 14 Mar. 1891; 25 Jan. 1892.

<sup>6</sup>Constance M. Green, Holyoke, Massachusetts: A Case Study of the Industrial Revolution in America (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1939), 210-212; Paper World (PW), XXVII (2, Aug. 1893), 13; XXVII (6, Dec. 1893), 6.

<sup>7</sup>HT, 27 Apr. 1891; 28 Mar. 1892; SR, 15 Mar. 1892; HT, 16 Nov. 1891; 17 Nov. 1891; 7 May 1892.

<sup>8</sup>HT, 5 May 1892; 13 May 1892. During a local address, P.J. McGuire, the former Workingmen's Party organizer and Knights of Labor official, also accepted the existence of the contractors' association, but urged the carpenters to "go forth and meet the builders on their own ground by seeking for contracts themselves on the cooperative plan." HT, 8 Jun. 1892.

<sup>9</sup>HT, 19 May 1892.

<sup>10</sup>HT, 23 Oct. 1891; 26 Oct. 1891; SR, 15 Nov. 1891; HT, 3 Jun. 1892; 13 Mar. 1893; 31 Jul. 1893; 9 Aug. 1893; 3 Jul. 1893; 23 Oct. 1893; 28 Mar. 1892.

<sup>11</sup>HT, 28 Mar. 1892; 28 Aug. 1890; 1 Sep. 1890; 1 Apr. 1890; SR, 15 Nov. 1891; 29 Nov. 1891; HT, 5 Sep. 1891; SR, 6 Sep. 1892; 2 Sep. 1893; HT, 2 Sep. 1893. The local Women's Christian Temperance Union journal perhaps best captured the manner in which labor day brought a temporary convergence of worker cultures in its depiction of the 1901 event:

Great credit is due to those who planned and carried out this labor day demonstration. It showed man in his best estate; erect, master of himself, in his right mind, the Master piece of creation.

But the black spot on the day's record was the drunkenness at the close.

True Light, XII, 6 (Sep. 1901), 4.

<sup>12</sup>HT, 28 May 1892.

<sup>13</sup>28 Mar. 1892; 31 Mar. 1892; 8 Jun. 1892.

<sup>14</sup>HT, 22 May 1893; 10 Apr. 1893; SR, 8 Jul. 1892; HT, 29 Feb. 1892; 23 Oct. 1893; 23 Aug. 1892; Norman Ware, The Labor Movement in the United States, 1860-1890: A Study in Democracy (New York: Vintage paperback edition, 1964; originally published in 1929), 334-345. When one store refused to close Friday nights, it did so, the Transcript observed, "at a visible weekly loss." HT, 8 May 1893.

<sup>15</sup>Messenger, 5 Dec. 1891; 12 Mar. 1892; 14 May 1892; 2 May 1891. On another occasion The Messenger ignored its injunction that workers should only undertake strikes that they could win: "sometimes (though) certain defeat stare men in the face, a contest may have in it such a principle, or such a challenge to manhood, that a glorious defeat is preferable to an inglorious surrender." Messenger, 21 May 1892.

<sup>16</sup>SR, 28 Jun. 1893; 5 Aug. 1893; 2 Aug. 1893; 3 Aug. 1893. Although forced to pay a higher rate of interest than he had intended, Bonvouloir sold a sufficient amount of bonds to meet municipal needs in late August, mostly to local capitalists. SR, 21 Aug. 1893; 28 Aug. 1893; 4 Sep. 1893.

<sup>17</sup>SR, 20 Aug. 1893; 30 Jul. 1893; 29 Aug. 1893; PW, XXVII (3, Sep. 1893), 10; SR, 11 Jan. 1894.

<sup>18</sup>Ernest Lovering to T. Parsons, 11 Aug. 1893, 7 Sep. 1893, vol. PC-8, Lyman Mills Papers, Baker Library, Harvard Business School (LMP); SR, 8 Sep. 1893; 12 Aug. 1893; 14 Sep. 1893; 6 Oct. 1893; 21 Oct. 1893. In November the molders' union reluctantly agreed to a ten per cent cut at the Deane Steam Pump Company, one of the city's largest metal shops, SR, 4 Nov. 1893; 8 Nov. 1893.

<sup>19</sup>SR, 26 Oct. 1893; 27 Oct. 1893; 20 Nov. 1893; 23 Dec. 1893; HT, 1 Nov. 1893; 13 Nov. 1893; SR, 4 Jan. 1894; 7 Feb. 1894. Unwilling to abandon a lifelong paternalism, William Skinner notified the relief association that if any of his employees applied for aid "they should be referred to the company for assistance." SR, 2 Jan. 1894. In June, the city's Catholic churches began a subscription list for the unemployed. Holyoke Labor, 23 Jun. 1894.

<sup>20</sup>SR, 1 Dec. 1893; Holyoke Municipal Register (HMR), 1893, 507; HT, 18 Dec. 1893; SR, 3 Apr. 1894; 4 Apr. 1894.

<sup>21</sup>PW, XXVIII (3, Mar. 1894), 94; SR, 26 Mar. 1894; 28 Mar. 1894; PW, XXIX (2, Aug. 1894), 47.

<sup>22</sup>SR, 2 Feb. 1894; HT, 25 Sep. 1894; 2 Oct. 1894; 5 Oct. 1894; 6 Oct. 1894; 8 Oct. 1894; 9 Oct. 1894; 10 Oct. 1894; 26 Oct. 1894; SR, 10 Sep. 1894; 11 Sep. 1894; E. Lovering to T. Parsons, 9 Apr. 1894, 16 Apr. 1894, 18 Apr. 1894; 23 Apr. 1894, 1 Jun. 1894, vol. PC-8, LMP.

<sup>23</sup>HT, 8 May 1894; SR, 11 May 1894; 14 May 1894; HT, 21 May 1894; SR, 13 May 1894; HT, 29 May 1894; 3 Oct. 1894; 11 Oct. 1894; SR, 23 Sep. 1894; 11 Oct. 1894; 13 Oct. 1894. How many advertisers actually boycotted the Transcript is difficult to determine. The Transcript and Republican implied that they were few, but Holyoke Labor, local organ of the SLP, reported that "a long list of merchants was read off at the meeting of the CLU who stopped their ads in the Transcript, also a few who didn't care what the Central would or would not do." Holyoke Labor, 26 May 1894. The St. Jerome's Temperance Society also voted to award its printing contracts only to union shops. SR, 30 Jul. 1894. The dispute was never resolved. In August, Dwight offered to reinstate as many of the strikers as he could then use, but refused to recognize the union. The union rejected the proposal because he would not state when the striking printers would be rehired. SR, 7 Aug. 1894; 11 Sep. 1894.

<sup>24</sup>HT, 17 Jan. 1894; 25 Jan. 1894; 26 Jan. 1894; 13 Mar. 1894; 7 Jun. 1894; SR, 8 Jun. 1894; 21 Jun. 1894.

<sup>25</sup>HT, 16 Nov. 1891; 19 Nov. 1891; 26 Nov. 1891; 27 Nov. 1891; 2 Dec. 1891. In 1892 Shea temporarily resigned his aldermanic seat to protest the manner in which liquor licenses had been distributed. That year he lost a close election to Dillon, but returned to the board in 1893. HT, 3 Apr. 1892; 24 Apr. 1892.

<sup>26</sup>SR, 23 Aug. 1908; HT, 3 Dec. 1890; 23 Nov. 1885, 3 Feb. 1886; 3 Nov. 1888; 27 Nov. 1892.

<sup>27</sup>HT, 27 Nov. 1894; 4 Dec. 1894; SR, 9 Dec. 1894.

<sup>28</sup>HT, 27 Nov. 1894; 25 Jan. 1895; Holyoke Labor, 2 Mar. 1895. Holyoke Labor tended that the bill would give corporations "an almost unprecedented power over their employees during strikes." Holyoke Labor, 27 Apr. 1895.

<sup>29</sup>SR, 12 Feb. 1893; HT, 22 Feb. 1895; 19 May 1894; 15 Feb. 1896; 17 Jan. 1895; 19 Mar. 1895. A brief analysis of the American Protective Association can be found in John Higham, Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860-1925 (New York: Atheneum paperback edition, 1963: originally published in 1955), 80-87. "QUEBEC" perhaps best expressed French-Canadian disenchantment with the police when he proposed a departmental code of ethics which contained the following provisions:

The test of physical strength of the applicants will be the breath, if strong enough it will take the place of the silver service exam.

Any boy found making fun of a drunken policeman will be hung on the spot.

Any policeman bringing in a drunk must show (a) which is the drunkest, and (b) which got the other drunk.

All policemen must communicate with their first cousin when a raid is to be made so as to keep it still.

Any policeman that has to be dumped into a hack like a dead sow with his feet up on the cushions and his head under the seat and carried home, must pay the hack fare himself.

HT, 17 Jan. 1893.

<sup>30</sup>HT, 18 Mar. 1895; 17 May 1895; SR, 3 Mar. 1895.

<sup>31</sup>SR, 20 Oct. 1895; 8 Dec. 1895; HT, 4 Dec. 1895; Holyoke Labor, 29 Feb. 1896; SR, 14 Mar. 1896; 12 Jul. 1896; 20 Jul. 1896; 22 Jul. 1896. The interpretation of municipal reform here offered here draws on Samuel P. Hays' seminal article, "The Politics of Reform in Municipal Government in the Progressive Era," Pacific Northwest Quarterly, LV (1964), 157-169.

<sup>32</sup>SR, 22 Jul. 1896; HT, 9 Dec. 1896; 24 Nov. 1897; 8 Dec. 1897; 9 Dec. 1897; 15 Dec. 1897.

<sup>33</sup>SR, 30 Jul. 1890; 18 Aug. 1890; 8 Dec. 1890; 26 Dec. 1890; 22 Jan. 1891; 16 Feb. 1891; HT, 4 Apr. 1890; 22 Apr. 1890; 19 Jul. 1890. A fuller description of the social activities sponsored by German-American socialists and the important contribution made by women is contained in Mari Jo Buhle, Women and American Socialism, 1870-1920 (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1981), 14-17.

<sup>34</sup>SR, 20 Aug. 1893; Holyoke Labor, 7 Apr. 1894; 20 Oct. 1894; HT, 5 Dec. 1894; 4 Dec. 1894; 16 Oct. 1894; SR, 2 Sep. 1895; 3 Sep. 1895; 7 Sep. 1896; Holyoke Labor, 25 Jan. 1896. Between May and July 1896 the CLU even ceased holding meetings. Rebecca A. Brown, "The Socialist Labor Party in Holyoke, Massachusetts, 1893-1900," unpublished senior thesis, Mt. Holyoke College, 1981, 116.

<sup>35</sup>SR, 23 May 1896; 24 May 1896; 24 Aug. 1896; 12 Sep. 1896; 15 Sep. 1896; 19 Sep. 1896; 10 Mar. 1896; 11 Mar. 1896; HT, 18 Apr. 1896; SR, 19 Sep. 1896; 30 Nov. 1896; 17 Dec. 1896; 8 Jan. 1897; 1 Nov. 1896.

<sup>36</sup>SR, 16 Aug. 1896; HMR, 1896, 477; True Light, VII, 2 (May 1896), 13; HT, 21 Aug. 1896; 7 Nov. 1896; SR, 4 Apr. 1896; 29 Aug. 1896. The Polish had good reason to return to their homeland. As newcomers to Holyoke, they were the last hired, first fired, and had the greatest difficulty obtaining municipal aid. A few years earlier City Almoner O'Donnell had told one group of relief applicants that they "should be sent back to Poland as paupers" and would be if they persisted in their demands. SR, 3 Feb. 1894. A few days after Kate Sullivan's death another Irish woman attempted to commit suicide by jumping in the second level canal, but was rescued before she drowned. SR, 28 Aug. 1896.

<sup>37</sup>SR, 21 May 1897; 30 May 1897; 8 Sep. 1897; 12 Sep. 1897; HMR, 1897, 160.

## C H A P T E R VII

### DEFEAT ON TWO FRONTS:

#### POLITICAL AND INDUSTRIAL STRUGGLE, 1898-1905

Herbert Farr had furnished one of the success stories which buttressed the individualistic ethos of the Holyoke upper class. He began his career in textiles as a managerial apprentice, and then opened a small mill at Hespeler, Ontario, before moving to Holyoke in 1874 where he formed what soon became one of the nation's leading alpaca firms. By the century's end, though, the intensely competitive system in which he had long thrived claimed him as yet another of its victims - in a dramatic way. Early one morning in November, 1900, Farr loaded a revolver which he kept at home, walked quietly to the bathroom, pressed the gun to the side of his head, and took his life. In many ways Herbert Farr was a belated casualty of the depression. Five years earlier the strain of conducting a large corporation during a period of economic crisis had caused a nervous breakdown from which he had never fully recovered. Continued ill health, a walkout by 400

weavers, the previous year, and the recent suicide of a long-time friend had left him depressed and despondent. Although few other manufacturers chose Herbert Farr's manner of bidding farewell to nineteenth century laissez-faire capitalism, most recognized the dawning of a new era.<sup>1</sup>

In the closing years of the century a flood of mergers transformed the nation's economy, eliminating or absorbing countless smaller firms and replacing them with huge, multi-unit corporate entities. At Holyoke, the Deane Steam Pump Company became part of the International Steam Pump Company, the Hadley and Merrick Thread Companies entered the American Thread Company, and the Holyoke Envelope Company joined a combine. The most striking indication that a new era had arrived came when sixteen paper manufacturers sold out to the American Writing Paper Company.<sup>2</sup>

After a brief post-depression boom in the paper industry, plant expansion and the entry of new companies quickly led to overproduction and left many producers selling under cost. By the fall of 1898 more local manufacturers looked to the trust promoter for salvation, but they drove hard bargains. Voicing a capital-

istic version of the labor theory of value derived from the passing era's dominant ethic, they demanded exorbitant sums for their property. As one millowner remarked of an offer made to him:

They say 'We know just what your plant is worth, and instead of giving you \$600,000 which you ask, we can offer you only \$300,000. That is all it is worth.' Perhaps that is so. I know what my plant is worth, and I don't need any banker to tell me. I know also that I have spent just \$300,000 in that plant, but is a man to receive no compensation for the work and energy of a lifetime? . . . I should receive some compensation for this labor beyond the actual money spent, and you cannot blame me if I demand two dollars for every one from the promoters who hope to make 50 or 100 thousand dollars from the thing. The Yankee paper-maker is the shrewdest human being on earth and he will stick up for his rights when it comes to a deal like this.

