For the public good: Henry Cole, his circle and the development of the South Kensington estate.

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by

Ann Cooper BA (Hons), ALA, FRSA

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The Open University
Walton Hall
Milton Keynes

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Abstract.

The career of Henry Cole, a distinguished Victorian civil servant, is traced from 1823 to 1873. The utilitarian programme which he followed and the circle of friends, colleagues and acquaintances with whom he worked are explored through scrutiny of the major events and institutions with which he became involved. As a young man Cole became a minor member of the group of young radicals centred on John Stuart Mill. Cole held to his utilitarian ideals throughout his long career during which he initiated the reform of the Record Commission, made significant contributions to the success of the Great Exhibition, engineered the restructuring of the Schools of Design and the expansion of the Department of Science and Art, promoted the exhibitions of 1862 and 1871-4 and was the man chiefly responsible for the creation of the museums area of South Kensington.
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Abbreviations

DNB Dictionary of National Biography
ILN Illustrated London News
JSA Journal of the Society of Arts
PRO Public Record Office
Windsor Archives The archive material of the Royal Commission for the Exhibition of 1851, including material transferred from the Windsor archives, located with the archives of Imperial College.
In investigating any of the nineteenth century schemes with which Henry Cole became involved it is all too easy to drown in the wealth of primary material available. Cole did not throw away documentation. At the Victoria and Albert Museum in the National Art Library we have Cole's correspondence, his diaries, the pamphlets and memoranda which he had had printed, and his collection of press cuttings about himself and his interests. At the Science Museum Library is Cole's collection of printed information in connection with the exhibitions held at South Kensington (volumes transferred when the South Kensington Museum Library was split into its arts and science collections).

Other important archives contain much of relevance to the story of Cole and the development of the South Kensington estate. In the Imperial College archives are now housed the Windsor Archives relevant to the Commissioners for the Exhibition of 1851, the Commissioners' office now being at the College and their own archives accessible at the same location. The Public Record Office has the files of the Department of Science and Art, the Department of Practical Art, and relevant Treasury and Home Office files as well as a collection of papers and correspondence relating to Lord Granville, an important member of the Cole circle. At the Society of Arts are the minutes of their meetings which were so often controlled by Cole during his long membership of that Society, and similar records at the Royal Horticultural Society also contain much which relates to the activities of Henry Cole. The Department of Palaeogeography and Diplomatic at the University of Durham holds the papers of General Charles Grey, who became an important ally of Cole after the death of the Prince Consort.
Cole's publications include pamphlets on historic buildings and on the railway network. He published a series of children's books. He edited a number of journals, including the Railway Chronicle, and sometimes started his own — for example the Journal of Design. He collected his own papers carefully so that when, as Director of the South Kensington Museum, he created what has become the National Art Library, he could add his own papers to that collection.

Cole was sure, from an early date in his civil service career, that what he was doing was of national importance. He kept excellent records with posterity in mind. His diaries are a record of his activities which he characterised as "public work". Personal details are few and largely confined to noting his leisure-time visits and walks, his dinner dates, outings to the theatre and to church. He also mentions time spent with his children, and titles of books he is reading. Cole's diaries tell us little about his relationships\(^1\). There is very little in them which Cole would not want the public to know. When after his retirement he began work on an autobiography he was able to use the diaries as a major resource; entries which he thought important are underlined, almost certainly by Cole himself whilst working on the autobiography.

The autobiography was incomplete at the time of his death and was completed by two of his children. The two volume work was published as Fifty years of the public work of Sir Henry Cole, K.C.B. These volumes

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1. For instance the fact that his marriage is imminent is clear from his checking on the banns having been read, but it is not completely clear who he is marrying, his diary referring to meetings with a number of young women right up to the date (28th December 1833) when he records "married at St Martins church". His new wife was his cousin Marion Bond, whom he had married in secret; she went back after only two days to her post as a governess and did not come to live with Cole until several months later.
are excellent source material for study of the nineteenth century projects with which Cole was concerned. The narrative of the biography is heavily loaded with extensive quotations from original documents which Cole had at his disposal in the library at South Kensington. Those parts of the biography which Cole wrote are full of anecdotes which illustrate Cole's self-importance and his recollection in later life of the admiration and respect which he had earned through his hard endeavours. The part of the biography which was completed after his death by his children Alan and Henrietta, using the notes which Cole had prepared, is much more stilted and careful, and respectful of their father's memory. The biography is an excellent guide to Cole's view at the end of his life of the various projects with which he had been involved. It also acts as a point of entry to the diary, correspondence and "miscellanies" (press cuttings, reports and printed memoranda) in the National Art Library at South Kensington.

All of these sources and more have been consulted to piece together the details of the involvement of Cole, an inner circle of close allies and an outer circle of useful contacts in pursuing what can be retrospectively identified as two separate but related long-term aims. The first and broader goal was to encourage British "arts, manufactures and commerce". As time progressed a second more concrete aim became apparent - the creation at South Kensington of an international centre which would support these same ends through education, museums and exhibitions.

With the wealth of material which is available it is surprising that no full-scale biography of Cole has been published. Elizabeth Bonython has produced an illustrated booklet on Cole for the Victoria and Albert Museum, which describes Cole's interests, identifies members of his
circle and points to his achievements. However, because Cole was involved in so many spheres, much about his life can be discovered by the diligent reader in other biographies and histories. Cole is referred to, often quite briefly, in histories of art, education and the civil service as well as in histories of the Public Record Office, the Society of Arts, the Royal Horticultural Society and of the various institutions at South Kensington. The focus of this thesis is, by contrast, Cole himself, exploring the ways in which this man of exceptional ability participated in and influenced many aspects of the cultural and public life of Victorian England.

