

Impact of Capitalist Development

General Ludd's Triumph

This song was sung by British weavers (Thompson, 1963) called "Luddites" as they destroyed new textile machinery at the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th centuries. They rose in scattered rebellion against industrial progress that had undermined their skills and standard of living.

The guilty may fear but no vengeance he aims At the honest man's life or Estate, His wrath is entirely confined to wide frames And to those that old prices abate. These Engines of mischief were sentenced to die By unanimous vote of the Trade And Ludd who can all opposition defy Was the Grand Executioner made (534).	Then the Trade when this arduous contest is o'er Shall raise in full splendor its head, And colting and cutting and squaring no more hall deprive honest workmen of bread. Chants no more your old rhymes about bold Robin Hood, His feats I but little admire. I will sing the Achievements of General Ludd, Now the Hero of Nottinghamshire (547).
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Hard Times (1854) by Charles Dickens

In *Hard Times* (1854), English novelist Charles Dickens introduces us to Thomas Gradgrind, an industrialist and the headmaster of a school where the goal is to take "little pitchers" and fill them "full of facts." Gradgrind's school is in an English mill town during the industrial revolution of the mid-1800s and his students are destined to become cogs in the machinery of the new society. In the second chapter, titled "Murdering the Innocents," he demonstrates his scientific method of teaching to a new instructor, Mr. M'Choakumchild.

"'Girl number twenty,' said Mr. Gradgrind, squarely pointing with his square forefinger, 'I don't know that girl. Who is that girl?'"

'Sissy Jupe, sir' explained number twenty, blushing, standing up, and curtsying.

'Sissy is not a name,' said Mr. Gradgrind. 'Don't call yourself Sissy. Call yourself Cecilia.'

'It's father as calls me Sissy, sir,' returned the young girl in a trembling voice, and with another curtsy.

'Then he has no business to do it,' said Mr. Gradgrind. 'Tell him he mustn't. Cecilia Jupe. Let me see. What is your father?'"

'He belongs to the horse-riding, if you please, sir.'

Mr. Gradgrind frowned, and waved off the objectionable calling with his hand.

'We don't want to know anything about that, here. You mustn't tell us about that, here. Your father breaks horses, don't he?'"

'If you please, sir, when they can get any to break, they do break horses in the ring, sir.'

'You mustn't tell us about the ring, here. Very well, then. Describe your father as a horsebreaker. He doctors sick horses, I dare say?'"

'Oh yes, sir.'

'Very well, then. He is a veterinary surgeon, a farrier and horsebreaker. Give me your definition of a horse.'

(Sissy Jupe thrown into the greatest alarm by this demand.)

'Girl number twenty unable to define horse!' said Mr. Gradgrind, for the general behoof of all the little pitchers. 'Girl number twenty possessed of no facts, in reference to one of the commonest of animals! Some boy's definition of a horse. Bitzer, yours.'"

Later in the chapter, we learn that Mr. M'Choakumchild, "and some one hundred and forty other schoolmasters, had been lately turned at the same time, in the same factory, on the same principles, like so many pianoforte legs. He had been put through an immense variety of paces, and had answered volumes of headbreaking questions." Dickens wearily suggests that "(If he had only learnt a little less, how infinitely better he might have taught much more!"