The result was overcapitalization, one of several reasons why the trust never met the expectations of its devotees.<sup>3</sup>

Another was the trust's failure to integrate backwards and control raw materials, which reduced its edge over smaller competitors. This problem was exacerbated by the promoters' unsuccessful attempt to buy some of the local mills. The refusal of William Whiting, Holyoke's largest paper manufacturer, to enter the combine particularly alarmed smaller producers whose tenuous

market position gave them less choice in the matter. When the promoters declined to meet his \$6,000,000 asking price, Whiting simply observed that his firm was making money at current market prices and that the trust's activities could only improve his prospects:

The combine, in order to yield any kind of dividend, will have to raise the price of paper. If we make a corresponding increase it is clear that it will be so much gain for us. If we keep our prices where they are, it stands to reason that our trade will increase.

Others resisted the blandishments of trust promoters on ideological and personal grounds. James Ramage registered his aversion to the new era by declaring competition one of the "laws of the universe," essential to progress, "continued happiness, and indeed the very existence of the human race;" and William Skinner, who at age seventy could still be found working in shirtsleeves on the shop floor of his mill, bluntly told the organizers of a silk combine, "Gentlemen, I don't want my sons to grow up to be loafers." Until his death in 1894 Timorthy Merrick refused even to enter into pricing agreements with other thread producers. His heirs felt differently, however, and like the majority of local manufacturers sold out.<sup>4</sup>

Although some were skeptical from the outset, in 1899 the difficulties of the American Writing Paper Company still lay in the future and most local manufacturers believed its formation marked the inception of prosperity. Their belief that trusts could fully exploit export markets fortified this sanguine attitude. As one millowner explained, "What we want to do is to get rid of our big surplus," which would reduce competition and maintain prices in domestic markets. But the "only solution" to current overproduction, he argued, was foreign trade, and because "no one manufactory can afford to send its paper abroad and put it on the market in competition with the home product," some form of industrial combination was absolutely necessary. "Those who are crying against the trust are the ones who will be benefited the most," he concluded, "for consolidation means more business and more business means steady employment and good wages."<sup>5</sup>

Such reassurances did not convince the middle class that the promised prosperity would be shared equally by all. Local merchants and petty entrepreneurs who formed the Holyoke Businessmen's Association entered the new era with considerable trepidation. Created in

1897 on the premise that "In Unity There Is Strength," the organization functioned as a bastion of boosterism concerned primarily with expanding local trade. It soon became apparent that the American Writing Paper Company had divergent interests. Because it purchased most of its supplies from outside distributors and employed comparatively fewer hands than the independent mills, the trust's activities retarded local exchange. Nor did the company's announcement that rather than break prices it would "shut down in the case of a glut of the paper market" do anything to ease apprehensions.<sup>6</sup>

The merger movement was not the only post-depression phenomenon to affect Holyoke. The period from 1899 to 1903 also saw an unprecedented number of strikes. As the economy gradually revived, workers began to repair moribund unions and demand the restoration of wage cuts and other concessions made during the depression. Holyoke wage earners recovered slowly from hard times. As late as July, 1898, the Republican observed that relief applications were still abnormally high and the following month an American Federation of Labor (AFL) convention at Springfield reported that Holyoke trade unionism was in a "demoralized condition." That same month,

though, a small band of weavers at the Connor Brothers Woolen Mill walked out in protest against the seventy to eighty hour work week they had to endure. The strike proved unsuccessful, but the following spring and summer other textile operatives obtained greater success.<sup>7</sup>

In May, 400 weavers walked out at the Farr Alpaca Company, demanding a ten per cent wage increase and abolition of the fines system for poor cloth. Because business had just returned to pre-depression levels, Farr wished to avoid an extended struggle. The strikers, most of whom were French-Canadian women, quickly accepted his offer to revise the fines system and increase wages by five per cent, but not before they had formed a union. Within a few weeks Polish and French-Canadian weavers at the Lyman Mills also established separate unions and joined operatives from other departments in seeking to restore the 1896 wage schedule. The strike began on June 8 when the yard laborers laid down their tools; a week later the doffer boys and ring spinners deserted their respective frames. Anticipating a general walkout, and with an excess of cloth on hand, the company locked out the remaining workers before they

too left of their own accord. The mills remained closed until early July, at which time all but the doffers and ring spinners returned to work. When they sought help from the CLU, it declared that they belonged to no union and resolved to sit on its hands. The strike was effectively at an end.<sup>8</sup>

Company agent Ernest Lovering attributed the strike to "outside agitators," but assured his superiors that their efforts had proved fruitless:

The most active strikers did not apply for work July 5th. Their places are now filled. There is no union of Lyman employees. H.S. Mills has recently left Holyoke, probably to try similar tactics in another town. . . . Have your Association (the Arkwright Club) look out for him.

That December, however, the doffer boys again walked out, demanding a fifteen per cent wage increase. In all likelihood they were dispatched by the mule spinners for whom they worked or parents holding higher positions in the mill, and their departure warned of wider grievances. This time the workers chose to act during a period of heavy demand and the company promptly came to terms by granting a general wage increase ranging from five to ten per cent. It was also apparent that the "outside agitators" whom Lovering believed he had

vanquished in July were more persistent than he had imagined. By June, Holyoke boasted six textile unions with more than 1,000 members, the majority of whom were women. But textile unionism was not destined to prosper locally. An examination of the last major textile strike of the period discloses some of the reasons for its decline.<sup>9</sup>

The dispute involved the mule spinners at the Lyman Mills. In April, 1902, a committee representing the spinners and their helpers demanded a ten per cent wage increase to match that recently obtained by New Bedford spinners. Agent Lovering first attempted to put them off by arguing that the work performed by the mule spinners at the Lyman Company and thus their scale of remuneration bore a closer relation to mills in Lawrence, Lowell, and Manchester than those in New Bedford. The argument was to no avail and when the spinners threatened to walk out if the company did not accede, treasurer Parsons informed Lovering that business was so poor that a shutdown would be to the mill's advantage. Accordingly, on May 5 the mills closed, locking out 1,400 workers. Still hoping to placate the spinners, Lovering sent one of the hands to Lowell

to investigate wages there - after he had insured that they were indeed no higher than those paid at the Lyman Company. The ploy failed and when after two weeks all but the mule spinners returned to work, both sides settled in for a long struggle.<sup>10</sup>

The Company's initial strategy was simple: replace the mules with ring spindles and the mule spinners with semiskilled and generally less troublesome ring spinners. It soon found, however, that ring spun yarn did not meet product specifications, and it had to begin purchasing filling from other mills. Despite the failure of this tack, the company publicly maintained that the installation of ring frames had rendered the mule spinners superfluous. In addition to planting articles to that effect in the local press, it went ahead and ordered new frames, asking one supplier to ship "any part of our work at an early date" in order "to convince the mule spinners that we have new frames coming to in part take care of mule spun yarn." But the mule spinners were less easily duped than the fourth estate. With the national union's backing, they prevented the employment of strikebreakers and threatened to boycott any mill supplying yarn to the company, thus forcing

the Lyman management to take elaborate precautions to disguise the identity of its suppliers.<sup>11</sup>

Because it added to the cost of manufacturing, buying yarn from outside sources could be no more than a temporary expedient. Yet the company believed that if it too readily acceded to the mule spinners' demands, it would embolden other operatives to seek comparable wage increases. As it was, recent gains by the weavers had already added significantly to production costs. After comparing cost of manufacturing data for the third quarter of 1902 with the previous year, treasurer Parsons wrote to Lovering that a "good saving is made in wages of Carding, Spinning, and Dressing to offset (the) cost of yarn bought, but Weaving has gone up out of sight." But with labor militancy on the rise, Lovering worried that if the strike continued into the spring it might spill over into other departments. In a letter to Parsons he summarized the company's dilemma:

Should a compromise or entire surrender to spinners be made, I figure that with present going conditions, labor agitation will be on the increase next spring and summer and there will be further effort to unionize all our help.

The better way to control labor troubles is when help are at work and not when they are

loafing, owing to the high perfection of the labor leader of today as the kingpin in a dispute.<sup>12</sup>

By November Lovering recognized that he had to come to terms with the spinners. To prevent local strike leaders gaining prestige from the conflict's outcome, he chose to deal exclusively with Samuel Ross, president of the National Mule Spinners Association. In January they reached a settlement and the spinners returned to work. Although the spinners obtained their demands, the strike did more to retard than foster textile unionism at Holyoke. The fact that they went it alone for nine months reinforced the craft exclusiveness of mule spinners. Where earlier they had coupled their demands with those of less skilled operatives and appeared to be spearheading a campaign to organize all textile workers, the spinners subsequently embraced a traditional exclusiveness and made their own deals with the bosses. A few years later when they notified Lovering of a recent increase at New Bedford, he advanced their wages five per cent "to hush up the matter:" "By this method," he explained, "there was to be no publicity and upset to other departments."<sup>13</sup>

The turn of the century also saw renewed activity

among paper workers. During the depression a succession of wage cuts and the reinstatement of the seventy two hour week for four workers insured the reemergence of Eagle Lodge at the first sign of better times. The formation of the American Writing Paper Company further encouraged organization. Shortly after the company's establishment, C.S. Hemingway of West Springfield's Mittineague Paper Company told a Holyoke audience that trusts provided prosperity for workers as well as manufacturers. By eliminating competition and maintaining high prices, he explained, the combine would be able to raise wages. Indeed, Hemingway argued, higher wages enforced by worker organizations were essential to the trust's success, as independents could only meet its wage scale if they followed the existing price line; and this they would be forced to do if workers avoided the employ of any company not paying combine wages. It was a marvelous vision, but the industry of course did not work that way. The Whiting Paper Company demonstrated as much by paying high wages and consistently underselling the trust; and, besides few manufacturers shared Hemingway's equanimous view of trade unions. Nor did the workers themselves assume

that trust formation augured a new affluence: one of their number conceded that the combine's greater efficiency would reduce hours, but contended that it would also mean less pay and fewer jobs. Paper workers did recognize the necessity of organization, though, and by 1900 Eagle Lodge claimed nearly 1,500 members.<sup>14</sup>

A 1901 strike by the city's stationary firemen provided the occasion for the most notable job action of Holyoke paper workers before 1903. State law required mills using steam boilers to employ licensed firemen. Thus when the firemen threatened to leave their posts on June 1 if they were not granted an eight hour day, they in effect threatened to shut down all of the city's factories. Upon hearing of the impending action, Eagle Lodge prepared demands of its own. By contrast, the Holyoke Businessmen's Association expressed alarm at the prospect of a general strike dispatched a special committee to dissuade the firemen from walking out, while the Republican urged the unions to give management more time to consider. But the owners needed no additional time to ponder the firemen's request. With the exception of the Whiting Paper Company and three other mills, they had mutually resolved to stand firm, and on the morning

of June 1 production halted at twenty five mills.<sup>15</sup>

They did not resume operation for two weeks, and with good reason. The owners could not use the shut-down to undertake repairs, for the bricklayers resolved to do no work on mill buildings and the teamsters refused to handle their products and supplies. Among the strikers no one broke ranks and there was thus no occasion for violence. The women, observed the Transcript, "seemed especially happy. . . . There was a feeling of satisfaction manifest among them and nearly all expressed the greatest confidence in the results." The manufacturers were less cheerful, largely because William Whiting had again chosen to go his own way over their appeals for class solidarity; the news that a mass meeting of strikers repeatedly applauded the mere mention of Whiting's name further dampened millowner spirits. In mid-June, Following the intervention of the State Board of Arbitration, the owners capitulated on a wide range of demands: the firemen obtained an eight hour day, tour workers won a sixty six hour week, and semiskilled paper workers extracted a wage increase.<sup>16</sup>

Apart from the immediate benefits secured by its

members, the strike proved a particular boon to Eagle Lodge. During its first week the union formed a women's division that rapidly grew to more than 1,000 members and by mid-July total union membership eclipsed the 4,000 mark. By late June it felt sufficiently powerful to request a closed shop. The owners stoutly resisted, one declaring that he would shut down "until eternity first," and when William Whiting joined them the union decided to defer the demand until a later date. Nonetheless, Eagle Lodge had travelled a considerable distance from its beginnings fifteen years earlier, when it comprised an intensely craft conscious band of machine tenders and beater engineers unwilling even to organize their helpers. The two groups still possessed an influence within the union that far exceeded their numbers, but now realized that the organization of all workers improved their bargaining position and enhanced their power. Like the manufacturers for whom they worked, they too had adjusted to the changed social and economic environment of the new era of corporate capitalism.<sup>17</sup>

By reason of their militance and numbers, paper workers spearheaded the resurgence of Holyoke labor,

but they were not alone. Between 1899 and 1901 strikes by local cabinet-makers, brickmasons, painters, plumbers, carpenters, laborers, brewery workers, pressmen, and stage employees met with varying degrees of success. Meanwhile, the Central Labor Union (CLU) coordinated labor activity and extended moral and financial support to strikers in neighboring communities. Still brandishing the boycott as its most effective weapon, the CLU placed bans on saloons refusing to employ union bartenders, enforced national boycotts of Ballantine Ale and the products of the American Tobacco Company, and urged workers to patronize merchants who employed union clerks. Such, apparently was Holyoke's reputation for ale consumption that Herbert Ballantine himself appealed in person before the CLU to relax the boycott on his product.<sup>18</sup>

The most notable boycott of the period came in response to the union busting practices of the local street railway company. In June, 1901, company president W.S. Loomis ordered the disbandment of the motor-men and conductors union, because, he argued, "if his men belonged to a labor organization they would become so independent that they would become negligent." The

CLU retaliated by placing a boycott on Mountain Park, a local amusement area in the northernmost corner of the city reached only by trolley. The Transcript immediately declared the injunction of "dangerous significance, since it strikes at the root of the liberty the constitution affords every man," yet complacently added that few merchants would observe it anyway. The CLU anticipated such a response and appointed a committee to take down the names of all businessmen and their families who patronized the park. As union members threatened businessmen seen riding the cars with economic reprisal, the growing tension between workers and the middle class became vividly manifest. One merchant angrily declared that "I don't proposed to have the Holyoke unions tell me what clothes I shall buy, what I shall eat, or where I shall go for pleasure."<sup>19</sup>

Despite, or perhaps because of the acrimony engendered by the boycott, the CLU sought to repair its links with the middle class. In January, a committee appeared before the Holyoke Businessmen's Association and agreed to do its utmost to promote local trade. CLU president James M. Kennedy also suggested that the businessmen

form an arbitration committee to settle any future disputes. But it was an uneasy truce at best. The following month the union instructed workers "to trade only in such establishments as employ union clerks" and warned that a "close watch will be maintained."<sup>20</sup>

The Mountain Park boycott ended in August after the motormen and conductors voted not to unionize. CLU secretary Edward F. Dowd declared the vote fraudulent and coerced, but still lifted the ban, disingenuously observing that, with a major steel strike looming, "the unions would doubtless soon be called to aid them and they did not desire to continue fights on minor matters." However disappointing the boycott's conclusion, the Holyoke labor movement could take pride in the progress it had made in recent years. During 1901 the CLU added more than a dozen newly formed unions to its ranks and total membership doubled to more than 7,500 workers. That September nearly 25,000 people lined the city's main thoroughfares to watch 6,000 workers - ranging from "the humble bootblack to the skilled laborer" - parade through the streets of Holyoke.<sup>21</sup>

As the new year dawned, building tradesmen and metal workers girded for imminent struggles with their respective employers. On March 1, 400 carpenters left their jobs demanding recognition of the building trades council and \$2.50 for an eight hour day. Construction soon came to a standstill and when the strike continued into April contractor solidarity began to collapse. The settlement accorded the carpenters their wage and hour demands and provided for the establishment of a six man arbitration committee comprised of three builders and three members of the building trades council. In a quest for shorter hours, the machinists eschewed a general strike in favor of a strategy that entailed picking off one shop at a time. By late June they too had largely succeeded.<sup>22</sup>

Yet as 1902 closed there were indications that the post-depression tide of labor militancy had crested. At the CLU James M. Kennedy defeated Edward F. Dowd in a bitter contest for business agent. A brickmason and member of the St. Jerome's Temperance Society, Kennedy represented a faction that saw a mutuality of interest between social classes and urged that "tact and courtesy" characterize labor's dealings with capital.