That a civil servant of humble origins could become a very influential member of mid-nineteenth century London society provides an illuminating case study of both the changing structure of that society and the "progress" of one individual. Cole's career as a civil servant, the development of the organisations with which he was involved and the network of contacts with whom he was able to work provide evidence of these changes and illustrate the social, intellectual and institutional processes which were involved. Cole's civil service career spans a period of revolutionary change in the structure, management and size of the civil service. At the beginning of his career Cole worked within a system dominated by patronage and infected with jobbery; opportunities were few and were most often offered according to the connections rather than the abilities of the candidates. The mid-century reforms of the civil service coincided with the highpoint of Cole's career when he attained a position of considerable influence within a service which was rapidly growing. Cole was one of the few senior civil servants who favoured the changes; the civil service from which Cole retired was a very different body from that which had permitted Cole to achieve so many of his ambitions.
MacDonagh's description (1977; 197-213) of the processes leading to reform of the civil service serve to highlight the exceptional qualities of Cole. MacDonagh points to the inefficiency, lack of ability and lack of vision of the vast majority of civil servants employed under the patronage system. Those who were effective were most often men who came into the higher levels of government employment from outside and with professional qualifications. The (joint) author of the major report on the civil service in 1853, Trevelyan, and Cole's friend the public health reformer Edwin Chadwick are identified by MacDonagh as prime examples of this type. By contrast Cole entered the service as a very lowly clerk and, despite the system, progressed to the highest level because of his exceptional ability. It is almost certainly significant that Cole's ally and political master Lord Granville, who had given Cole his greatest opportunity in the establishment of the Department of Practical Art only a year earlier, was one of the six "Peelites" who voted in January of 1854 in favour of the introduction of an examination system for civil service candidates (ibid.; 207).

This thesis will show that Cole's power base derived from his ability to operate over a wide sphere, manipulating both organisations and individuals. Cole consciously developed an extensive informal network of colleagues and acquaintances, and drew from this pool the individuals who would be most effective to assist him in whatever project was in hand. Individuals who became part of the Cole circle are listed, with short biographical details, in Appendix 1. Cole also made use of formal networks which, as Mark Godwin has suggested (Goodwin, 1990; 17), might be seen as the "quangos" of his day. One such was the Society for the Promotion of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce which Goodwin identifies as a quango for the visual arts, another was the Department of Science and Art, which Cole controlled and which in Cole's time was rather loosely
supervised by the government.

Cole's early life is briefly described by Elizabeth Bonython (1982; 2-3). Cole was born in 1808, into a family which was neither rich nor aristocratic. He was the son of an army officer who had been wounded in riots in Dublin in 1801 and had subsequently become a recruiting officer. When the family settled in Chelsea young Henry was sent to Christ's Hospital School where the family held the right to send their sons because of the bequest of a more wealthy ancestor. On leaving school in 1823 at the age of fifteen Cole needed to earn his living and, perhaps because of the silver medal which he had won for handwriting, obtained employment as a clerk working for Sir Francis Palgrave at the Record Commission where he transcribed and indexed medieval records.

Cole had a lively mind and as a young man he developed friendships with other young men in similar employment. These friends included some who would become important reformers of utilitarian persuasion. Cole entered this circle in 1826, at the age of 18, when he moved into the home of the writer Thomas Love Peacock, whose son worked with Cole at the Record Commission. Cole enjoyed lectures, theatre, music and art as well as "improving" pastimes such as attending John Stuart Mill's London Debating Society and taking lessons in French (Cole Diary; 27th April 1823). When Cole visited the British Museum for the first time in November of 1823 he was so impressed that he returned three times in the following four days (Cole Diary; 24-28 November 1823).

Cole's group of friends often went for long walks together on Sundays "passing the whole day as agreeably as possible in walking, talking and

2. This will be my convention for referring to the Cole diaries. The complete reference is quoted at the end of this chapter.
glee" (Cole Diary; 1st April 1832). The talking may have been serious philosophical radicalism; the source of the "glee" in Mill's circle was almost certainly Charles Buller\(^3\), whose talent as a humourist is well documented by his biographer (Haury, 1987; 31-36). Cole was not an important member of the group of young people who came to be known as the Philosophical Radicals\(^4\). He was certainly quite close in a personal sense, John Stuart Mill at one time lending him money (Mineka, 1963; XIII, letter 414), but was, it seems, not sufficiently regarded to be mentioned in biographies relating to this group\(^5\). That Cole was able to form, and maintain over many years, friendships with these men who were all to become to some degree shapers of mid-Victorian thought is an indication of Cole's own potential. It also reflects the fact that clerkship in the civil service was an occupation which was attractive to intelligent men who needed to earn their living; it became for the most able a route to power. Cole's utilitarian connections and his civil service career are important strands which are followed throughout this investigation of his "public works".

Cole was not a contributor to philosophical radical ideas, but he received them, and he acted on them. Philosophical Radicalism was derived from Benthamism and based on a belief in "the greatest happiness of the greatest number". Human nature, its proponents argued, is such that there will always be conflicts of interest; these, the Mills and

3. Charles Buller MP was to be involved with Cole in the reform of the Record Commission, and later invited Cole (according to Cole) to join him in his work in Canada. Haury (1987) makes no mention of Cole in his analysis of Buller's political career, though he has used Cole's biography as source material.

4. Those who promoted these views in the political sphere are termed the Philosophical Radicals; those who accepted the general ideas of the political party are termed Utilitarians.

their friends believed, should be resolved through the operation of appropriate legal and political systems. This implied that the legal and educational systems should provide opportunities to the whole population, allowing the people to become an intelligent and well informed electorate within a representative democracy.

Alan Ryan [in Sutherland (1972; 33-62)] has suggested that there was a strong current within utilitarianism which put a very high value on skills and methodical administration (ibid.; 42-43). The enthusiastic young men in the younger Mill's circle saw themselves as promoting the greatest happiness of the greatest number by the diligent application of their skills as servants of the state. We shall see in the following chapters how Cole promoted utilitarian aims during his long civil service career. It will also become clear that Cole used the methods which characterised the Philosophical Radicals in pursuing his aims. Finer [in Sutherland (1972; 11-32)] has suggested that three processes might be involved in the translation of the (Benthamite) philosophy into action, namely irradiation, suscitation and permeation. Although Finer's terminology is a little obscure, his analysis is helpful in discussing Cole's methods of work.

