

Author	Date	Description of Cities and Factories

Document A "The Cotton Mill", John Jones, 1821

Now see the Cotton from the town convey'd  
 To Manchester, that glorious mart of trade:  
 Hail splendid scene! The Nurse of every art,  
 That glads the widow's and the orphan's heart!  
 Thy mills, like gorgeous palaces, arise,  
 And lift their useful turrets to the skies!  
 See Kennedy's stupendous structure join'd  
 To thine M'Connell--friends of human kind!  
 Whose ready doors for ever wide expand  
 To give employment to a numerous band,  
 Murray's behold! That well deserves a name,--  
 And Lee's and Houldsworth's our attention claim,--  
 And numerous others, scattered up and down,  
 The sole supporters of this ample town.

Document B "The Factory Town", Ernest Jones, 1847

The night had sunk along the city,  
It was a bleak and cheerless hour;  
The wild winds sang their solemn ditty  
To cold grey wall and blackened tower.

The factories gave forth lurid fires  
From pent-up hells within their breast;  
E'en Etna's burning wrath expires,  
But man's volcanoes never rest.

Women, children, men were toiling,  
Locked in dungeons close and black,  
Life's fast-failing thread uncoiling  
Round the wheel, the modern rack!

E'en the very stars seemed troubled  
With the mingled fume and roar;  
The city like a cauldron bubbled,  
With its poison boiling o'er.

For the reeking walls environ  
Mingled groups of death and life:  
Fellow-workmen, flesh and iron,

Side by side in deadly strife.

There, amid the wheels' dull droning  
And the heavy, choking air,  
Strength's repining, labour's groaning,  
And the throttling of despair...

Stood the half-naked infants shivering  
With heart-frost amid the heat;  
Manhood's shrunken sinews quivering  
To the engine's horrid beat!...

Yet their lord bids proudly wander  
Stranger eyes thro' factory scenes;  
'Here are men, and engines yonder'.  
'I see nothing but the machines!'...

Thinner wanes the rural village,  
Smokier lies the fallow plain--  
Shrinks the cornfields' pleasant tillage,  
Fades the orchard's rich domain;

And a banished population  
Festers in the fetid street:--  
Give us, God, to save our nation,

Less of cotton, more of wheat.

Take us back to lea and wild wood,

Back to nature and to Thee!

To the child restore the childhood--

To the man his dignity.

Document C excerpt from THE LIFE AND ADVENTURES OF MICHAEL ARMSTRONG, THE FACTORY BOY, Francis Trollope, 1840

The party entered the building...The ceaseless whirring of a million hissing wheels seizes on the tortured ear; and while threatening to destroy the delicate sense, seems bent on proving first, with a sort of mocking mercy, of how much suffering it can be the cause. The scents that reek around, from oil, tainted water, and human filth, with that last worst nausea, arising from the host refuse of atmospheric air, left by some hundred pairs of labouring lungs, render the act of breathing a process of difficulty, disgust and pain. But what the eye brings home to the heart of those, who look round upon the horrid earthly hell, is enough to make it all forgotten; for who can think of villainous smells, or heed the suffering of the ear-racking sounds, while they look upon

hundreds of helpless children, divested of every trace of health, of joyousness, and even of youth! Assuredly there is no exaggeration in this: for except only in their diminutive size, these suffering infants have no trace of it. Lean and distorted limbs--sallow and sunken cheeks--dim hollow eyes, that speak unrest and most unnatural carefulness, give to each tiny trembling, unelastic form, a look of hideous premature old age.

Document D "Notes of a Tour in the Manufacturing Districts of Lancashire", W.C. Taylor, 1842

How a painter would have enjoyed the sight which broke upon my waking eyes this morning!...The valley is studded with factories and bleach-works. Thank God, smoke is rising from the lofty chimneys of most of them! For I have not traveled thus far without learning that the absence of smoke from the factory-chimney indicates the quenching of the fire on many a domestic hearth, want of employment to many a willing labourer, and want of bread to many

an honest family. The smoke too creates no nuisance here--the chimneys are too far apart; and it produces variations in the atmosphere and sky which, to me at least, have a pleasing and picturesque effect.

I visited the interior of Mr. Ashworth's Turton Mill, which does not differ materially from that of many other well-regulated mills which I have visited. I was pleased to find that great care had been bestowed upon the 'boxing up' of dangerous machinery. I learned that accidents were very rare, and that, when they did occur, they were the result of the grossest negligence or of absolute willfulness. I mention this circumstance because the burst of sentimental sympathy for the condition of the factory-operatives which, a few years ago, frightened the isle from its propriety, appealed largely to the number of accidents which happened from machinery, and I was myself for a time fool enough to believe that mills were places in which young children were, by some inexplicable process, ground--bones, flesh, and blood together--into yarn and printed calicoes. I remember very well when first I visited a cotton-mill feeling something like disappointment at not discovering the hoppers into which the infants were thrown.

The conditions in the mill are exceedingly favourable. The working rooms are lofty, spacious, and well ventilated, kept at an equable temperature, and scrupulously clean. There is nothing in sight, sound, or smell to offend the most fastidious sense. I should be very well contented to have as large a proportion of room and air in my own study as a cotton-spinner in any of the mills of Lancashire. The toil is not very great, nor is it incessant. The heaviest part of the labour is executed by the steam-engine or water-wheel; and there are so many intervals of rest, that I am under the mark when I assert that an operative in a cotton-factory is at rest one minute out of every three during the period of his nominal employment.

Document E excerpt from "The Excursion", William Wordsworth, 1814

Meanwhile, at social Industry's command  
How quick, how vast an increase. From the germ  
Of some poor hamlet, rapidly produced  
Here a huge town, continuous and compact  
Hiding the face of earth for leagues--and there,

Where not a habitation stood before,  
Abodes of men irregularly massed  
Like trees in forests,-spread through spacious tracts.  
O'er which the smoke of unremitting fires  
Hangs permanent, and plentiful as wreaths  
Of vapour glittering in the morning sun.  
And, wheresoe'er the traveler turns his steps  
He sees the barren wilderness erased,  
Or disappearing; triumph that proclaims  
How much the mild Directress of the plough  
Owes to alliance with these new-born arts!  
-Hence is the wide sea peopled,-hence the shores  
Of Britain are resorted to by ships  
Freighted from every climate of the world  
With the world's choicest produce. Hence that sum  
Of keels that rest within her crowded ports  
Or ride at anchor in her sounds and bays;  
That animating spectacle of sails  
That, through her inland regions, to and fro  
Pass with the respirations of the tide,  
Perpetual, multitudinous!...  
...I grieve, when on the darker side  
Of this great change I look; and there behold  
Such outrage done to nature as compels  
The indignant power to justify herself;

Yea, to avenge her violated rights.

For England's bane.

Document F "And Did Those Feet In Ancient Time", William Blake, 1808

And did those feet in ancient time

Walk upon England's mountains green?

And was the Holy Lamb of God

On England's pleasant pastures seen?

And did the Countenance Divine

Shine forth upon our clouded hills?

And was Jerusalem builded here

Among these dark Satanic mills?

Bring me my bow of burning gold:

Bring me my arrows of desire:

Bring me my spear: O clouds unfold!

Bring me my chariot of fire.

I will not cease from mental fight,

Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand

Till we have built Jerusalem

In England's green and pleasant land.