Kennedy strongly opposed strikes and asserted that most labor disputes could be resolved through "frank dealing and mutual concessions." Labor unions, he told a meeting of the men's league at the Second Baptist Church, did not seek to "antagonize employers or wring unjust concessions (from them), but to increase the wages of the men and lessen the hours of labor to such a point that men could give their families more of their time."<sup>23</sup>

Dowd's followers were no less committed than the Kennedy faction to higher wages and shorter hours, but they did not share Kennedy's faith in the beneficence and good will of capital. Instead they cast class relations in a more confrontational framework and favored "taking up a grievance hammer and tongs fashion." At the January meeting between the CLU and the Businessmen's Association, Kennedy had recommended forming an arbitration committee, where Dowd had warned that in any agreement between the two groups the businessmen must "come half way" and cease discriminating against union members in their hiring practices. Although Dowd engineered his reelection as business agent the following spring, the mounting tension between the two factions

did not augur well for the future.<sup>24</sup>

Just as signs of discord appeared in labor's ranks, the Skinner Silk Company tested the power and influence of the CLU. Because the company would not grant its stationary firemen an eight hour day, it had been on the CLU's unfair list since 1901 and local building tradesmen refused to do any work for the concern. In 1903 the company planned to expand its operations, but rather than settle with its handful of firemen it chose instead to confront the CLU by announcing that it would build outside Holyoke. "No mill man would come here and build a mill," said William Skinner, Jr., as he made the decision public. "You are not allowed to run your own business." The Holyoke Businessmen's Association reacted immediately to the announcement. In addition to appointing a committee to meet with the firemen, association president Marcienne Whitcomb released a letter from a manufacturer who had considered locating in the city, but feared that "Holyoke is a pretty tough place if the Skinner episode is any example." The firemen's union quickly gave way, deciding that "it was a case in which the good of the city as a whole and themselves as individuals would be better

conserved by a change in their position." And a week later the CLU removed the Skinner Mills from the unfair list. Yet the company still refused to build that year, because, Joseph Skinner stated, the "union labor market is in too dangerous a condition now." Meanwhile, by raising the specter of capital flight, the Skinners had prompted the middle class to abandon any pretense of neutrality and identify its interests with those of local millowners; they also deepened the rift within the CLU by strengthening the hand of those who believed in the interdependence of capital and labor.<sup>25</sup>

Despite its troubles, the CLU continued to grow. In May, 1903, the forty five unions affiliated with it numbered nearly 8,000. By a considerable margin the largest was Eagle Lodge, which had added to its ranks during the previous year by supporting two successful job actions for shorter hours and expanding its campaign to enlist women paper workers. In the spring of 1903 it demanded a closed shop and wage increases ranging from twenty to thirty per cent for different categories of workers. The American Writing Paper Company assumed the role of spokesman for local manu-

facturers and declined to discuss wages until the union dropped its demand for a closed shop. They had their way when a strike vote in late May demonstrated that a majority of paper workers would not walk out on the unionization issue alone. Eagle Lodge in turn appointed a committee to negotiate a new wage schedule. Because many owners felt that the union's increasing boldness made a test of strength inevitable, the company submitted a wage proposition sufficiently at odds with the workers' request to prompt a second strike vote. Again, the majority opted to stay on the job. The following day, however, 300 cutter women took the matter into their own hands and left their machines.<sup>26</sup>

The walkout surprised union leaders who initially urged the women to return to work. They not only refused but demanded support; one observer hinted that the women questioned the manhood of male workers who refused to join them. Within a few days another 1,200 paper workers joined the walkout, closing seven mills and forcing Eagle Lodge to conduct yet another strike vote. This ballot showed a large majority favoring the strike and, with the exception of five exempted mills, the Holyoke paper industry ground to a halt as 3,500 workers desert-

ed the mills. In the following weeks the millwrights refused to do repair work, the stationary firemen voted not to furnish steam for paper machines, the CLU placed the mills on the unfair list, and in the streets, striking workers did what they could to make life miserable for a small band of strikebreakers. As the strike dragged into July, though, there were signs of sagging morale among the strikers. It was then that the company, sensing an imminent victory, reanimated striker spirits by arrogantly refusing to make any conciliatory gesture, despite the pleas of local businessmen and the State Board of Arbitration that it deal with the workers. On July 19, the strikers overwhelmingly voted to remain out until the trust submitted to arbitration.<sup>27</sup>

The company still refused to budge. An ultimatum declaring that only those who returned to work by August 6 would be granted the wage increase proffered at the strike's outset represented its only concession. Most workers by now at least sensed that the trust wanted not only to win, but to crush the union as well. Yet as strike funds and worker savings diminished, it became clear that they could not hold out indefinitely.

In mid-August a committee of machine tenders met with Mayor Chapin and expressed a desire to return to work. In the next few days a handful of mills recommenced operation and as applications poured into the American Writing Paper Company, the strikers voted on August 18 to terminate the sixty-five day old struggle. The vote also signalled the temporary decline of Eagle Lodge: financially exhausted and stripped of its leadership by a company blacklist, the union quickly passed into a state of desuetude. Its demise also crippled the CLU, though not before the carpenters assembled for one last hurrah during the spring of 1904.<sup>28</sup>

On May 1, more than 400 carpenters packed up their tools and joined fellow tradesmen from Chicopee and Springfield in a valley-wide strike. The struggle continued for more than two months and before it ended involved major elements of the middle class. Emboldened by the Skinner episode of the previous spring and the recent defeat of the paper workers, the petit bourgeoisie scented the blood of a dying labor movement and moved against the carpenters with uncharacteristic decisiveness. At Springfield in mid-May sixty five businessmen banded together "to correct abuses result-

ing from organized labor." At Holyoke merchants refused credit to strikers and local lumber dealers assured the Master Builders' Association that they would not sell to striking carpenters seeking to contract on their own. At the police court, Judge E.W. Chapin, the mayor's father, did his part by sentencing two carpenters convicted of assaulting a strikebreaker to six months in jail. By mid-August the strike had collapsed on all fronts and carpenters throughout the valley began returning to work. In its wake James Kennedy's followers moved to the fore and established a new structural trades alliance that required an affirmative vote from each member local before a strike could be called.<sup>29</sup>

By 1905, then, the Holyoke labor movement consisted of a quiescent and largely unorganized textile workforce, a badly demoralized and nearly moribund paper union, and a building trades council led by conservative unionists reluctant to confront capital. Factionalism, craft exclusiveness, and an inability to match capital's material resources in crucial struggles only partially explain its rapid descent. An equally noteworthy failure in the political arena both preceded and foreshadowed its defeat on the economic front. Unlike the upsurge of the

early nineties, labor marched into the post-depression years with few friends at city hall.

The unstable coalition that in 1897 propelled Michael Connors into the mayor's office came unravelled during the course of his administration. Besides giving free reign to the saloon interest, a major scandal irreparably damaged Connors' credibility with working class respectables. In August, tax collector James C. Keough, a long-time Connors' crony, resigned under fire. A subsequent audit of his books showed numerous instances of tax payments made, credited, and then erased; it also revealed a \$115,000 shortage. As Keough prepared to enter the county jail, opposition Democrats joined with Republicans to heap abuse upon Connors' "business government," and at St. Jerome's, Father Harkins asked his parishioners to turn the "knaves" out by forming a "citizen's movement in which representative men from both parties could join hands and nominate a strong, clear, responsible, candidate for mayor."<sup>30</sup>

Connors still retained sufficient strength within the party to secure the mayoral nomination for John Sheehan, a former state representative and one-time

president of the CLU. But Sheehan lost the election to Arthur B. Chapin. The contest marked the ascendancy of a Republican machine headed by Chapin's brother-in-law, William F. Whiting, that would dominate Holyoke politics for the next fifteen years. Through a shrewd, ethnically balanced, non-partisan dispensation of patronage Whiting quickly established a formidable organization. He also placated the saloon interest, though press and pulpit generally took less notice of the "reform" government's lax enforcement of the liquor laws. As the Republican's Sunday correspondent observed in 1901, "with the exception of that sturdy old opponent of evil, Rev. P.J. Harkins," what shocked the "pious folks" during the Connors' years now occasioned little concern. Lastly, conservative trade unionists viewed the Whitings as the embodiment of a cherished mutuality of interest between capital and labor. Many of the same men who cheered the mention of William Whiting's name at the 1901 strike rally also cast their ballots for his son's mayoral choices.<sup>31</sup>

The Whiting machine proved especially solicitous of corporate interests. After the city had voted to purchase the Holyoke Water Power Company's lighting

plant, Chapin arranged a second referendum out of deference to upper class fears of higher taxation and the company's reluctance to sell. Despite his intervention, the voters again opted for public ownership, but in a tax case involving the Lyman Mills which evoked widespread interest among manufacturers sensing rebates. Chapin kept the company closely informed of the city's position, thus helping it to obtain a favorable settlement. Caution was the major feature of Chapin's approach to labor. He avoided any overt attacks, but at the same time did equally little to aid it and in 1902 Edward F. Dowd decided to challenge the "capitalistic barons" who had assumed control of local politics.<sup>32</sup>

Dowd depicted the election as a struggle between capital and labor. Instead, it was a contest between opposing CLU factions. As Dowd's operatives worked to sabotage the aldermanic campaign of James M. Kennedy, the latter's supporters publicly criticized Dowd. "A LABOR MAN," wrote that he did "not represent the trade union movement in its true sense - and as a representative of labor unionism in Holyoke he has been tried and thrown into the discards." On election day, they carried their animus against Dowd into the voting booth and

helped reelect Chapin by a substantial margin.<sup>33</sup>

CLU factionalism does not fully account for labor's failure during the period. Capital's superior material resources would have severely tested the best organized movement. Moreover, the split largely occurred within the building trades which accounted for a small proportion of the workforce. Yet the prominent position of the building trades council within the CLU made the dispute more important than the number of workers directly involved.

The split also remains noteworthy for what it reveals about the period of ideological flux labor experienced as it moved from producerism to trade unionism. Although the post-depression merger movement hastened acceptance of the notion that wage earners constituted a separate class with distinct interests, this was an uneven process, still incomplete by the first decade of the century. Some workers still viewed the world as a loose amalgam of producers with convergent interests. This was especially true within the building trades where many employers continued to operate on a relatively small scale. An industrial analogue to building trades producerism could be found in the paper mills

where four workers continued to receive special treatment and a few owners like William Whiting made occasional gestures indicating that they had the workers' best interests at heart.<sup>34</sup>

The precipitate decline of the local socialist movement at the turn of the century also slowed the wheels of ideological change and removed a strong voice that had already played an important role in shaping post-producer consciousness. After initiating the Trades and Labor Assembly in the mid-eighties, the Socialist Labor Party (SLP) increased its influence within the local labor movement during the following decade. CLU endorsement of plank ten of the AFL political programme was evidence of that. During the course of the depression party declarations emphasizing the irrationality of the capitalist system and irreconcilable antagonism between capital and labor sounded increasingly more compelling, while the subsequent merger movement made it appear positively clairvoyant. It even seemed for a time that the SLP would emerge as a political equal of the two major parties.

In 1898, as the Whiting machine toppled the Connors organization, the SLP placed Moritz Ruther on the board

of aldermen and its Congressional candidate obtained seventeen per cent of the vote. The party's electoral support had gradually increased during each of the previous four elections and predictions that it would soon become a serious force in local politics did not seem far fetched. But this was not to be. Ruther lost his aldermanic seat the following year and in July, 1900, party factionalism at the national level touched the local branch, prompting a group led by E.A. Buckland, a Yankee machinist and former Prohibitionist, to form a chapter of the Social Democratic Party (SDP). In succeeding months as Buckland and Ruther publicly questioned each other's political aptitude and revolutionary commitment, both parties soon faded from view. Again, though, we need to look beyond the evident harm caused by factionalism to obtain an adequate assessment of the problems which the movement faced.<sup>35</sup>

A signal failure was the deterioration of SLP-trade union relations on the eve of the most militant strike wave in the city's history. In the nineties Moritz Ruther had regularly addressed gatherings of trade unionists on "Unionism and its Benefits," but this amicable relationship visibly soured after 1899. Increasingly,

Ruther referred to the "labor union idolatry" of the "pure and simplers" and characterized local union leaders as "labor skates." Never having fully accepted the late summer observance of labor day, Ruther remarked that under such leadership "St. labor day" would soon become the "annual funeral day" of the working class. Thus isolated from the labor movement, he was relegated to applauding from the sidelines as ever greater numbers of workers took their case into the streets.<sup>36</sup>

Ruther's changing conduct was in part a reaction to the anti-socialist attacks of some local union leaders. In March, 1899, he complained of "erstwhile labor leaders who are strutting about the streets of Holyoke with a billy in their hands as 'protectors of peace and order' . . . denouncing the socialists because they 'broke up the unions.'" Despite such opposition from trade unionists who probably resented and feared SLP influence with workers as much as they disagreed with the party's ideological stance, Ruther continued to appear before labor audiences for some months afterwards. Later that year, however, the national body enacted measures restricting the union activities of party members.<sup>37</sup>

In 1895 socialist trade unionists had formed the

Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance to propogate class-conscious unionism. Although the STLA was deliberately created as a rival to the AFL, party leader Daniel DeLeon allowed members considerable discretion in their trade union activities and did not demand that they desert existing organizations. This liberal policy may well have been a response to the counsel of local leaders like Moritz Ruther. "At this stage of the movement," he wrote DeLeon in 1895, "we have to exercise a great deal of tolerance. . . . We ought to take advantage of every sympathetic feeling towards us rather than repulse it because it may not be exactly up to date." But all this changed after 1898 when the growing independence of STLA locals caused DeLeon to circumscribe trade union activity with stringent regulations which sacrificed organizational development to ideological correctness.<sup>38</sup>

The Social Democratic Party was no less isolated from the local labor movement than the SLP. Although E.A. Buckland eschewed attacking local union leaders and chided Ruther for doing so, his conviction that labor could achieve "the final abolition of the entire wage system" only through politics left him disdainful

of economic action. Strikes and boycotts, Buckland contended, are "wholly ineffectual in a genuine test of strength between capital and labor and are the wornout methods of pure and simple trade unionism." He considered compulsory arbitration an improvement upon these archaic weapons because "it does away with strikes and its attending interruption of business and shifts the conflict to the more orderly and less costly means of legislation." The post-depression strike wave thus found Buckland too on the sidelines.<sup>39</sup>

Broader institutional problems compounded - and explained in part - the failure of Holyoke socialism to maintain its influence with the labor movement. Speaking wherever workers gathered, Moritz Ruther and others worked tirelessly to spread the socialist gospel. But the slender resources at their command limited such efforts, and the disappearance of workers' debating clubs and literary societies during the depression deprived the movement of potential staging areas for a more effective advance. As a result, the SLP never replicated the socialist culture which sustained it within the German community outside ward three.