Finer describes irradiation as the process by which an individual who supported the utilitarian set of values "infected" his own circle of friends and colleagues with these ideals; Cole was a most accomplished creator and exploiter of networks of useful people. Suscitation is the term Finer attaches to the process whereby the press or public enquiry or both were used to "sell" a scheme to government and the public; Cole promoted two important public enquiries and supported these and other campaigns by a very effective stirring up of press interest – even to the extent of launching his own publications on several occasions.
Permeation describes the process by which the obtaining of a public appointment was used to create a platform from which much could be achieved and yet more individuals could be "infected" and drawn into a network of reformers; Cole manoeuvred himself into a very influential position as the most senior civil servant in a government department which had itself been created to meet a need which Cole had fought to establish. The provision of education was to the utilitarians a means of increasing the happiness of a very great number of the population. Cole's Department sought to provide educational opportunities to a wide range of students across the whole of the country and at as low a cost as possible. The aim was to improve British manufactures and thus to increase the general well-being of the country.

It was through Edwin Chadwick, then a young law student, that Cole met Jeremy Bentham, just a few weeks before Bentham's death (Cole Diary; 6th May 1832). Although the meeting with Bentham was not significant, it is interesting to note that Cole recorded Bentham's death in his diary and the following day notes that "The King's assent was given to the Reform Bill" (Cole Diary; 6th and 7th June 1832). Cole never lost his enthusiasm for reform in its widest sense. In the first few pages of his autobiography Cole declares his view that the Reform Bill of 1832 was essential as the political event which made his own subsequent reforming activity possible. Cole's analysis may be suspect, and his statement is made in the rosy glow of hindsight, but it is interesting for the insight it provides into Cole's attitude to "reform".

In 1882 half a century will have passed since the first great Reform Bill became law, in obedience to a popular demand so stern as to be irresistible, that the worn out fictitious representation of places like Old Sarum and Gatton, which had lost their populations, should be abolished, and that the thousands in Manchester, Birmingham and
other places in the North should be duly represented in Parliament. The Reform Bill led to many other reforms: abolition of religious tests, municipal corporation reform, abolition of slavery, reform of the Poor Laws; and, I venture to say, that the reform of the Public Record system, exposed by Charles Buller, could not have received proper attention before the year 1835; when any powers of action I possessed for public work were first called out (Cole, 1884; Volume 1, p3).

Perhaps not surprisingly in one who achieved so much, Cole's character was somewhat abrasive. Henry Trueman Wood's description of Cole, written some thirty years after his death, is worthy of lengthy quotation:

It may be admitted that Cole had in full measure the defects of his qualities. He liked having his own way, and he generally got it. He disliked opposition, and was ruthless with his opponents. He was a born fighter, and his methods of fighting were often questioned and disliked. Naturally enough, this made him unpopular, while the objects he sought often laid him open to ridicule which is generally the lot of those who first advocate schemes for the accomplishment of which others in a later age are hailed as the benefactors of their kind. However, he cared little for ridicule or for unpopularity, so long as he got what he wanted, as he usually did. His best friends and admirers must wish that he had had greater regard for the feelings of others, and that he had been content to attain his objects without thrusting aside and trampling down those who did not agree with him. But that was not his way, and perhaps gentler methods might have proved less successful. At all events, it is likely that they would have been slower, and of all things, delay was hateful to the impatient soul of Henry Cole (Wood, 1913; 359).

Cole and what I have come to think of as the "South Kensington Mafia" link together the organisations which provided the funding and the influence to make the "great" exhibitions of 1851 and 1862, the series of smaller exhibitions which ran annually from 1871 to 1874 and the
museums complex at South Kensington happen. Many of the Cole circle were also concerned in the furtherance of the educational aims which Cole promoted through the Department of Science and Art. The principal organisations which came under Cole's influence were the royal family, the Society of Arts, the Department of Science and Art (Department of Practical Art), the Commissioners for the Exhibitions of 1851 and 1862, and the Royal Horticultural Society. The principal individuals who assisted Cole were the Prince Consort, Lord Granville and Colonel (later General) Charles Grey. Cole knitted together a wider group of friends, acquaintances and members of Cole's staff in various ways and at various times to achieve these ends.

In order to come to an understanding of the various relationships between people and organisations it has been necessary to look in very close detail at the memberships and activities of various groups and institutions. It is through this fine texture of interactions between the individuals and organisations that the processes of intellectual, social and institutional change are revealed and Cole is exposed as an accomplished manipulator of both people and organisations. The scale of what was achieved is indicative of the effectiveness of this kind of power base in mid-nineteenth century Britain.
References. Chapter 1.


At the beginning of his working life Cole was a very ordinary young clerk. He worked, presumably satisfactorily, for nine years in his first position without making any progress, and there was no reason to expect him to have an exceptionally successful career. His activities out of office hours, however, were those of a young man who wished to better himself, and he had some far from ordinary friends, including, as we have seen, some young and enthusiastic utilitarians.

Cole's first employment when he left school in 1823, was as a clerk to one of the sub-Commissioners of the Record Commission, Sir Francis Palgrave. The Record Commission was a parliamentary commission which had been established early in the nineteenth century to investigate the state of the public records which were housed in various buildings in and around London. From 1832 onwards Cole, no longer content to remain a very lowly clerk, became increasingly unhappy both with his own situation and with the Record Commission.

The official historian of the Public Record Office, John Cantwell, is clear about the importance of the bright, young, radical Cole in bringing about the creation of the Public Record Office:

The received version that the Public Record Office emerged, almost inevitably, from the report of a parliamentary select committee in 1836, fits the notion of the age of reform, but implies a vision and sense of purpose which were almost entirely absent, except in the minds of three or four persons actively engaged in record affairs. Foremost among them was Henry (later Sir Henry) Cole. (Cantwell, 1991; 1).

The ambitious Cole saw much that was wrong in the running of the
Commission, and was not inclined to be entirely philosophical in his radicalism; he wanted to see reform and was prepared to fight to achieve it.

At the time when Cole began to emerge as an agitator for reform the Record Commission had for thirty years had charge of the public records, which they had discovered to be in a very fragile condition. Cole was one of the clerks employed to preserve the more important records by transcribing them. The Commission had made but small impression on the task of identifying what public records existed, the records were held in quite unsuitable accommodation and the public had yet to see any benefit from the not inconsiderable monies which had been voted to the Record Commission.

