

(Free) The Town Labourer 1760- 1832 - THE NEW CIVILIZATION

## The Town Labourer 1760- 1832 - THE NEW CIVILIZATION

*J.L. Hammond, B Hammond*

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**J.L. Hammond, B Hammond : The Town Labourer 1760- 1832 - THE NEW CIVILIZATION** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Town Labourer 1760- 1832 - THE NEW CIVILIZATION:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Life for workers at the height of the Industrial RevolutionBy Dr. H. A. JonesThough this book was written during WWI, it was thought worthwhile republishing at the end of the 20th century. Its message could hardly be timelier when the `mistakes and troubles of the age are seen to be due to a false spirit', to paraphrase the authors. The book recaptures in very human terms the ethos of the Industrial Revolution that ushered in the Age of Materialism. These social changes did not create the proletariat or capitalism but they completed their evolution, say the authors.The poor working conditions of those employed during the huge economic expansion in Britain that we describe as the Industrial Revolution are quite well-known. Just how appalling it was for the men, and even more so for the women and children, employed in mine and mill is brought home vividly in this book by the Hammonds. It is quite startling to be made aware of how little monitoring, concern or control over social conditions was expressed by central government or Parliament: most factors were in the hands of local, and usually self-interested, administrators. The people were not so much citizens of a particular town but rather `hands of this or that master'. . . `The great cities of the North of England, which at one time . . . had provided artists, players, minstrels, great pageants and guild festivals, represented now the meanest and barest standards of life.' In the mid-19th century, in the matter of education of the masses, `England was far behind the rest of the civilised world' - a state to which, sadly, we seem to have returned at the beginning of the 21st century. Many of these unhealthy and soul-destroying conditions continued until the end of the 19th century. Our ancestors paid a heavy price for the comfort and

convenience of our lives today. When much of humankind is beginning to realise the problems we have caused ourselves by excessive materialism and is starting to explore the spiritual dimension of their lives, moving out of the 'rat-race' of commerce in the big city to find some peace and tranquillity in what is left of our countryside, the underlying message of this book could not be more appropriate. Many of the players in this drama are well-known figures - Thomas Paine, Thomas Malthus, David Ricardo, Bishop George Berkeley, and so on, but very many more were unfamiliar to me, and the Internet was not a great deal of help. They were probably well-known at the beginning of the 20th century but have since slipped into obscurity. Knowing something of the writings of these reformers would make the message of this book more potent. Still, this is one of the most engaging and detailed, though disturbing, accounts I have read of the times. The period under discussion is that of the American Revolution and the abolition of slavery - though these workers were little better off than slaves. I would recommend this book as essential reading for anyone exploring the social history, especially in Northern England, during the late 18th and early 19th centuries. *The Village Labourer, 1760-1832*