Lastly, Holyoke socialists faced the opposition of

a Catholic Church which remained influential with the local labor movement. In 1902, the CLU cancelled its labor day festivities out of deference to the Catholic Temperance Union's plans for a field day and parade. The Church did not encourage the post-depression wave of worker militancy, but also refused to condemn it. "The capitalists may feel that they are crowded and bullied by labor," Father J.J. McCoy told a gathering of the Business Men's Association, "and when labor is badly officered we can readily believe this instance to be true, but labor any day is not far from hunger, and hunger will drive men mad." Catholic spokesmen also supported the growth of trade unionism and linked labor organization to a defense of worker dignity. "The labor movement," commented a Messenger editorial "is a movement to resist this tendency of labor to become a mere commodity and to secure the recognition of human rights and personal values in the working world." Among trade union goals, the article accorded special importance to labor's struggle for a "living wage, upon which the existence of home, its wifehood, motherhood, and childhood depend." It was a significant observation. In the decades after 1900 the living wage doctrine would

become the core element in a mature culture of Catholic trade unionist respectability.<sup>40</sup>

NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Holyoke Public Library Scrapbook, 19:52; Springfield Republican (SR), 26 Nov. 1900. As it turned out, the Farr Alpaca Company prospered well into the 1920s. Florence Conwell Hutner, "The Farr Alpaca Company: A Case Study in Business History," Smith College Studies in History, vol. XXXVII (1951), 73-94.

<sup>2</sup>Constance H. Green, Holyoke, Massachusetts: A Case Study of the Industrial Revolution in America (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1939), 181-193.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 228-235; Lyman Horace Weeks, History of Paper Manufacturing in the United States (New York: Lockwood Trade Journal Company, 1916), 302-313; SR 17 Oct. 1898; Holyoke Transcript (HT), 18 Oct. 1898; SR, 26 Jun. 1899.

<sup>4</sup>Alfred Chandler, Jr., The Visible Hand: The Managerial Revolution in America (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1977), 354; HT, 2 Jun. 1899; SR, 3 Jun. 1899; 20 Jun. 1899; 22 Jun. 1899; HT, 26 Jul. 1898; 28 Jul. 1898; 14 Apr. 1899; 30 Jan. 1890; SR, 25 Mar. 1894; Green, Holyoke, 181-182.

<sup>5</sup>SR, 11 Jan. 1899; 27 Jan. 1899.

<sup>6</sup>HT, 21 Jan. 1897; 5 Aug. 1899; 26 Feb. 1901; SR 20 May 1900.

<sup>7</sup>David Montgomery, Workers' Control in America: Studies in the History of Work, Technology and Labor Struggles (New York: Cambridge University Press paperback edition, 1979), 20; SR, 24 Jul. 1899; HT, 3 Aug. 1898; 19 Aug. 1898; 23 Aug. 1898.

<sup>8</sup>HT, 25 May 1899; 26 May 1899; 31 May 1899; SR, 26 May 1899; 27 May 1899; 30 May 1899; Massachusetts Bureau of Statistics of Labor (MBSL), Thirtieth Annual Report, 1899, 193; HT, 8 Jan. 1899; E. Lovering to T. Parsons, 17 Jun. 1899, 27 Jul. 1899, vol. PC-11, Lyman Mills Papers, Baker Library, Harvard Business School (LMP); HT, 15 Jun. 1899; 16 Jun. 1899; 19 Jun. 1899; 22 Jun. 1899; 6 Jul. 1899; SR, 17 Jun. 1899; 22 Jun. 1899; & Jul. 1899; 8 Jul. 1899; 9 Jul. 1899; 10 Jul. 1899. A June strike by 100 weavers at the Chadwick Plush Mill also failed. HT, 19 Jun. 1899; 20 Jun. 1899; SR, 30 Jun. 1899.

<sup>9</sup>E. Lovering to T. Parsons, 27 Jul. 1899, vol. PC-11; LMP; SR, 8 Jul. 1899; 14 Dec. 1899; HT, 14 Dec. 1899; 4 Jun. 1900. During the latter half of 1899 textile operatives throughout the state obtained at least partial restoration of depression wage cuts. At Holyoke, the Germania Woolen Mills, Merrick Thread Company, and Skinner Silk Mills also granted pay increases. This in part explains the readiness of the Lyman Mills to meet the demands of the December strikers. HT, 18 Dec. 1899.

<sup>10</sup>T. Parsons to Horace Wadlin, Chief, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Boston, 12 Jun. 1902, vol. PA-10; C. Merriam to T. Parsons, 8 Apr. 1902, vol. PC-12; C. Merriam to E. Lovering, 17 Apr. 1902, vol. PE-35; T. Parsons to E. Lovering, 2 May 1902; T. Parsons to F.D. Williams, 3 May 1902; T. Parsons to Minot, Hooper, and Company, NYC, 6 May 1902, vol. PA-10; E. Lovering to Agent, Boott Cotton Mills, Lowell, 25 Apr. 1902, 6 May 1902; C. Merriam to L.A. Auman, Dwight Manufacturing Company, 13 May 1902, vol. PE-35, LMP; SR, 3 May 1902; 14 May 1902.

<sup>11</sup>E. Lovering to Lowell Shuttle Company, 8 May 1902, 7 Jun. 1902; E. Lovering to Whitinsville Spinning Ring Company, 6 Jun. 1902; E. Lovering to Whitin Machine Shop, 7 Jun. 1902; E. Lovering to Mason Machine Works, Taunton, 17 Jul. 1902, vol. PE-35; E. Lovering to T. Parsons, 9 Jun. 1902, 17 Jul. 1902, vol. PC-12, LMP; SR, 28 May 1902, 30 Jun. 1902, 25 Jul. 1902; E. Lovering to Treasurer, Mason Machine Works, 13 Aug. 1902, vol. PE-35, LMP. In time the Republican recognized the company's

actual strategy. SR, 26 Jul. 1902. The elaborate plans devised by the company to disguise the identity of its yarn suppliers can be followed in E. Lovering to Soule Mills, 27 Jun. 1902, 2 Jul. 1902; E. Lovering to H.K. Lyman, 27 Jun. 1902, 2 Jul. 1902; E. Lovering to Warren Manufacturing Company, 2 Jul. 1902, 25 Sep. 1902; E. Lovering to J.M. Pendergast and Company, Boston, 18 Sep. 1902; E. Lovering to Morison and Vaughan, Boston, 15 Sep. 1902, 25 Sep. 1902, vol. PE-35; T. Parsons to James F. Knowles, 24 Sep. 1902, vol. PA-10; E. Lovering to T. Parsons, 20 Jul. 1902, 18 Sep. 1902, vol. PC-12, LMP. Unable to find any New England spinners to replace the strikers, Lovering wrote one German overseer seeking work that "It might occur to you to bring over some married mule spinners and their families to this country should you think seriously of coming to America." Lovering also asked a series of questions that reflected a preoccupation not only with the strike, but with textile unionism as well:

By head spinner, do you have charge of mules as well as spinning frames?

Are you acquainted with Dobson and Barlow (Bolton, England) mules?

What wages per week do your mule spinners make?

How many hours per week?

Are they members of any trade unions?

Are any of the employees in your factories members of trade unions?

E. Lovering to Willy Schubert, Augsburg, Germany, 12 Nov. 1902, vol. PE-36, LMP.

<sup>12</sup>T. Parsons to E. Lovering, 17 Oct. 1902, vol. PA-10; E. Lovering to T. Parsons, 13 Oct. 1902, 14 Oct. 1902, vol. PC-12, LMP.

<sup>13</sup>E. Lovering to Frank Bennett, treasurer, The American Cotton and Wool Reporter, Boston, 26 Sep. 1902, vol. PE-35; E. Lovering to Samuel Ross, New Bedford, 20 Nov. 1902, vol. PE-36; E. Lovering to T. Parsons, 30 Jan. 1903, vol. PC-12, LMP; SR, 2 Feb. 1903; HT, 3 Feb. 1903; E. Lovering to T. Parsons, 26 Jul. 1906, vol. PD-3, LMP. A few days later the loom fixers also received a five per cent increase. E. Lovering to T. Parsons, 30 Jul. 1906, vol. PD-3, LMP.

<sup>14</sup>SR, 1 Mar. 1898; 28 Mar. 1898; HT, 27 Oct. 1899; 12 Apr. 1899.

<sup>15</sup>SR, 13 May 1901; 20 May 1901; HT, 31 May 1901; 14 Jun. 1901; SR, 30 May 1901; HT, 1 Jun. 1901. The few paper strikes before 1901 included successful actions by cutter women at the Dickinson Paper Company and reel boys at the Chemical Paper Company seeking wage increases. HT, 6 Jun. 1899; 2 Aug. 1899.

<sup>16</sup>HT, 4 Jun. 1901; 5 Jun. 1901; 6 Jun 1901; 7 Jun. 1901; 8 Jun. 1901; SR, 15 Jun. 1901; HT, 17 Jun. 1901; MBSL, Thirty Second Annual Report, 1901, 143-144.

<sup>17</sup>HT, 5 Jun 1901; SR, 21 Jul. 1901; HT, 27 Jun. 1901; 28 Jun. 1901; 6 Jul. 1901; 8 Jul. 1901.

<sup>18</sup>HT, 20 Jan 1899; 9 Mar. 1900; 9 Apr. 1900; 14 Apr. 1900; 22 Jan. 1900; 17 Aug. 1900; 3 Jul. 1899; 23 Aug. 1899; SR, 13 Oct. 1900; HT, 18 Aug. 1900; 20 Aug. 1900; 8 Jun. 1899; 12 Apr. 1900; 5 Sep. 1900; MBSL, Thirty First Annual Report, 1900, 72; Thirty Second Annual Report, 1901, 142-144; SR, 25 Jun. 1900; HT, 24 Oct. 1898; 30 Jan. 1899; 12 Jun. 1899; 9 Jul. 1900; 23 Jul. 1900; 27 Jul. 1900; SR, 25 Jun. 1900; 23 Jul. 1900; 28 Jul. 1900; 29 Jul. 1900; 28 Aug. 1900; 27 Aug. 1900; HT, 28 Jan. 1901.

<sup>19</sup>HT, 3 Jul. 1901; 24 Jun. 1901; 1 Jul. 1901; SR, 17 Jul. 1901; 2 Jul. 1902. When one teacher told her students to ignore the boycott the CLU urged the school committee to reprimand her. HT, 1 Jul. 1901.

<sup>20</sup>HT, 8 Jan. 1902; 10 Feb. 1902.

<sup>21</sup>SR, 29 Jul. 1901; 12 Aug. 1901; HT, 29 Jul. 1901; SR, 23 Jun. 1901; 11 Nov. 1901; 11 Aug. 1901; 3 Sep. 1901.

<sup>22</sup>SR, 7 Apr. 1902; 11 Apr. 1902; HT, 11 Apr. 1902; 18 Apr. 1902; SR, 18 Apr. 1902; 5 Jun. 1902; 10 Jun. 1902; 20 Jun. 1902. In another strike that spring, the plumbers and steamfitters obtained a compromise settlement of \$2.75 for a nine hour day. SR, 2 May 1902; 21 Ma6 1902.

<sup>23</sup>SR, 25 Sep. 1902; 5 Oct. 1902; 23 Nov. 1902; 8 Mar. 1903. Relieved at Dowd's temporary replacement, one businessman "of high standing" declared that Kennedy "would have a fine chance to make a name for himself . . . and win the confidence of the employer as well as the men." SR, 30 Sep. 1902.

<sup>24</sup>SR, 23 Nov. 1902; HT, 8 Jan. 1903; SR, 28 Mar. 1903.

<sup>25</sup>SR, 12 Mar. 1903; 25 Mar. 1903; HT, 23 Mar. 1903; 27 Mar. 1903; SR, 27 Mar. 1903; 3 Apr. 1903; 5 Apr. 1903; 13 Apr. 1903; 6 May 1903.

<sup>26</sup>SR, 3 May 1902; 29 May 1902; 10 Jun. 1902; HT, 22 Sep. 1902; 7 Oct. 1902; 9 Feb. 1903; SR, 10 Apr. 1903; 12 Apr. 1903; 27 May 1903; 30 May 1903; 31 May 1903; 1 Jun. 1903; 8 Jun. 1903; 9 Jun. 1903.

<sup>27</sup>9 Jun. 1903; 19 Jun. 1903; 12 Jun. 1903; 13 Jun. 1903; 14 Jun. 1903; 15 Jun. 1903; 2 Jul. 1903; 6 Jul. 1903; 8 Jul. 1903; 19 Jul. 1903; 20 Jul. 1903; 22 Jul. 1903; 23 Jul. 1903; 26 Jul. 1903.

<sup>28</sup>SR, 1 Aug. 1903; 2 Aug. 1903; 10 Aug. 1903; 11 Aug. 1903; 14 Aug. 1903; 18 Aug. 1903; 19 Aug. 1903; 20 Aug. 1903; HT, 25 May 1907.

<sup>29</sup>2 May 1904; 14 May 1904; 16 Jun. 1904; 18 Jun. 1904; 8 Aug. 1904; 14 Aug. 1904; 23 Aug. 1904. An unsuccessful mason tenders' strike that summer occasioned the first injunction granted to restrict the picket line activities of Holyoke workers. SR, 7 Apr. 1904; 5 May 1904; 12 May 1904; 5 Aug. 1904; 18 Aug. 1904.

<sup>30</sup>HT, 16 Aug. 1898; 13 Oct. 1898; 22 Nov. 1898; 8 Oct. 1898; 24 Oct. 1898.