The event which triggered Cole into action was personal. In 1832 Cole asked Palgrave to increase his salary, and when this was refused Cole accepted a better offer from Thomas Duffus Hardy, who was also able to offer him work with the Record Commission. Cole recorded in his diary that Palgrave "did not half like my leaving him under such circumstances" and that there was a "fracas" between Hardy and Palgrave (Cole Diary; 19th April 1832). These three men, Cole, Palgrave and Hardy, were among the few who Cantwell recognises as having a sense of purpose for the Record Commission. After his unhappy meeting with Palgrave, Cole immediately went to see his friends; "Called on Peacock, Mill and Grant" (Cole Diary; 18th April 1832). These friends were all philosophical radicals, but also clerks, working at India House for the East India Company, and would be sympathetic.

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1. Cole was not directly employed by the Record Commission. The Commissioners received funding from the government, individual commissioners then employed clerks to carry out specific tasks. Cole was employed by Palgrave to carry out work for the Commission.
Cole had to serve out the remainder of his contract with Palgrave. He found the delay irksome. By the end of May 1832 Cole felt that he was "dragging [his] time there on very wearily, having distaste for my employment and conviction of its inutility and in suspense for the termination of the Record turmoil" (Cole Diary; 31st May 1832). The following day Cole recorded in his diary "In the evening engaged in looking over Cooper's [Secretary to the Record Commission] public records". On the 5th June "the chief portion of [Cole's] time was occupied in writing upon the necessity of establishing a General Record Office". In his frustration Cole had begun to think about the malpractices of the Record Commission. He was already a regular contributor to the Examiner, now he decided that the public should be made aware of the situation and that this could be achieved by publishing an article about the Record Commission (Cole Diary; 2nd July 1832).

Cuttings of Cole's contributions to the Examiner are pasted into Volume I of the volumes of "Miscellanies" (Cole's scrapbooks) in the National Art Library at the Victoria and Albert Museum. Most of the earlier contributions in the same volume are reviews of musical performances or exhibitions of paintings. Cole was regularly supplied with tickets to attend on behalf of the Examiner. Two articles which were published at about this time and which are presented in the Miscellanies volume as being penned by Cole refer to the Record Commission. "An account of the most important public records of Great Britain and publications of C P Cooper esq." begins with a statement which no doubt caused much offence.

2. It was not uncommon for civil servants to have other gainful employment. Cole wrote regularly for the Examiner which was a weekly radical paper, with Albany Fonblanque as editor and Edwin Chadwick sub-editor.

3. My convention in referring to this collection will be "Cole Miscellanies".
to Cole's employers: "Let us examine any measure of our Government and we shall find it only a cloak for some abomination". Getting down to the specific abomination which was the Record Commission the article declares:

The main purpose of such an establishment was, if ever perceived by the late inefficient Commission completely lost, as we infer, in the desire of converting the institution into a vehicle for patronage; and this object, to the great cost of the public, was most successfully attained.

The second article, "The Record Job - proposed removal of records from the Kings Mews", is even more specific in its attack:

The best thing to be done with them [the Records] is, undoubtably, to place them under the care of the British Museum, where literary men of all classes should have an opportunity of investigating them gratis, and of copying for the public whatever they find interesting. But what is wanted at present is a distinct establishment and jobs or places for Mr Cooper, Mr Palgrave and other persons. The system of high fees which is now maintained serves at once to fill the pockets of the job-drivers, and to shut out rival investigators.

Cole was highlighting three major aspects of the work of the Commission which he believed to be against the public interest. The first was the lack of organisation and of access - which the British Museum was experienced at providing - the second was the difficulty of access and the system of charges which prevented any but the rich from seeing or obtaining copies, and the third was in the jobbery which existed in the way in which the Commissioners and their secretary were exploiting the records for their personal financial advantage.

In April of 1832 Cooper, as Secretary to the Record Commission, offered
Cole a post as clerk to the Commission, at a salary of £150 (Cole Diary; 17th April 1832). This would have changed Cole's status from being employed indirectly by a sub-commissioner to direct employment by the Commission. It seems that Hardy's offer had been the better one because Cole records on 23rd January 1833 that "Mr Cooper proposed to cut me down to a salary of £150 pr annum for which I was to devote the whole of my time - a proposal which I rejected". Cole had not been spending the whole of his time at the Record Office, and had been able to attend lectures on law and on mathematics as well as writing critical reviews and articles for the Examin. Perhaps Cooper felt that by employing Cole directly the Commission could prevent him from publicising their shortcomings. However, on the 29th January 1833 Cole completed the task he had been working on for Hardy and on the following day Cole records "Called on Cooper to whose proposition that I should be generally retained by the Commission as a clerk of £150 pr annum I was obliged to submit". Cole was not happy, but continuity of employment was evidently of some importance to him.

Cole became more and more concerned about the jobbery which he saw in the activities of the Record Commission. He discussed his worries with John Stuart Mill and sought the help of their friend the MP Charles Buller in obtaining access to the financial records of the Commission. Buller was respected by the utilitarians; Mill thought highly of his ability as a political speaker, and in 1833 believed Buller to be one of only two radical MP's of whom he had hopes (Mineka, 1963; XII, letters 61 and 79). Buller promised Cole that he would ask a question in the House (Cole Diary; 13th August 1833) and on the 15th August 1833 Cole called at the "Vote Office" to collect a copy of the Commissioners' returns. Cooper was apparently rattled by Cole's persistence and his success in getting the facts about the Commission's use of public money; he "tried to bamboozle me with offers of increased salary" (Cole Diary;
16th August 1833).

Cole tells his side of the story in his autobiography (Cole, 1884; Volume 1, 3-19) where he claims that Cooper "displayed extraordinary vanity and boastful ignorance". Cole was constrained by his position as an employee of the Commission, but continued to be an embarrassment, writing letters to the press under pseudonyms and anonymously, and assisting others who were active in bringing the Commission's activities to public notice. Cole was dismissed in November of 1835 and, once relieved of his duties as a civil servant, campaigned openly, with the help of his friends, to reform the Record Commission.

Charles Buller, who had already assisted Cole in getting access to the Commission's financial records in 1833, was the channel through which Cole obtained a public enquiry into the Record Commission. On 18th February 1836 Buller moved that a select committee should be appointed to enquire into the conduct of the Record Commission. Cole records:

The Committee conducted an investigation over a period of five months, and took the evidence of seventy-nine persons. The Chairman, Mr Buller, showed an amount of patience, ability and diligence which raised him at once into political importance, and he drew up a Report, in the compilation of which he sought my assistance, and used to call me the attorney for the prosecution. (Cole, 1884; Volume 1, 11).