<sup>31</sup>HT, 14 Dec. 1898; Peter Faebler, "Habitants in Holyoke: The Development of the French-Canadian Community in a Massachusetts City, 1865-1910," University of New Hampshire, Ph. D., 1976, 281-284; SR, 10 Oct. 1901; 29 Oct. 1901; 30 Nov. 1903.

32E. Lovering to T. Parsons, 30 Mar. 1900, vol. PC-11, LMP; SR, 21 May 1899; 12 Mar. 1900; 14 Mar. 1900; Holyoke Municipal Register, 1898, 542; E. Lovering to T. Parsons, 14 Dec. 1903; T. Parsons to E. Lovering, 31 Oct. 1904, vol. PD-1, LMP: SR, 29 Oct. 1904.

33HT, 4 Dec. 1902; 8 Dec. 1902; 10 Dec. 1902; SR, 8 Dec. 1902; 14 Dec. 1902.

34Tour workers were the group most reluctant to participate in the 1903 strike. SR, 8 Jun. 1903; 20 Jul. 1903.

35HT, 9 Nov. 1898; 13 Dec. 1899; 11 Jul. 1900; 15 Nov. 1900; 17 Nov. 1900; 20 Nov. 1900; 21 Nov. 1900; Howard H. Quint, The Forging of American Socialism: Origins of the Modern Movement (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company paperback edition, 1964; originally published in 1953), 319-349.

36SR, 16 Feb. 1898; 11 Mar. 1898; HT, 11 May 1899; 27 Mar. 1899; 4 Sep. 1901; 3 Jul. 1901.

37HT, 27 Mar. 1899.

38The letter to DeLeon is quoted in Rebecca Brown, "The Socialist Labor Party in Holyoke, Massachusetts, 1893-1900," unpublished senior thesis, Mt. Holyoke College, 1981, 105; L. Glen Seretan, Daniel DeLeon: The Odyssey of an American Marxist (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979), 141-171.

39HT, 5 Sep. 1901; 17 May 1901; 11 Sep. 1902; 5 Jul. 1901.

40SR, 28 Jul. 1902; Messenger, 1 Jun. 1901; HT, 11 Feb. 1903; Messenger, 2 Apr. 1901; A rambling oration by one Holyoke priest, warning of the growth of socialism, is reprinted in Messenger, 4 Feb. 1899.

C H A P T E R   V I I I  
CATHOLIC TRADE UNIONIST RESPECTABILITY

Across from Hampden Park on Maple Street next to the Central Fire Station stood a three story structure which housed the Alden Press. Its proprietor, Edward Alden, employed the first two floors for his business, which in the dozen years following 1908 included publishing the local labor weekly, The Artisan. But it was what transpired on the building's third floor that often determined what appeared in the paper. There each Saturday evening one could find Holyoke's leading trade unionists, engaged in heated discussion of the principal local and national issues of the day. Dubbed the Dynamiters' Club by some members, others referred to the gatherings as the Holyoke Labor College, reflecting the group's emphasis on self-improvement and the fact that a speaker from an area college frequently began an evening's proceedings with a lecture. Although Alden was a Yankee printer, the club largely attracted Irish Catholic trade unionists and the philosophy of labor which

evolved from these debates and subsequently appeared in the columns of The Artisan reflected their predominance. This chapter looks at the mature post-1900 expression of the culture of Catholic trade unionist respectability.<sup>1</sup>

The basic principles of Catholic trade unionism included values shared by all unionists. One was independence. "Throw off your shackles, ye wage slaves," declared The Artisan, "Remove the hoodwink and see the light of better things through the trade union movement." Unlike Yankee artisans, for whom an escape from wage slavery usually meant some form of independent or cooperative production, trade unionists saw wage slaves as those who refused to stand in solidarity with their fellow workers. Simply joining a trade union, though, was not enough. The dutiful trade unionist needed to develop a number of "good habits:"

Get into the habit of attending meetings and paying your dues. Get into the habit of wearing the button of your organization on the lapel of your coat. Get into the habit of speaking a good word for a fellow workman. The above habits thoroughly mastered will give you that feeling of satisfaction that comes to the man who does his duty.<sup>2</sup>

The reference to the "man who does his duty" was no unconscious lapse. A loosely defined manliness formed another of the basic values of local unionists. Despite the large number of women in the workforce, an appeal to manhood pervaded the language of Holyoke Trade unionism and presumably that of workers themselves. In publishing a list of strikebreakers, The Artisan declared that these were "men who have forsaken honor and a right to a place in the haunts of men." An editorial attacking dual unionism stated that "the duty of the true blue, sensible, thinking union man is to fight for unionism within its ranks and not in the ranks of any opposing scheme of organized labor which seeks but to destroy the recognized organization which labor has."<sup>3</sup>

An aversion to drink also remained a distinguishing characteristic of trade union respectables. Their position on temperance combined not only the themes of manliness and independence, but added a concern for the family's welfare. Locally, the leading proponent of temperance was Urban Fleming, a mule spinner who for many years doubled as president of the CLU and the St. Jerome's Temperance Society.

Largely because of Fleming's influence, the CLU

consistently refused to endorse the licensing of liquor dealers, despite the urgings of the bartenders' union that it support the measure. At one 1917 debate on the license question, Fleming linked child labor to parental drunkenness and argued that saloonkeepers were no friends of labor. On more than one occasion when the unions attempted to defeat an administration inimical to labor, he asserted, "every saloonkeeper in the city gave money into a slush fund to defeat the unions." A 1909 Artisan editorial also complained that bar owners frequently hired non-union men to undertake repair work. The same article expressed shock at finding that many women were "habitual users of intoxicating liquors" and called for laws forbidding women from entering saloons and prohibiting waitresses from serving liquor.<sup>4</sup>

Some unionists depicted the saloon as a threat to the future of trade unionism. A letter to The Artisan from "A SCOT" outlines the manner in which intemperance impoverished the family and sapped the workers' manhood as it undermined unions. "Every drunkard's wife can tell you the struggle she has to keep his working card clear, to enable him to get the standard rate of wages, and because she is ashamed to let his fellow workers understand the character of her husband at home."

But only so much can be done, he continued, and "as things get worse she is compelled to let it fall back a month, then two, and so on, until the stage is reached" at which the intemperate worker has "to break the bonds of brotherhood, the result being that he falls into the ranks of scab labor. Most workers probably did not see the problem in such ominous terms. Even The Artisan opposed prohibition, labelling it an attack on individual rights which signalled a "New Paternalism." Few trade union respectables wished to replace the tyranny of drink with a broader oppression. Indeed, the real importance of the saloon lay in the fact that it served as a negative referent. For respectables saloon culture bore the mark and threat of servility: to the millowner, to the political boss, and to the demon rum itself.<sup>5</sup>

The respectables' attitude toward the family best disclosed the masculine ethos which underlay Holyoke trade unionism. The trade union, declared one 1908 Artisan editorial, was the "Defender of the Home." No other institution so steadfastly demanded a "living wage" that would allow the worker to "maintain a creditable home, to bring up his children, and educate them into honest, moral men and women and useful citizens

of the commonwealth." A dozen years later the message remained unchanged: "In the old theory of an American standard of living, it was considered that the father or the head of the family should be the breadwinner, and that his wages should be adequate to properly support the family." Any other arrangement, the editorial bluntly stated, was "wrong, fundamentally, economically, and vitally wrong." Such statements clearly reveal the centrality of the family in the lives of trade union respectables. But in claiming that only trade unions consistently fought for a living wage, they neglected to credit the role played by numerous Catholic spokesmen after 1900.<sup>6</sup>

The foremost Catholic exponent of the family living wage was Father John A. Ryan, who popularized the demand in countless books, articles, and addresses. During the 1920s he co-authored a syndicated column for the National Catholic Welfare Conference, "Expert Catholic Discussion of Capital and Labor," which appeared in Springfield's Catholic Mirror and many other church publications. Despite their wide dissemination the degree to which Ryan's writings directly influenced Catholic workers is open to debate. Considerably less arguable is the manner in which they revealed the inner-

most aspirations and attitudes of Catholic wage earners. Ryan wrote with a profound understanding of his audience and because his exposition of the family living wage possessed this descriptive as well as prescriptive character, it merits more than passing attention.

Ryan located authority for the family living wage in man's natural right to full personal development. Because celibacy was unnatural in lay society, he argued, "the majority of men cannot reach a proper degree of self-development outside of the conjugal state." From this Ryan concluded that the "'minimum of the material conditions of decent and reasonable living' comprises, for the adult male, the means of supporting a family." Furthermore, the right to a living wage applied not simply to married, but to all workers. For if employers could pay single wage earners less, "they would strive to engage these exclusively," thus placing a premium "upon a very undesirable kind of celibacy." The argument demonstrates recurring patterns in Ryan's thought and indicates why his writings proved so compelling. He not only grounded his abstractions in an earthy shrewdness which addressed the deepest longings of Catholic workers, but could

move with breathtaking swiftness from the metaphysical world of natural right to the hard reality of contemporary labor markets.<sup>7</sup>

As one might suspect, Ryan's views of marriage and women were militantly conventional. A belief that social stability required woman's presence in the home buttressed the demand for a family living wage: "The welfare of the whole family, and that of society likewise, renders it imperative that the wife and mother should not engage in any labor except that of the household." There her chief duty was to bear and raise children. In condemning birth control, Ryan characteristically framed his attack in class terms: "The birth control advocates hope to see a situation in which the poorer classes would deliberately keep their families small while the comfortable and rich classes would have fairly large families." In reality, though, the "comfortable classes" were too selfish and "too deeply sunk in the quagmire of egotism" to raise large families and only those who found birth control morally objectionable would continue to procreate freely: "In other words, they will be mainly the Catholic element of the population. Thus, the fittest will survive:

that is, the fittest morally."<sup>8</sup>

Despite the limited role that he prescribed for women, Ryan fully realized that many were compelled to enter the workforce. Rather than ignore what for him was an unpleasant reality, he urged not only that women be paid the same wages as men for comparable work, but that steps be taken to organize them into unions. As with his insistence that single as well as married workers be paid a living wage, the demand stemmed from an unsentimental analysis of the labor market. The more women received in wages, the less employable they would be: "Unless we hold that an increase in the proportion of women workers is desirable," Ryan contended, "we must admit that social welfare would be advanced by the payment of uniform wages to both sexes for equally efficient labor." Ryan also spoke from a conviction that all workers needed the protection afforded by organization and that no worker would be secure until all belonged to labor unions. He found it a cruel irony that unskilled wage earners, who most needed protection, were among the least organized. An examination of Holyoke trade unionism after 1900 shows that Ryan's views on women workers and organized

labor bore some resemblance to current reality.<sup>9</sup>

Holyoke trade unionists brooked no expansion of women's work that infringed upon traditional preserves. When in July, 1911, the Deane Steam Pump Company hired a group of women to work in its coremaking department, sixty molders and coremakers immediately walked out, claiming that once a job became defined as women's work, women's wages would soon follow. They also insisted that propriety debarred women from such work and their argument secured broad public support. That fall the dispute became an issue in the gubernatorial campaign when it was learned that Governor Foss employed women at his factory. John F. Sheehan, former head of the molders' union and ardent Foss supporter, who had condemned the practice at the Deane Steam Pump Company, tried to explain that Foss's foundry was conducted in a "model manner." As the Republican observed, however: "In this he got himself rather in the mire." In the end, the company refused to submit and the molders' union appointed a committee to lobby for a bill forbidding the employment of women in foundries.<sup>10</sup>

By contrast, in industries where women had tradi-

tionally constituted a large proportion of the workforce, Holyoke trade unionists encouraged their organization. In the local paper industry such encouragement proved unnecessary and the post-1910 history of paper unionism can scarcely be recounted without recognizing the integral role played by women workers. After the 1903 strike the American Writing Paper Company blacklisted union leaders and in subsequent years continued to dismiss anyone suspected of union activity. Although Eagle Lodge reappeared in 1907, it led a shadow existence during the next few years. Besides fear of dismissal, craft exclusiveness also inhibited union development. "A BACK TENDER" wrote that if machine tenders had any "backbone" the trust would be forced to deal more justly with its workers:

There isn't a machine tender working for the American Writing Paper 'combine' that dares to say a word about the union and I know that because I am working in the mill. They are moral cowards and wage slaves. The company owns them. They are not men - they are tools, that's all.

This was the condition of paper unionism when the American Federation of Labor (AFL) targeted the trust for organization in 1911.<sup>11</sup>

The AFL organizing campaign staggered along for

the better part of a year until the following January when a strike by the plater women at the Holyoke and Riverside divisions of the AWP Company pumped fresh blood into the anemic effort. Unable to effect any significant changes in the organization of work in the engine and machine rooms, the trust had turned its efficiency experts loose in the finishing department. It proved to be a serious mistake. As The Artisan later observed of the women workers affected:

They had several grievances, but the principal trouble was the 'efficiency' expert with his little stop watch. He, this 'efficiency' expert, had got the economy bug in his head, some say it was introduced into his head by a little learning, and he had made the officials believe that with his 'hoss-race' watch he could get as much work out of two girls as they were getting from three.

He tried it and the discredit of his stop watch be it said the girls refused to be driven like so many cattle. They struck, and what's more they stayed struck for four weeks.<sup>12</sup>

The first meeting of the strikers in early February attracted J.T. Carey, president of the Brotherhood of Paper Makers, but few paper workers. A week later another gathering drew a larger crowd and numerous men signed union applications before departing. Additional young male workers doubtlessly took

out their pens after attending the benefit dances staged by the striking women at Temperance Hall and The Artisan bluntly reminded others of their duty in words that embodied the most fundamental tenets of trade unionist respectability: "THROW OFF THE YOKE, YOU MEN, AND ENROLL UNDER FREEDOM'S BANNER - the BROTHERHOOD OF PAPER MAKERS." The trust soon sensed the mounting solidarity generated by the strike and in late February acceded to the women's demands. But by then it was too late. The Brotherhood of Paper Makers had already enrolled most of the city's plater women and loftmen, and a short while later the beater engineers and machine tenders moved in to gather the spoils of a victory to which they had contributed precious little. Paper unionism had returned to Holyoke.<sup>13</sup>

That women paper workers also embraced the demand for a living wage perhaps best demonstrates its compelling attractiveness. In January, 1915, the rag room workers at the Valley Paper Company walked out, declaring that a recent pay decrease deprived them of a living wage. Other paper workers immediately proffered their support. Large crowds joined the strikers

on the picket line and attended benefit dances; and, even though the rag workers belonged to no union, only the intervention of the State Board of Arbitration prevented Eagle Lodge from calling a sympathetic strike. One reason for the outpouring of aid was suggested by an Artisan editorial attacking company president, George Fowler, which disclosed the religious basis and potentially explosive nature of the living wage demand:

It is easy to go to Church on Sunday and, with a smirk, raise a head toward heaven and pray the good Lord to watch and protect him and his, peace on earth, good will toward men. Sanctimonious hypocrisy. How easy it is for the individual with a stomach full of good, nourishing food to pray for others and be a good Christian - until it hits his business. Until living his Christian professions means paying a living wage, it is easy to be a Christian.

The strike failed, but in its aftermath there was a new rag workers' union. Henceforth, even the least skilled paper workers could draw on the protection offered through organization.<sup>14</sup>

The strike failed in part because the company hired a group of Polish strikebreakers, who braved the verbal and physical harrassment of the picket line. The contempt which the city's more established ethnic

groups evinced towards the newcomers caused a degree of intra-class hostility that complicated efforts to incorporate Polish workers into the paper unions.

Divisions within the Polish Community itself did little to ease tensions. Where some Poles enlisted as scabs, others looked to the IWW for salvation. Eagle Lodge condemned a 1916 strike by Polish beater helpers at the Chemical Paper Company, because, it claimed, the strikers had formed a dual union under Wobbly auspices. Although the International tried to organize a Polish branch of Eagle Lodge, a subsequent beater helpers' strike conducted under the banner of an independent union indicated that some Polish paper makers still found the city's AFL affiliate wanting. Commonly depicted by the local labor establishment as either wage slaves or wild-eyed radicals, the Poles stood too far to the right or left of the golden mean prescribed by Catholic trade unionist respectability to exert any influence on the labor movement during these years.<sup>15</sup>

Despite the tensions created by the Polish presence, Holyoke paper workers after 1912 achieved a formidable degree of organization. The same cannot be said of local textile workers. In contrast to textile

centers in eastern Massachusetts, quiescence reigned among Holyoke operatives following the turn of the century burst of strike activity. To some extent, this derived from capital's timely use of the carrot and the stick. In 1912, the Lyman Mills granted a wage increase as soon as the news arrived that Lawrence strikers had secured a favorable settlement. Considering it "bad policy" to wait, treasurer Theophilus Parsons instructed the company agent to announce a raise immediately, before the workers banded together to issue demands. The Lyman Mills also maintained a blacklist of known organizers and consulted regularly with other mills on wage matters in order to anticipate worker discontent.<sup>16</sup>

Persisting craft exclusiveness also inhibited organization, as the Lyman Mills continued to cut special deals with its mule spinners and loom fixers. "I am in hopes," treasurer Ernest Lovering wrote the company agent of one wage increase, "that you can quietly swing whatever additional adjustments become necessary without using a percentage figure for public purposes, and at the same time keep in favor with the desirable class of help." The company discontinued

the practice after 1917 when an acute shortage of unskilled workers made it too risky, but prior to that time the preferential treatment accorded mule spinners and loom fixers gave them little reason to make common cause with their less skilled and less fortunate fellow workers.<sup>17</sup>

Yet mule spinners and loom fixers were not the only textile workers to prosper during the period. Technological innovation reduced the number of weavers, but increased the wages of those who remained. When the Lyman Mills began replacing its plain looms with automated Draper looms in 1914, it caused a noteworthy restructuring of the workforce in a typical weave room:

	Plain (310 looms)	Draper (292 looms)
Weavers	52	20
Fixers	3½	3
Changers	0	2
Cleaners and Oilers	0	4
Bobbin Cleaners	0	2

The changeover forced weavers to tend fifteen Draper looms instead of six to eight plain looms, but the company hoped an accompanying twenty five per cent wage increase would not only reduce dissent, but make the work attractive. Evidently, it did.<sup>18</sup>

The foregoing indicates some reasons why textile workers were not more active, but is hardly sufficient. Paper workers received higher wages than textile operatives, machine tenders and beater engineers were no less aloof than mule spinners and loom fixers, and while no mill correspondence exists to document the practice, one can safely assume that paper manufacturers also stayed abreast of regional wage movements. Why, then, did paper workers prove so much more willing to organize than textile operatives? We need first to recall that the paper and textile industries comprised two separate, if overlapping, labor markets for the Irish and French Canadians; and that, by 1900, French Canadian predominance in textiles extended to all departments and skill levels. To determine whether the pattern endured, a study was made of geographical and job mobility among French-Canadian textile operatives and Irish paper workers between the years 1905 and 1915. It showed that, even though French-Canadian textile operatives earned less, their persistence rate nearly equalled that of Irish paper workers. Also, French-Canadian paper workers were more likely to move or change their line of work than were French-Canadian textile operatives. Fin-

ally, where 14 of 170 French-Canadian paper workers later sought work in textile mills, only 4 of 313 textile operatives left for paper factories.<sup>17</sup>

The evidence strongly suggests that French-Canadians had carved out a comfortable niche within the local textile industry comparable to that achieved by their countrymen at Manchester's Amoskeag Mills. In a study of Manchester's French-Canadians, Tamara Hareven showed how they fortified their controlling position within the textile workforce by forming shop floor kin networks that placed and assisted newcomers, protected group members from mistreatment by management, and generally eased one through the work day. Furthermore, she persuasively argues, the networks to some extent functioned as surrogates for labor unions. Because managerial cooperation was crucial to the successful operation of these networks, French-Canadian textile workers also avoided the assertions of independence so characteristic of trade union respectables and accepted - indeed probably needed - managerial paternalism. Lastly, the low wages paid by the textile industry forced most families to rely upon the earnings of several members. The cult of the male breadwinner,

which buttressed the family living wage doctrine and constituted the focal point of Catholic trade unionist respectability, found few adherents among these workers. They still viewed the entire family - wives as well as children - as a productive unit.<sup>20</sup>

As the established group in most Holyoke textile mills, the French-Canadian presence thus inhibited organizational efforts. At the one factory which they clearly did not dominate, the Germania Woolen Mills, a largely German and Polish workforce demonstrated greater militance during the period than could be found at any other local concern. Polish radicalism particularly alarmed textile manufacturers. For a number of years the Lyman Mills helped subsidize a Chicopee paper, Piast, edited by J.F. Rutka, who promised to "oppose the great number of Polish papers published under Socialistic auspices now circulating in the vicinity." Together with other local concerns, the company also supported the activities of the Polish Catholic Church for the same reasons. To round out the argument, it should be emphasized that it was French-Canadian textile workers, and not French-Canadians generally, who impeded labor organization. Sustained material

deprivation had engendered adaptive mechanisms which led French-Canadian textile workers down a different ideological track than that of their Irish co-religionists: one based on the family economy rather than the family living wage. As French-Canadians became established in the paper mills, building industry, and metal trades, they too adopted the demand for a family living wage. In short, the closer workers came to its attainment, the more committed they became to the living wage doctrine and all that it implied.<sup>21</sup>

In addition to influencing trade union development, the living wage doctrine also shaped the political views and actions of Catholic trade unionists. Father Ryan felt that one could not look to employer benevolence for a living wage: "Only visionaries put any faith in this method." He invested more faith in unions but observed they were not enough, because so few unskilled workers were organized. Ryan thus saw the government as the institution most apt to insure that all workers received a living wage, and advised labor unions to take an active part in politics. Such participation was all the more essential because of a regrettable tendency in American politics to ignore

the existence of class interests. The legislative process, Ryan argued, disregarded "the fact that for the great majority of individuals their class interests are their primary interests; that where they have one interest in common with all other citizens of the country they have ten that are vital only to their particular class." The Constitution seemed to assume, he concluded, "that laws will be framed which will be equally favorable to all individuals, while, as a matter of fact, the balance of effect of almost every legal enactment of an economic nature is to benefit one class at the expense of another." Catholic trade unionists acted on similar assumptions.<sup>22</sup>

At Holyoke, The Artisan eschewed AFL voluntarism and applauded legislative proposals ranging from the old age pension bill of Victor Berger, the Milwaukee socialist, to the demand for a living wage by the American Federation of Catholic Societies. Prior to World War I, though, Holyoke trade unionists rejected calls to form a labor party. In 1916, The Artisan labelled one such proposal premature and argued that current AFL policy, which enjoined trade unionists to vote for the candidate, "no matter of what party, that will give the

most to labor, is the best plan for some time to come." Three years later local trade unionists proved more receptive.<sup>23</sup>

Although The Artisan endorsed the war effort, its support was lukewarm. Editorials criticized the draft as unnecessary and decried the Espionage law as a "violation of the liberty for which we are supposed to be fighting." When wages failed to keep pace with spiralling prices, it lashed out at "greedy employers" who used war-time calls for austerity to deny the just grievances of workers and "raised the cry of IWW" whenever they sought adequate wages. At the same time it linked its most zealous declarations of "patriotic duty" to labor's legislative demands. One editorial urging workers to buy war bonds stated:

As trade unionists we have asked from State and Union the enactment of laws and the establishment of policies calculated to improve the condition of wage earners. Now the nation is calling upon us for support and it is for us to denote by the support we give at this time, that we are entitled now and in the future to extra consideration at the hands of the law makers of State and Nation.

The government's post-war retreat on the labor front caused a rare criticism of AFL political policy for failing to secure laws "concerning the eight hour day,

the minimum wage, and the recognition of unions." Noting that "We have the power," The Artisan asked, "Why not use it?" In November, 1919, it congratulated the Boston CLU for sending a delegate to a Chicago conference considering the formation of labor party. By the following March it had drawn back from the venture, but in the same issue announcing its capitulation to the AFL line on labor parties, an editorial on the family warned that "any economic system which impairs this institution is wrong and will work to the detriment of the whole structure of American ideals."<sup>24</sup>

In the local arena, the formation of a wage earners' club in 1906 which sought to divorce the saloon from politics and generally improve the "condition of all workers" signalled the political resurgence of Holyoke trade unionists. Here the CLU's chief nemesis was the political machine of Republican boss William F. Whiting, whose principal spokesman after 1910 was Mayor John White. White's refusal in 1913 to explain his municipal labor policies before the CLU led Edward Alden and Urban Fleming to try their hand at political versification:

Oh Lord Mayor, listen to us, Thou who does up all  
 things well,  
 Harken to our supplication ere we hit the padded  
 cell.  
 Since you frowned upon our efforts we are feeling  
 mighty blue,  
 Condescend, Your Royal Highness; come and run the  
 CLU

Certain aldermen, they tell us, when you speak, are  
 stricken dumb,  
 Board of Public Works and License, you have got be-  
 neath your thumb.  
 When you speak the cops all shiver - when you cuss  
 they see the Boss.  
 Save the CLU, Your Honor; in other words, please  
 come across.

Treat our supplications kindly; do not try to get  
 our goat,  
 Fall is coming and remember that we both have got  
 a vote.  
 Keep your bonnet tied on tightly and your ire to  
 somewhat curb.  
 We'll be with you just as ever

Yours truly,

ED & URB

In response, White first lost his temper and threatened  
 to sue The Artisan. That winter he also lost his bid  
 for reelection, an event which Alden and Fleming memor-  
 ialized with another piece of doggerel:

Weel, Jacko, we reached out and got cha; we derricked  
 you out of the chair.  
 When we called your bluff you hadn't the stuff, to wit,  
 Jacko, you wasn't there.  
 For in spite of your stale, smutty stories, your bushwa  
 and blatherskite scoff,  
 Your stay in Room One won't be long, Father John, for  
 right here is where you get off.

You were some snobbish gink while you had it, but that  
   mayor for life stuff don't work,  
 For you sure hit the mud with a dull, sickening thud;  
   yes, Jacko, you sure got a jerk.<sup>25</sup>

As gratified as Alden and Fleming were by White's defeat, it did little to aid the local labor movement. Even The Artisan admitted that his successor, John H. Woods, had never shown "any conspicuous act of friendship for organized labor." After Woods served two lackluster terms, White regained the mayor's chair for a few years before again being defeated in 1917. Although a post-election Artisan editorial claimed the victor, John D. Ryan, as one of labor's own, a headline urging Ryan's reelection the following year evinced declining enthusiasm: VOTE TO ELECT JOHN D. RYAN, MAYBE MIGHT HAVE DONE BETTER BY LABOR BUT COULDN'T BE AS BAD AS MCKAY." In 1919, mayor-elect, John F. Cronin, a former trade unionist, bluntly informed the CLU that labor would not dominate his administration. The membership applauded the address nonetheless; he could be no worse than Woods or Ryan.<sup>26</sup>

The CLU's local political impotence may be traced to the 1896 charter revision, which prevented it from recreating the heady days of the early 1890s when a

powerful pro-labor board of aldermen did its bidding. Where ward-based elections had allowed the CLU to influence an aldermanic majority from the worker dominated lower wards, the new charter dictated that two-thirds of the city council be elected by an at-large vote. Thus required to reach a more socially heterogeneous constituency, most aldermanic candidates found it expedient to mute their support of labor. This, coupled with the fact that William F. Whiting's pro-business, Republican machine was the most effective political organization in Holyoke after 1900, insured that worker interests would receive no more than token recognition. These difficulties doubtlessly influenced the CLU's temporary decision to seek the formation of a labor party; that Holyoke trade unionists did not see this course of action through diminished what little leverage they had left in local politics.

Although The Artisan roundly condemned the IWW and Soviet Union, its approach to the Socialist Party was more ambiguous. In addition to praising Victor Berger's congressional activities, it carried announcements of socialist lectures, printed letters from local

party members, and endorsed George Wrenn, the socialist president of the Springfield CLU, when he ran for state senator. At the same time it reprinted articles by Catholic priests which coupled anti-socialist attacks with calls for social reform. John Ryan offered perhaps the best explanation of this form of Catholic anti-socialism. Because, Ryan observed, too many workers believed that "the socialist party is the only agency that is striving for the abolition of present economic wrongs," it was necessary to demonstrate that the Church was not "so preoccupied with spiritual things that she has no time for men's temporal needs." Citing Rerum Novarum as authority, Ryan took every available opportunity to publicize a Catholic reform agenda that ranged from the family living wage to cooperative production. "There is no need to resort to socialism," was the import of Ryan's message to wage earners: "All the evils of our industrial system can be abolished by sane and progressive measures of social reform, against which the Church has not a word to say."<sup>27</sup>

At St. Jerome's in Holyoke, Father J.J. Broderick expressed another variant of Catholic anti-socialism: one that combined the living wage doctrine with an

alleged socialist threat to the family. After characterizing the working mother as one of the "most serious evils of our industrial system," Broderick explained that "The law of nature requires that a mother give her whole care and time to her children." To amend the problem, which found justification in the "heartless principles of modern political economy, 'sell in the dearest market and buy in the cheapest,'" Broderick proposed the family living wage. "No, do not say this is socialistic," he argued:

For the basic principles of socialism are the denial of God and the affirmation of the industrial equality and identity of the sexes. But this (the family living wage) is founded on the principle that there is a God and that God has decreed special work for women; has ordained the mother His helpmate in caring for the youthful soul and implanting there, as none other can, the everlasting truths of religion.