John Stuart Mill agreed with Cole's assessment of Buller. In a letter written in January of 1837 (Mineka, 1963; XII, letter 185) Mill states that Buller "rose exceedingly in public estimation last year" and that he was likely to "play a very conspicuous part hereafter in our politics". Unfortunately these expectations were not fully met. Buller went to Canada in 1838 to work on a report on the government of the colony. After his return to England, in 1846 he became Secretary of the
Board of Control under Lord John Russell and in 1847 he became a Poor Law Commissioner. Never of robust health, he died, aged only 42, in 1848. Had he lived he would certainly have been used again by Cole in support of his various campaigns.

Correspondence in the Globe, the Standard, the Times and the Age published between November 1833 and January 1837 was preserved by Cole in the Miscellanies collection (Volume I) and tells the continuing story of the battle to reform the Record Commission. The most revealing of Cole’s importance to the success of the campaign is a letter to the Age published on 1st January 1837. The letter is vindictive in its attack on Cole, the jumped-up clerk who had caused so much trouble:

The first person mentioned in the margin of the report [of the Select Committee] is Mr Cole, who ought to be a gentleman of considerable judgement, ability and weight of character, for the importance of his evidence is such that he is referred to no less than thirty three times, and upon his shoulders is placed a chaudiorn of responsibility by his friend Mr Buller. Mr Cole, the discharged clerk of the Secretary of the Commission is one of the sons of a respectable coal dealer, in what is called a 'small way'. Thou art indeed a black diamond of the first water. We have read your pamphlets, reprinted by and at the expense of, the gentleman you have abused...that your salary was raised to £150...that a stranger...put you in the way of earning, by extra work, for the last four years, and while in his employ £500 per annum...that in consequence of abusing your employer behind his back you were most properly turned out of his employ, and that, stimulated to a lust of revenge, you have turned your pretty talents into the weak channel of vituperation.

Clearly the anonymous author of the letter was angry. A response (not by Cole) published in the same journal the following week accuses Mr Cooper of being the the "author of the libel".
The end of the Record Commission was not a clean cut affair. Cole records the details in his autobiography (Cole, 1884; Volume 1, 14-15):

After the termination of the enquiry into the record Commission, I became busily occupied for several months in bringing before the public the report, and the remedial measures it recommended, so as to prepare parliament for the adoption of them. I wrote many articles on the subject, the principle being one for Fraser's Magazine, another for the Law Magazine (1837, XVII, 80) another in Tait's Magazine, and many other contributions to the Times, Athenæum, and other papers, and thus a public opinion became formed on the subject. The Treasury declined to pay the Parliamentary Vote of 1836 to the Record Commission, and Lord Langdale, the Master of the Rolls, at the request of the Government, became the provisional administrator of its affairs: and so the Commission was virtually superseded. On 20th June 1837 King William IV died. The Record Commission lapsed; was never renewed, and the Secretary went into oblivion.

Cole was responsible for drawing up a bill for the reform of the Record Commission which Buller introduced into the Commons on 24th February 1837. Cole's bill was superseded by the government's own bill which received assent on 14th August 1838. Cantwell suggests that Cole's motivation in drafting the bill was "to improve the administration of justice, especially of poor litigants" (Cantwell, 1991; 5). Cole had certainly been influenced by his young friends the philosophical radicals, and had taken on board their attitudes to the legal system of this country. Lack of access to the public records implied lack of access to information on legal precedence and was therefore a barrier to justice.

On 12th August 1837 Lord Langdale, encouraged by Buller (Cantwell, 4). Langdale was another man approved by John Stuart Mill; three years earlier he had referred to him as "the most valuable man in the profession of the law" (Mineka, 1963; XII, letter 82).
1991; 7) re-employed Cole as an Assistant Keeper at the Exchequer of Pleas. Cole made his views felt with Langdale, who was given control of the Records between the expiration of the old Record Commission in December of 1837 and the establishment of the Record Office following the Act of 1838. The new Office did not make the records as easily and cheaply available as Cole would have wished, but in many ways the new organisation fulfilled the requirements which Cole had been instrumental in setting.

It is perhaps surprising, after Cole's allegations of the jobbery of his superiors, that he very soon arranged that his younger brother Charles should be employed at the Record Office as a clerk, and that shortly afterwards his cousin John Bond was similarly employed (Cantwell, 1991; 49-50).

Cole, with the help of his utilitarian friends, had fought the establishment and had won. Importantly for Cole's future reforming career, he had discovered that he could influence public opinion through the press, and that this was an effective method of bringing a cause to the attention of government. Journalism had proved to be a vehicle for reform and also an activity which could provide an income for Cole and his family during the two years he was without an appointment in government service. Cole learned two lessons which he was to put to good use; firstly he learned that he had the ability to make things happen, and secondly he learned the importance of having the right friends and acquaintances. That Cole valued his Record Office friends is illustrated by the fact that he named two of his children after his

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5. Cole borrowed £100 from John Stuart Mill during this difficult time. Mill was not the only one to support Cole financially. In 1843, in correspondence regarding the repayment of the loan, Mill recalls that he had suggested that Cole should "pay me last" (Mineka, 1963; XIII, letters 414,415)
Cole was part of a growing non-capitalist middle class which was to become very influential indeed. Perkin (1972; 252-256) suggests that what marked these men out was their (relative) freedom from anxiety about money. They were not subject to fears about rises and falls in rent, profits or wages, but could rely on a steady, if not substantial, income. They were "above" the economic battle and could look on as interested spectators. Cole never had the business sense which might have placed him in that section of the middle class which survived by trade and industry. His civil service salary, topped up (and sometimes more than doubled) by income from writing and, later, consultancy fees, allowed him to keep his family in comfort, though they never rose to become part of the carriage-owning classes. To Cole that was not important. What was important was his ability to mix with and to influence those who had power, and to use his own abilities and influence in support of the causes which constituted his "public works."