Broderick's address brought an immediate response from Daniel R. Donovan, the socialist business agent of the machinists' union, who contended that the socialist program went even further than the demand for a family living wage: it also called for shorter hours, old age pensions, and child labor laws, to mention but a few of its features. Significantly, Donovan offered no challenge to Broderick's depiction of woman's social

role.<sup>28</sup>

Just as it shaped their approach to trade unionism and politics, the living wage doctrine influenced the manner in which Catholic workers viewed class relations. John Ryan again provides a useful introduction. Despite his anti-socialism, Ryan refused to pose as a defender of capitalism. "Thank God," he remarked in one essay which argued that capitalism was a product of the Reformation, "we Catholics are in no degree responsible for the invention of the cold, ugly, soulless thing called modern capitalism, with its industrial aristocracy at one extreme and its proletarian masses at the other." Ryan accepted capitalism because he believed that competition and private ownership in the means of production provided necessary incentives to economic activity, but insisted that human rights preceded property rights: "The employer's right to obtain interest on the capital he has invested in his business is subordinate to the laborer's right to a Living Wage." He further contended that capitalist relations of production assumed a social contract in which the employer's obligation to pay a living wage is

"just as reasonable and valid as the obligation which constrains men to respect traditional titles of ownership." To insure that capital attended to its responsibilities, Ryan urged workers to form labor unions, conduct consumer boycotts, and seek legislative support.<sup>29</sup>

To a large degree, Ryan's views mirrored the approach to class relations taken by Holyoke trade unionists. When working for capitalists who paid a living wage and required reasonable hours, declared The Artisan, workers should not only take pride in their work, but an interest in their employer's business: "Make the employer feel that you have a material interest in his welfare, as well as you can, and you will force him to respect the union card." Local manufacturers reputed to pay high wages received effusive obituaries. At their deaths, The Artisan praised William Whiting's philanthropy and remarked that Joseph Metcalf of the Farr Alpaca Company had "set a high mark in fair dealing with his employees, for he paid the best wages in his line."<sup>30</sup>

Yet not all manufacturers enjoyed the commanding positions in their respective markets which allowed

Whiting Paper and Farr Alpaca to be so openhanded with their workers. Trade union relations with these firms proved considerably more adversarial. "The antagonism existing between the great forces in our industrial life," declared The Artisan, "exists because the workers seek by organization to bargain for a living wage with an employer whose dominant ambition in life is to get wealthy - not comfortably rich, but wealthy - at whatever cost to humanity." By treating their workers as "so many beasts of burden," such employers invited class war. "One has only to read the signs to perceive an approaching crisis," warned a 1909 editorial: "The struggle may be bloodless, but it will be no the less severe."<sup>31</sup>

The prospect of such struggles in turn conditioned trade union relations with the middle class. "The merchants have been buncoed into believing that the manufacturers' interests were the merchants' interests," stated The Artisan. This was a serious miscalculation for they could be no more prosperous than the workers who constituted the overwhelming majority of their customers. Accordingly, The Artisan urged workers to support local merchants and petty entrepreneurs, but

only those who engaged in fair labor practices, stocked union label goods, refused to handle boycotted commodities, and generally aided the labor movement. In an effort to maintain a safe logistical base from which to conduct relations with recalcitrant manufacturers, trade unions carefully observed the conduct of local businessmen during labor disputes. At the conclusion of the plater women's strike, The Artisan declared that "Those who have made known open hostility to the demands of the strikers will not be forgotten; those who demonstrated a friendly spirit to the girls will be remembered." However much it irked them, most small businessmen at least tacitly accepted the trade union definition of worker-middle class relations. When Fred Burnham, proprietor of a local coal and grain company, attempted to organize a merchant boycott of The Artisan after being placed on the unfair list, he found few supporters and had to come to terms with the CLU.<sup>32</sup>

To conclude, in the decades after 1900 the family living wage doctrine came to comprise the core element in a mature culture of Catholic trade union respectability. A product of the dialectical relationship be-

tween the Church and its working class laity, the culture engendered a non-revolutionary class consciousness among Catholic workers by fusing the accumulated experience of past struggles with their most tenaciously held cultural assumptions. It would serve as a guidepost to Catholic workers for decades to come.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Wyatt E. Harper, The Story of Holyoke (n.p., 1973), 126-127. Harper provides the names of twenty one of the group's regulars: they include two Yankees, one German, one French-Canadian, and seventeen Irish.

<sup>2</sup>Artisan, 26 Jul. 1910; 15 Apr. 1908.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 16 May 1913; 26 Apr. 1914.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 27 Nov. 1914; Springfield Republican (SR), 7 Oct. 1915; Artisan, 1 Dec. 1916; SR, 3 Dec. 1917; Artisan, 17 Feb. 1909. An Artisan editorial attacking the Emerald Club further revealed the political dimensions of the antagonism between trade unions and the saloons. Characterizing the club as one of the city's worst "rum holes," the editorial declared that "Here in Holyoke people are getting tired of the manner in which the 'administration' and its license commission perform its 'duties,' and if something is not done to divorce the saloon and politics a change may be sought." Artisan, 9 Sep. 1908.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., 28 Jul. 1909; 4 Jul. 1919.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., 15 Apr. 1908; 5 Mar. 1920.

<sup>7</sup>John A. Ryan, A Living Wage (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1920); originally published in 1906, 85-88.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., 101; John A. Ryan, The Church and Socialism and Other Essays (Washington: The University Press, 1919), 232-234.

<sup>9</sup>Ryan, A Living Wage, 76; Catholic Mirror, IV, 12 (Oct. 1924), 22, Ryan, Church and Socialism, 74-75.

<sup>10</sup>SR, 10 Jul 1911; 11 Jul. 1911; 14 Jul. 1911; 1 Oct. 1911; 29 Oct. 1911; 15 Jan. 1912.

<sup>11</sup>HT, 4 Feb. 1907; 25 May 1907; Artisan, 17 Mar. 1911. Recognizing the degree of fear the trust had instilled in local paper workers, an Artisan editorial assured those who joined the union that, until a comfortable majority had sent in their applications, "No one will know you have joined unless you tell." Artisan, 20 Jan. 1911. "A BACK TENDER" also complained that machine tenders refused to instruct their helpers in the mysteries of the Fourdrinier, because they feared they might lose their machines.

<sup>12</sup>SR, 27 Jan. 1912; Artisan, 3 May 1912. Despite the serious consequences of the strike for capital, local paper manufacturers continued to look to the finishing department for savings. In 1916, fifty plater women at the Chemical Paper Company walked out, complaining that the piece work system under which they labored "is a driving system and takes it out of the employees in greater measure than they are compensated for." SR, 4 Sep. 1914; 7 Feb. 1916; Artisan, 5 May 1916; SR, 16 Sep. 1916.

<sup>13</sup>SR, 5 Feb. 1912; 12 Feb. 1912; 13 Feb. 1912; 15 Feb. 1912; 19 Feb. 1912; Artisan, 16 Feb. 1912; SR, 21 Feb 1912; Artisan, 3 May 1912.

<sup>14</sup>SR, 21 Jan. 1915; 28 Jan. 1915; 4 Feb. 1915; 7 Feb. 1915; 13 Feb. 1915; 15 Feb. 1915; Artisan, 22 Jan. 1915; 29 Jan. 1915; 5 Feb. 1915; 26 Feb. 1915; 5 Mar. 1915; 12 Mar. 1915; 19 Mar. 1915. The Artisan editorial lambasting Fowler may also have been directed at the city's Protestant Churches. Although the Reverend E.B. Robinson, pastor of Grace Church, a working class congregation located in the lower wards, supported the demand for a living wage, a more typical attitude was that of Reverend J.S. Lyon at the Second Baptist Church: "too much attention was paid to the subject of wages by the worker," he told his affluent congregation, "and too little to study, the reading of books, and other outside subjects." SR, 5 Sep. 1911; 10 May 1909.

<sup>15</sup>SR, 22 Jan. 1915; 28 Jan. 1915; Artisan, 12 Mar. 1915; 19 Mar. 1915; 28 Apr. 1916; 1 Sep. 1916; SR, 11 May 1920; 14 May 1920.

<sup>16</sup>SR, 15 Mar. 1912; J.A. Burke to T. Parsons, 12 Mar. 1912; T. Parsons to J.A. Burke, 9 Apr. 1912; J.A. Burke to T. Parsons, 17 Dec. 1912; vol. PD-9; J.A. Burke to E. Lovering, 17 May 1916, vol. PD-10; E. Lovering to J.A. Burke, 10 Apr. 1918, vol. PD-12; H.L. Sigourney to J.A. Burke, 2 Dec. 1919, vol. PD-15, Lyman Mills Papers, Baker Library, Harvard Business School (LMP). The Farr Alpaca Company also adjusted its wage schedule according to the outcome of labor struggles at Lawrence. Florence Conwell Hutner, "The Farr Alpaca Company: A Case Study in Business History," Smith College Studies in History, vol. XXXVII (1951), 59-60.

<sup>17</sup>E. Lovering to J.A. Burke, 14 Apr. 1916, vol. PD-10, LMP; SR, 9 Aug. 1918; J.A. Burke to E. Lovering, 7 Jun. 1918; vol. PD-13, LMP.

<sup>18</sup>J.A. Burke to T. Parsons, 31 Mar. 1914, vol. PD-11; J.A. Burke to E. Lovering, 23 Aug. 1917, vol. PD-12; J.A. Burke to E. Lovering, 7 Jun. 1918, vol. PD-13, LMP. In 1913, the Farr Alpaca Company announced a similar changeover. SR, 8 Feb. 1913.

<sup>19</sup>The following table on geographical and job mobility among selected groups of Holyoke workers, 1905-1915, is based on data taken from Holyoke city directories. To improve its accuracy the 1907 and 1910 directories were also consulted.

Irish Paper Workers

<u>1905</u>	<u>1915</u>	
191	72	(36%)

French-Canadian Paper Workers

<u>1905</u>	<u>1915</u>	
170	42	(25%)

French-Canadian Textile Workers

<u>1905</u>	<u>1915</u>	
313	97	(31%)

<sup>20</sup>Tamara K. Hareven, Family Time and Industrial Time: The Relationship Between the Factory and Work in a New England Industrial Community (New York: Cambridge University Press paperback edition, 1982), 85-119, 189-218, 247-248.

<sup>21</sup>SR, 22 Sep. 1916; 30 Apr. 1918; 6 Dec. 1919; J.A. Burke to E. Lovering, 13 Dec 1917, vol. PD-12; J.A. Burke to E. Lovering, 24 Dec. 1919; E. Lovering to J.A. Burke, 31 Dec. 1919, 2 Jan. 1920, vol. PD-15, LMP.

<sup>22</sup>Ryan, Church and Socialism, 74-75, 146-148.

<sup>23</sup>Artisan, 18 Aug. 1911; 25 Aug. 1916; 28 Apr. 1916; 4 Aug. 1916.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., 13 Apr. 1917; 11 May 1917; 22 Mar. 1918; 14 Sep. 1917; 10 Jan. 1919; 21 Nov. 1919; 5 Mar. 1920.

<sup>25</sup>SR, 7 May 1906; 23 Jul. 1906; HT, 12 Nov. 1906; Artisan, 27 Jan. 1913; 4 Jul. 1913; 1 Aug. 1913; 5 Dec. 1913. The platform of the Springfield wage earners' club included demands for the public ownership of utilities, the "recognition of all labor organizations," and an anti-trust plank. SR, 15 Sep. 1906. While all sources agree that White initially obtained the mayorality through Whiting's sponsorship, there is some question concerning the degree of independence he later carved out for himself. Compare, for example, SR, 20 Nov. 1913 with The Artisan, 12 Feb. 1915.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., 29 Nov. 1912; 7 Dec. 1917; 29 Nov. 1918; SR, 15 Dec. 1919.

<sup>27</sup>Artisan, 19 Apr. 1918; 2 Aug. 1918; 14 Mar. 1919; 28 Mar. 1919; 29 Sep. 1909; 10 Dec. 1909; 8 Jul. 1910; 30 Oct. 1914; 16 Jun. 1909; 11 Mar. 1910; Ryan, Church and Socialism, 15-34. In a debate with Morris Hillquit the socialist leader, Ryan observed that one of the most compelling features of Marxism was its "prophecy of 'increasing misery.'" If it could be shown that the material conditions of working class life were steadily improving, argued Ryan, "you make the class struggle,

perhaps not a 'polite social function,' but a sham battle." Hillquit replied that the "socialist expectation of success is predicted not on a theory of progressive pauperization of the workers, but on the ever growing improvement of their condition" and contended that Ryan had drawn upon a "somewhat debatable passage from Marx." Hillquit's rebuttal was well taken, but did not alter Ryan's conviction that social reform and the progressive improvement of the material conditions of working class life constituted the most effective means of blunting socialism's appeal. Morris Hillquit and John A. Ryan, Socialism: Promise or Menace? (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1917), 141, 238. Further discussion of Catholic anti-socialism can be found in Henry F. Bedford, Socialism and the Workers in Massachusetts, 1886-1912 (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1966), 181-219; Marc Karson, American Labor Unions and Politics, 1900-1918 (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1958), 212-284; and especially David Montgomery, Workers' Control in America: Studies in the History of Work, Technology, and Labor Struggles (New York: Cambridge University Press paperback edition, 1979), 76-81, who in the course of his analysis notes how the living wage doctrine functioned as a particularly effective feature of Catholic anti-socialism.

<sup>28</sup>Artisan, 27 Feb. 1914; 6 Mar. 1914. In Ryan's debate with Hillquit, the latter's contention that "marriage should be dissolvable at the will of the parties themselves" occasioned some of Ryan's least temperate remarks. Hillquit and Ryan, Socialism, 172-174.

<sup>29</sup>Ryan, Church and Socialism, 22; Hillquit and Ryan, Socialism, 65-66; Ryan, A Living Wage, 31, 113-114, 129, 135-136; Catholic Mirror, IV, 4 (Feb. 1924), 23-24. At St. Jerome's, Father Harkins declared that in "dire distress there is no ownership" during the course of a sermon attacking the arrogance of wealth. HT, 27 Aug. 1906. Barrington Moore offers a useful analysis of the manner in which an implied social contract governs class relations in Injustice: The Social Bases of Obedience and Revolt (White Plains, NY: M.E. Sharpe paperback edition, 1978), 15-31.

<sup>30</sup>Artisan, 24 Mar. 1909; 22 Apr. 1908; 13 Jan. 1911; 24 Nov. 1916; Hutner, "Farr Alpaca Company," 57-72. Ryan's view of work slowdowns followed from his belief that a social contract should govern industrial relations: "By all means, let labor be urged to do an honest day's work. Also let capitalists and employers be urged to refrain from taking excessive interest and excessive profits." Catholic Mirror, IV, 1 (Nov. 1923), 19.

<sup>31</sup>Artisan, 24 Mar. 1909.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., 16 Feb. 1912; 24 May. 1912; 11 Nov. 1908; 14 Apr. 1909; 16 Sep. 1910; 15 Mar. 1912; 5 Sep. 1913; 23 Feb. 1912; 10 Nov. 1916; 24 Nov. 1916; 2 Mar. 1917.