By the mid 1840s Cole had formed friendships with reformers and utilitarians, with artists and with writers. He had become known as a reformer himself through the Record Office reforms and through his subsequent involvement in the Penny Postage campaign with Rowland Hill (Cole, 1884; Volume 1, 34-69). He had become an experienced journal editor. He was involved with The Guide, a weekly radical newspaper, from 1837 to 1838. In 1840 he briefly took over the London and Westminster Review from John Stuart Mill jointly with William Hickson. Cole gave up his share after in this enterprise after only a few months, because he was impatient that sales of the (renamed) Westminster Review were not encouraging (Wellesley Index, 1979; Volume III, 540-541), though he continued to write articles for Hickson. Another Cole title,
the short-lived *Historical Register*, appeared in 1845.

The relationships which were to be so important in the events leading up to the establishment of what became known as South Kensington began with Cole's introduction in 1845 to the Society of Arts and through that Society to Prince Albert.
References. Chapter 2


Mineka, F. E. (1963) The collected works of John Stuart Mill, Toronto, University of Toronto Press.


Cole was very successful in his use of the Society of Arts as the vehicle which, from the mid 1840s until his death in 1882, was a source of both organisational and individual support for his activities. In this chapter Cole's involvement with the Society will be traced from its beginnings in 1845, revealing the careful building of influence within the Society and the skilful use of this influence in reforming activities across a wide range of issues. Francis Palgrave rightly saw Cole's involvement with the Society of Arts as the beginning of the end of Cole's connection with the Record Office, writing in 1849 to his father-in-law that "I don't expect [Cole] will ever return to this humdrum department. Prince Albert swears by him, as folks say" (quoted by Cantwell, 1991; 123).

Cole's utilitarian agenda had much in common with the aims of the Society. Among its growing and socially diverse membership Cole was able to identify individuals whose influence and abilities could be harnessed and applied to achieve very much more than was possible for an individual working alone.

The Society of Arts was founded in 1754 as the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce. It was very successful for many years, being very active in promoting both fine arts and invention, particularly by the scheme of "premiums" or prizes which were offered on successful completion of projects approved by the Society. By 1845 the Society's influence had become much reduced and its financial situation was unhealthy. Prince Albert had been invited to become a member in 1840 and had been elected President in May of 1843. Albert has been credited with restoring the Society's fortunes.
Henry Trueman Wood, in his history of the Society, suggests that the contribution of the Prince was in the ability which he had to discriminate "with extreme shrewdness" between the suggestions which were presented to him (Wood, 1913; 356).

Albert was certainly active in his support of the Society, but historians have considered Cole to have been perhaps the single most influential member of the Society of Arts. Wood (1913; 353) states that Cole "ought to be looked on as the second founder of the Society", while Hudson and Luckhurst (1954; 182) suggest that Cole "supplied much of the driving force that gave the Society a new importance in the land".

Cole was introduced into the Society of Arts in 1845 by John Scott Russell, described by his biographer as "a great Victorian engineer and naval architect" (Emmerson, 1977; subtitle). In 1844 Russell had left his employment at a shipyard on the Clyde to take up a new post as editor of the Railway Chronicle which was launched on 20th April 1844 by Charles Wentworth Dilke. Russell had been a member of the Royal Scottish Society of Arts and was therefore welcomed into membership of its sister Society in London.

Cole was introduced to Russell by Rowland Hill in August of 1844. Cole had worked with Rowland Hill on secondment to the Treasury from 1838 to 1841. He devised a "plan for circulating petitions, addresses, and communications on the uniform penny postage at the cheapest rate" (Cole, 1884; 39). Another example of "suscitation", this consisted of the publication of the Post Circular, which, being registered as a

1. The first of three generations with the same name, this Charles Wentworth Dilke (1789-1864), referred to by Cole as "old Dilke", was a journalist and critic, editor of the Athenaeum and of the Historical Register.
newspaper, would be delivered by the post office at a uniform penny rate. When the campaign reached its successful conclusion Cole assisted Rowland Hill in obtaining designs for the stamp and bringing the new postal system into operation.

Cole, who as we have seen had become an accomplished journalist, had been involved in the publication of the *Historical Register* which, like the *Railway Chronicle*, was published by Dilke. The *Historical Register* was not a commercial success and ceased publication after only a few months. Almost immediately after this Cole's diary records that he had found an alternative subject upon which he could write and that he had begun work on a "Brighton Railway Manual" (Cole Diary, 27th April 1845). On being introduced to this very experienced journalist, John Scott Russell suggested that Cole might offer articles to the *Railway Chronicle*. There was an enormous potential market for information on the railways. Railway builders, engine builders, passengers and those who needed to move bulky goods, as well as those whose interest was in investment, were potential readers of the *Chronicle*. In 1845 157 MPs had interests in the railways; by 1855 99 railway directors were sitting in the two houses of parliament; in 1846-1848 5-7% of the national income was invested in railways (Mathias, 1983; 259). The railway industry was able to support the publication of a trade journal. An advertisement in the second issue of the *Historical Register* in January of 1845 described the *Railway Chronicle* as "A paper giving an account of every Railway Meeting; every New Line; every Engineering Railway..."

2. Starting publication in January of 1845 the journal was published "with the sanction and assistance of various government departments". It included births, deaths and marriages, appointments to the civil service, health statistics, weather data, and news summaries. Contributors included Cole, S and F Redgrave (brothers of Richard?) and Horsley (this is possibly John Horsley, a Master at the School of Design who on behalf of Cole produced the artwork for the first Christmas card in 1843).
Improvement; every Fluctuation in Price; in fact, everything that can
effect the money value of Railway investments" (Cole Miscellanies V).

On the 6th May 1845 John Scott Russell called on Cole to talk about the
publication of a pamphlet about the Brighton railway and the possibility
of articles on other railways. After a second visit from Scott Russell
the Cole diary begins to refer to articles on "Excursions on Railways
(Cole Diary, 20th May 1845), and then on the 21st May Cole visited the
offices of the Great Western Railway about free passes which had been
arranged for him (Cole Diary), so that he could travel their lines in
researching the articles. During the summer months of 1845 Cole made
many railway journeys and wrote a series of articles for the Chronicle
(Cole Diary, 26th June 1845). In October the arrangement was made more
formal and Cole made a detailed note in his diary, recording the
contract and the dual purpose for which charts of the railway network
and supporting text were to be prepared:

On the 2nd Oct Mr Russell & C W Dilke met at my office [at the
Record Office] to discuss publication of the Railway Charts. It was
agreed that the Charts should first be published from week to week
in the Railway Chronicle: that the cost of setting up the Charts
should be charged to the R. Chron. & that the payment of 10/6 per
column should be allowed for the compilation - After publication in
the Railway Chronicle, the Chart is to be published separately at
1/-. The expenses of drawing, engraving, travelling charges, paper,
stereotyping, printing, binding to be charged to the Charts
separately, the expenses to be at the risk of the proprietors of
Rly. Chron: & when these are repaid, the profits if any to be
divided equally between two proprietors and myself - the four lines
out of London to be done - Brighton, SW, GW & Birmingham.

This arrangement was to become a model for Cole's later business
projects. In contrast to the way Cole bought himself into joint
ownership of the Westminster Review, opening himself to the possibility
of financial loss, now he worked in such a way that if someone else could be persuaded to put up the capital, Cole would claim his expenses and a share in any profits which resulted, but would be free of any liability should the project fail.

Cole's involvement in the Railway Chronicle increased as the weeks went by. Russell became aware that Cole's character was somewhat abrasive and he advised Cole "Never make a personal enemy except for a great project" and suggested "If you attack any one do it as if you were in his presence" (Cole Diary; 13th November 1845). Cole seems to have accepted Russell's advice as being constructive criticism, recording it without comment in his diary. Russell did not consider Cole's personality to be a bar to further cooperation; a week later he asked him to take over temporary editorship of the Railway Chronicle.

Cole and Russell collaborated in promoting several other railway projects, through the Railway Chronicle and other means, including the campaigns for a uniform narrow gauge and the separation of freight from passenger traffic (Cole, 1884; Volume 1, Chapter 2). When Russell was invited to become Railway Editor to the Daily News (Charles Dickens' newspaper) at the end of 1845 he very soon invited Cole to become involved in that publication too (Cole Diary, 5th December 1845). Cole's Record Office salary of £500 was thus boosted by an additional £750 per annum (Emmerson, 1977; 31). This was a substantial sum. Reader (1966; 202) provides a context for evaluating incomes in the nineteenth century: "At any time before 1914 £1000 a year represented a considerable worldly success, though not great wealth, and placed a man, economically speaking, well towards the top of the middle class". Cole, at 37 years of age, by supplementing his civil service salary with an income from journalism, had become a man in comfortable circumstances.
It is intriguing that, at a time when Cole was able to earn a high fee for his journalistic work, he felt it necessary to keep up his (supposedly) full-time post as a civil servant. After all, in 1845 his employment at the Record Office could not have been stimulating. After the excitements of his reforming activity and the distraction of his secondment to work with Rowland Hill to introduce the penny post, the largely clerical tasks of his permanent post must have seemed tedious. Whether Cole's reason for maintaining the civil service position was related to his lowly beginnings and a need to have a reliable income which would still be there if his business activity failed, or whether he believed that he was in a position to carve out a very good career within the civil service which it would be foolish to interrupt for the sake of short-term gains, is not clear. It is clear, however, that his superiors at the Record Office had no objection to his very busy commercial activity. This was not unusual at this time; it was very common for civil servants to have other sources of income. Cole had other opportunities, during his long career, to leave the civil service for more lucrative employment; he always chose to stay.

On the same day that Cole was invited to join the Daily News, he recorded for the first time in his diary that he was doing work connected with the Society of Arts: "Drank tea & passed the evening preparing subjects for prizes for the Soc. of Arts...". John Scott Russell was the man who suggested to Cole that the Society of Arts was an organisation worthy of his attention. Russell had become a member of the Society of Arts a year earlier, and had been introduced by Thomas Webster. Webster had been chairman of a special committee of the Society, set up in 1841 to look into possible remedies for its financial difficulties. The Committee of Miscellaneous Matters had proposed a new structure of committees to run the Society's business (previously all action was taken at the General ordinary meetings). The proposals were
substantially accepted, after lengthy discussion, in December 1845 when a new Council was established to manage the business (Hudson and Luckhurst, 1954; 177-178). If Webster introduced Russell in the hope that he would help to change the fortunes of the Society he was not disappointed. Russell was one of eleven new members elected at the meeting of the Society held on 20th November 1844, and he quickly became one of the most active members of the Society.

Francis Whishaw, who was Secretary of the Society at that time, shared with Russell an interest in railways. Papers on railway topics had been presented to the Society by Whishaw and were published in the Society's Transactions (v55, 1843-1844; pp135, 183, 192). When Russell became a member he found common interest with the Secretary and was soon drawn into the inner circle of the Society.

Russell read his first paper to the Society, on an engineering topic, describing a vertical drill designed by J E MacDowell, on May 7th 1845. On June 11th he took the chair at the General Meeting. When the Society reconvened after the summer recess Russell proposed the son of his journalistic friend Charles Wentworth Dilke as a member at the first ordinary meeting on 17th December. Dilke's son, also named Charles Wentworth Dilke, was to become another very active member of the Society. At the second ordinary meeting on 21st January 1846 Henry Cole was proposed as a member. Cole was formally proposed as a member of the Society by E Speers, a very longstanding and influential member of the Society (joint Chairman of Council for the 1846-1848 sessions). Cole's son was of the opinion that it was Russell who "induced him to become a member" (Cole, 1884; Volume 1, 378).

3. Later (1849) Charles Wentworth Dilke senior was elected to membership, proposed by Cole.
Henry Trueman Wood and Hudson and Luckhurst in their histories of the Society agree that the arrival of Cole, following the major reorganisation of the Society's affairs, was to mark a new beginning. The old, tired, Society now had members who would revitalise the organisation and make it a body of not only national, but international importance.

On April 1st 1846 the annual election of officers took place. John Scott Russell was elected Secretary, the younger Charles Wentworth Dilke became a member of Council and Cole was elected a member of the Fine Arts Committee. From this date onwards Cole remained an influential member of the Society until his death in 1882. Trueman Wood suggests that for the first half of this period Cole's influence "really amounted to absolute control". Wood, who knew and admired Cole "without being in the least unaware of his faults" acknowledged that Cole did not have any great financial abilities "but if he wasted some of [the Society's] funds, it was mainly due to him that the Society had any funds to waste" (Wood, 1913; 358).