## CONCLUSION

In closing, I would like to comment on a few aspects of the foregoing that merit further examination. The first concerns the most evident lacuna in the present work: the absence of any sustained analysis of working women and how the family living wage doctrine affected them. That it reinforced cultural traditions that circumscribed their lives goes without saying. By definition, the cult of masculinity which buttressed the doctrine excluded and subordinated women. But these observations are hardly sufficient. As the cutter women who initiated the 1903 paper strike showed by questioning the manhood of less militant co-workers, working women did not regard the ethic of manliness with humble awe, but were quite capable of turning male bravado to their own ends. The incident points up the need to keep in view the complex and dynamic nature of intersexual relations among workers - or any other social grouping for that matter.

In a recent study of working women, Leslie Woodcock

Tentler has argued that women's work experience only served to reinforce a psychological dependence on family and the domestic role. By casting women as homemakers and childbearers, the family living wage doctrine can scarcely be said to have lessened that dependence. Yet as Susan Porter Benson has observed, Tentler's dismissal of the "spontaneous, disorganized" job actions of women wage earners was premature in that she failed to explore the consciousness that supported them. In her own work, Benson found that saleswomen developed a vigorous shop-floor culture based on a "keen sense of themselves as workers and as women." The family living wage doctrine by no means precluded the formation of such a culture. The striking rag workers who sought a living wage demonstrated that women workers could employ the doctrine to their own benefit. Although the sources do not tell us if the women made the doctrine part of a broader work culture, it remains noteworthy that they viewed it as something other than a life sentence to domesticity.<sup>1</sup>

This is not to denigrate the activities of working class housewives or ignore what the doctrine meant to them. In Jane Humphries' apt phrases, they functioned

as "executors of consumption" and "administrators of the wage," while conducting a ceaseless struggle to maintain the family's standard of living. In this role, the doctrine appealed to them no less than it did to the male breadwinners who headed such households. The doctrine further affected them, as Humphries suggests, by sharpening their awareness of workplace issues - a matter of no small significance given their important role in socializing the young. In short, the living wage doctrine affected women as workers and housewives in ways that go far beyond the manner in which it limited their lives. And any further study of the subject should employ a conceptual framework broad enough to show how women actively engaged the doctrine as well as how it reinforced cultural sanctions restrictive their activities.<sup>2</sup>

Another question left unexplored in the present work concerns what happened to the culture of Catholic trade unionist respectability after 1920. Its development during the previous half-century revealed that it was no static formation. There is no reason to believe that it became so thereafter, especially given the tumult engendered by the Great Depression. How they

did it evolve in subsequent years?

One starting point for such an investigation is Pius XI's encyclical, Quadragesimo Anno, which he issued in 1931 to commemorate the fortieth anniversary of Rerum Novarum. The Pope began by stressing the interdependence of capital and labor and condemning both socialism and the "liberalistic tenets of the so-called Manchester School." In a discussion of wages, he not only endorsed the family living wage, but went even further by suggesting that the wage contract be so modified that workers would share "in the ownership, or the management, or the profits." He also recommended the establishment of "vocational groups," organizations that would bring together capital and labor in a given industry. Pius was vague as to how the groups would function and how power would be divided between the managers, owners, and workers who would comprise them, but he clearly intended that workers be accorded some measure of managerial authority.<sup>3</sup>

For American Catholic spokesmen the idea was not entirely new. As early as 1914, in his debate with Morris Hillquit, Father John Ryan had asserted that he looked forward to "the direct ownership of the greater

part of the instruments of production by the workers themselves by such methods as copartnership schemes and cooperative societies." Ryan later incorporated the proposal in his draft of the Bishops' Program of Social Reconstruction, and in 1923 he criticized Samuel Gompers' call for an Economic Congress because it contained nothing "so specific as the Pastoral Letter's further recommendation that the workers gradually should obtain 'a larger share in the ownership of the land upon which, and the tools with which, they labor.'" After the publication of Quadragesimo Anno, numerous other Catholic leaders joined Ryan in asking that workers be given a greater measure of control over their work lives.<sup>4</sup>

Among the Catholic labor leaders who took up the call for a greater measure of workers' control in industrial policy making were John Brophy and Philip Murray, both of whom admitted to being influenced by the labor encyclicals. The wartime demand by Murray and other union bosses that industrial councils be established carried over into the postwar period, as unions sought to shape decisions on personnel matters, job content, and other production issues. One CIO official remarked

that unions "must be conceded the right to bargain respecting all functions of management." But, as David Brody has written, "That day has not come." Capital staunchly resisted all union efforts to encroach upon managerial prerogatives and developed a strategy that involved giving labor regular wage increases instead. "Give the unions the money," said one General Motors executive, "the least possible, but give them what it takes. But don't let them take the business away from us." In Brody's words, it "proved to be an irresistible formula." Organized labor shelved attempts to secure greater power and authority in American industry and traded control for cash.<sup>5</sup>

The subsequent evolution of a Catholic working class culture could not escape being influenced by these events. The increasing popularity of worker control schemes among Catholic spokesmen and labor leaders insured as much. And any study of the matter must attempt to determine the degree to which Catholic workers embraced such proposals. Even more intriguing are the ways in which the manipulation of different elements of the developing culture may have reinforced tendencies that resulted in the postwar wage compromise.

Catholic spokesmen never saw any conflict between the family living wage and worker copartnership schemes. In the case of John Ryan, worker control was a logical extension of the living wage demand: both supported man's natural right to full personal development. Yet Catholic spokesmen also viewed worker control plans as a means of mitigating class struggle. When it became apparent that such proposals promised to intensify rather than diminish class conflict, Catholic leaders seem to have silently acceded to capital's dissociation of the two demands. The most important questions on the matter again involve the rank and file. Did they also accept the dissociation? Did the ostensible attainment of a family living wage pacify them? Or had worker control issues become so deeply ingrained in the culture that many felt betrayed by the wage compromise? These are important questions and should concern not only historians, but all who believe that workers must play a fundamental role in social change.

NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Leslie Woodcock Tentler, Wage-Earning Women: Industrial Work and Family Life in the United States, 1900-1930 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979); Susan Porter Benson, "The Customers Ain't God: The Work Culture of Department-Store Saleswomen, 1890-1940," in Michael Frisch and Daniel J. Walkowitz, eds., Working-Class America: Essays on Labor, Community, and American Society (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1983), 185-211.

<sup>2</sup>Jane Humphries, "Class Struggle and the Persistence of the Working-Class Family," Cambridge Journal of Economics, I (Sep. 1977), 255-256.

<sup>3</sup>A translation of Quadragesimo Anno is reprinted in Oswald von Nell-Breuning, S.J., Reorganization of Social Economy: The Social Encyclical Developed and Explained (New York: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1936), 395-442.

<sup>4</sup>Morris Hillquit and John Ryan, Socialism: Promise or Menace? (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1917), 46; John Ryan, The Church and Socialism and Other Essays (Washington: The University Press, 1919), 21-22, 41; Catholic Mirror, IV, 2 (Dec. 1923), 19; Patrick W. Gearty, The Economic Thought of Monsignor John A. Ryan (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 1953), 287-294; Neil Betten, Catholic Activism and the Industrial Worker (Gainesville: University Presses of Florida, 1976), 74, 78, 85-85. The Bishops' Program of Social Reconstruction is reprinted in Aaron Abel, ed., American Catholic Thought on Social Questions (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1968), 325-348.

<sup>5</sup>Betten, Catholic Activism, 113-115; David Brody, Workers in Industrial America: Essays on the 20th Century Struggle (New York: Oxford University Press paperback edition, 1980), 175-189.

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## APPENDIX ONE

Listed below are the names and positions of the thirty five manufacturers examined in chapter two, and the sources employed to construct the profiles. The following abbreviations have been used both here and in appendix two:

BRHC - Biographical Review of the Leading Citizens of Hampden County, Massachusetts  
En of Ma - Encyclopedia of Massachusetts  
HPL Scpbk - Holyoke Public Library Scrapbook  
HPL LF - Holyoke Public Library Local File  
HT - Holyoke Transcript

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Sources</u>
Julius F Appleton	President, Riverside Paper Company	HPL Scpbk 21:53
Henry J. Beebe	Treasurer, Beebe and Webber (Woolen) Company	<u>BRHC</u> , 828-830
Jared Beebe	President, Farr Alpaca Company	<u>BRHC</u> , 828-830
George A. Clark	Treasurer, Newton Paper Company	HPL Scpbk 20:88
Chauncey L. Covell	President, Massasoit Paper Co.	<u>BRHC</u> , 412-413
Daniel P. Crocker	Treasurer, Crocker (paper) Manufacturing Company	HPL Scpbk 3:8
Jones S. Davis	Agent, Lyman Mills	HPL Scpbk 4:73

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Sources</u>
George R. Dickinson	President, George R. Dickinson Paper Co.	BRHC, <u>16-17</u>
Herbert M. Farr	Treasurer, Farr Alpaca Company	HPL Scpbk 18:52
Orrick F. Greenleaf	President, Holyoke Paper Company	HPL Scpbk 1:11-12
William J. Grover	Agent, Hadley Thread Company	HT, 28 Jun. <u>1889</u>
C.H. Heywood	Treasurer, Holyoke Paper Company	HPL Scpbk 1:4-5
Charles C. Jenks	President, Whiting Paper Company	<u>En of Ma,</u> 2:41
John S. McElwaine	Treasurer, Valley Paper Company	HPL Scpbk 4:85
Donald MacKintosh	President, D. MacKintosh and Sons (dyers)	BRHC, 494- <u>497</u> ; HPL Scpbk 20:50
John G. MacKintosh	Treasurer, D. MacKintosh and Sons (dyers)	<u>En of Ma,</u> 2:12-25
Timothy Merrick	Treasurer, Merrick Thread Company	HPL Scpbk <u>16:16</u>
Joseph Metcalf	Treasurer, Farr Alpaca Company	<u>En. of Ma,</u> 1:337-338
Daniel H. Newton	President, Massachusetts Screw Company	HPL Scpbk <u>25:65-66</u>
James H. Newton	President, Franklin Paper Company	HPL LF

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Sources</u>
John C. Newton	Vice-President, Chemical Paper Company	HPL Scpbk 17:558-559
Moses Newton	President, Newton Paper Company	HPL Scpbk 28:57
Joseph C. Parsons	Treasurer, Parsons Paper Company	<u>BRHC</u> , 359-360
George W. Prentiss	Treasurer, George W. Prentiss and Company (wire manufacturing)	<u>BRHC</u> , 422-425
James Ramage	President, Chemical Paper Company	HPL LF
John Ramage	Vice-President, Franklin Paper Company	HPL Scpbk 22:49
Edward C. Rogers	Treasurer, Massasoit Paper Company	<u>BRHC</u> , 62-66
Robert H. Seymour	Treasurer, Henry Seymour Cutlery Company	HPL Scpbk 17:190
William Skinner	President, William Skinner (silk) Manufac- turing Company	HPL Scpbk 20:16-17
William E. Syms	Treasurer, Syms and Dud- ley Paper Company	HPL LF
Edward C. Taft	Treasurer, Albion Paper	<u>BRHC</u> , 360
Joel S. Webber	President, Beebe and Webber (Woolen) Company	<u>BRHC</u> , 618- 619
William Whiting	Treasurer, Whiting Paper Company	<u>BRHC</u> , 252- 253
Nathan F. Whitten	President, Holyoke Machine Company	<u>BRHC</u> , 427- 428
Warren H. Wilkinson	Treasurer, Springfield Blanket Company	<u>BRHC</u> , 133- 134

## APPENDIX TWO

Listed below are the names and positions of members of the Holyoke middle class examined in chapter two, and the sources employed to construct the profiles.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Sources</u>
Anderson Allyn	Realtor; Co-proprietor, meat market; Vice-President, Holyoke Savings Bank	FPL IF
James F. Allyn	Realtor; Co-proprietor, meat market; Director, Holyoke National Bank	HPF LF; HPL Scpbk 1:4
Lewis P. Bosworth	Proprietor, L.P. Bosworth (brickyard)	HT, 28 Sep. 1881
Edwin Chase	Proprietor, E. Chase and Sons (lumber)	HT, 30 Sep. 1882
Henry A. Chase	Co-proprietor, E. Chase and Sons (lumber)	BRHC, 520-521
Roswell P. Crafts	Landlord; Vice-President Mechanics Savings Bank	BRHC, 613-617
E.F. Flagg	Co-proprietor, Wiggin and Flagg (lumber) Co.	HT, 21 Apr. 1875
Allen Wigginbotham	Merchant; Property Manager	BRFC, 249-250
Dwight F. Ives	Realtor; Director, Holyoke National Bank	BRFC, 301-302

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Sources</u>
Robert B. Johnson	Treasurer, Holyoke Savings Bank; President Holyoke National Bank	HPL Scpbk 47:126; 17:524, 635
William S. Loomis	Realtor; Treasurer, Holyoke Street Railway Company; Vice-President, Holyoke Savings Bank	HPL Scpbk 2:114; 26:93, 96
Philander Moore	Grocer; Director, Hadley Falls National Bank	<u>En of Ma</u> , 1:6-7
Rufus Mosher	Realtor	HPL Scpbk 1:5-6
William Nash	Wholesale butcher; Director, Holyoke National Bank	HPL Scpbk 17:101
Levi D. Perkins	Wholesale butcher; Director, Holyoke National Bank	<u>HT</u> , 16 Dec. 1895
William S. Perkins	Realtor; Director, Holyoke National Bank	<u>BRHC</u> , 299-300
E.J. Pomeroy	Grocer	HPL Scpbk 16:67
Charles B. Prescott	Treasurer, Mechanics Savings Bank; Postmaster	HPL LF
Charles W. Ranlet	President, Hadley Falls National Bank	HPL LF
Lemuel Sears	Produce dealer; Director City National Bank	<u>En of Ma</u> , 1:32-33
Austin I. Shumway	Dry goods dealer	HPL Scpbk 18:93
Whiting Street	Merchant	<u>HT</u> , 3 Aug. 1878

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Sources</u>
Luther A. Taber	Jeweler	HPL Scpbk 22:6
John Tilley	Furniture dealer	HPL LF
Marcienne E. Whitcomb	Landlord	<u>BRHC</u> , 841-842

Catholic Middle Class

David F. Coghlan	Proprietor, Coghlan's Steam Boiler Works	<u>HT</u> , 28 Apr. 1891
John Delaney	Contractor	HPL LF
John Dillon	Realtor; Liquor	<u>En. Ma</u> , 1: 43-45
Maurice Lynch	Contractor	HPL Scpbk 20:6-7
Daniel O'Connell	Contractor	<u>En of Ma</u> , 1:145-146