Unfortunately the description in Fifty years of the Public Work of Sir Henry Cole of this early involvement with the Society of Arts comes in that portion of the work which was completed after his death by two of his children; it therefore lacks the delightful first person accounts and self-praise which are common features of the earlier autobiographical chapters. The brief account given of Cole's relationship with the Society includes the following comment on Cole's arrival:

In 1845, the Society was feeble in existence. Its annual presentation of medals and premiums had not secured for it vivacity of action and did not yield it a promise of long life. At the end of ninety years' life, it could number hardly more than three
hundred members, and in its ninety-first year, apparently almost at the end of its resources, the only remaining stock of the Society was ordered to be sold. However, in 1846, a fresh effort was to be made (Cole, 1884; Volume 1, 379).

Although John Scott Russell had come to know Cole through their mutual interests in journalism and the railways, this was not the basis for Russell's introduction of Cole to the Society of Arts. It was Cole's personal and business interest in "art applied to manufacture" which made him a suitable person to enter the fellowship of that Society. Cole had, as we have seen, business interests unrelated to his work as a civil servant. Most particularly, in this context, Cole was proprietor of a company which he ran under the pseudonym "Felix Summerly". Cole had published Summerly's Home Treasury, a series of illustrated children's story books. He had been persuaded to produce the children's books by the needs of his own children, using what he called "some of the first artists of the time" in illustrating the Treasury, including Mulready, Webster, Cope, Redgrave and Horsley (Cole, 1884; Volume 1, 101 and Volume 2, 161). Darton (1982; 219-251) discusses the importance of Cole's children's books and his promotion of well-illustrated traditional British stories and rhymes in an attempt to provide an alternative to the (North American) "Peter Parley" children's books which were currently in vogue. Cole's own account of his "Felix Summerly" business and its growth from the publication of handbooks about what have now become tourist attractions (Westminster Abbey, Hampton Court etc.) to the marketing of "Art Manufactures" can be found in the first volume of his autobiography (Cole, 1884; Volume 1, 98-115). He was attempting, through this company, to provide an outlet for artists producing designs

4. Cole's children's books were appreciated by some of the highest in the land. Cole records in his diary (10/5/51) that the Queen commented that he ought to write a child's book about the Great Exhibition, and the Princess Royal told him that she had read his books "very often".

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for household articles, and to educate what he would have called "public taste". The continuation of this personal crusade to bring together art and design to produce British made articles of high quality will be seen in later chapters concerning Cole's work at the Department of Science and Art.

The following extract from Cole's autobiography describes the events leading to the manufacture of the Felix Summerly tea service, which was Cole's first foray into the realms of "art manufacture" and the means of his introduction to the Society of Arts and to Prince Albert:

In 1845, the Society of Arts offered prizes for the production of a tea service and beer jugs for common use, to be exhibited at an exhibition of Art Manufactures, at the Society's Rooms, John Street, Adelphi, London. Having recently become acquainted with Mr Minton, I persuaded him with difficulty to send in a design for a beer jug. He dreaded the retailers of London, who at that time ruled the manufacturers with a rod of iron, but at last he gave way in terror. At the British Museum [1st April 1846] I consulted Greek earthenware for authority for handles, and I went to the Potteries on 3rd April, 1846, and passed three days in superintending the throwing, turning, modelling, and moulding of a tea service ....... It was a condition of the Society of Arts, that the manufacturer's name should be given, and attached to any objects rewarded. Mr Minton feared he would be ruined if he gave his! Messrs Wedgewood and Spode had broken down the tyranny of the retailers, and marked their names on their wares. Silver medals were awarded by the Society, through an Art Committee presided over by Sir William Ross, RA, celebrated as the first of miniature painters of works grand in style though small in scale - to Mr Minton's beer jug and to Felix Summerly's tea service. These objects were exhibited at the Society's Art Manufactures Exhibition and are still in use in the Society's rooms [1882], and may be seen in steam packets going to all parts of the world. I presented a set to the South Kensington Museum, which I hope may be kept and always exhibited there, as a link in the chain of circumstances leading to that great Exhibition, which sowed the seed for the beginning of the South Kensington Museum itself (Cole, 1884; Volume 1, 104-106).
On the 23rd May 1846 Cole recorded in his diary that he had been to the Society of Arts to "decide on prizes" and that he and Minton had both been awarded the prizes for their exhibits which Cole refers to above. Cole's understanding, in later life, of the importance of the tea service in providing his introduction to the Society and to Prince Albert, is clear from the above account of the events which led to its manufacture. Having been awarded the prize Minton, a progressive manufacturer with interests in both technology and design (Wyatt, 1858), became a member of the Society in June of 1846, and Cole set out to make best advantage of the tea service, his prize and his connections.

Cole went on to use Royal Academicians as his designers and well known manufacturers to produce items which ranged from household goods such as a bread board and a paperknife to ornamental pottery, glassware and furniture. These items were sold from a Bond Street address to customers with sufficient money and a desire to purchase British made articles designed by eminent artists of the day. Although Cole's market was rather exclusive, his pleasure at the very widespread use of his tea service is indicative of the fact that Cole hoped that, through his efforts, improved design would become available to all classes of society. Cole's "art manufactures" provided him with an opportunity to demonstrate the benefits of applying decorative art to useful manufactured objects and to promote the principles which he was to apply at a later date within the Department of Science and Art. Felix Summerly's Art Manufactures (briefly assessed by MacCarthy, 1972; 12-22) never made any significant amount of money for Cole. Cole's talent proved to be more in his journalistic and administrative skills than in business.

On 3rd August 1846 Cole visited Scott Russell in order to persuade him to write (as Secretary of the Society) to Prince Albert, the President
of the Society of Arts, to suggest that the Prince might like a private view of the prize-winning tea service (Cole Diary). The ploy must have been successful because on the 5th August Cole records that he went with Scott Russell to visit the Prince and display his wares. This meeting, engineered by Cole, was intended to promote his business by gaining royal approval for the tea service. Cole had learned the value of influential friends, and was prepared to exploit what was as yet a very limited acquaintance with the Prince. Cole had met the Prince on 18th March 1842 when he had visited the Record Office at Carlton Ride. In the light of Cole's later responsibilities in the Great Exhibition it is amusing that Cole recorded in his biography that "Lord Lincoln told me afterwards that the Prince had said if he wanted to pack the greatest quantity into the smallest space he would send for me" (Cole, 1884; Volume 1, 24).

Cole's interests in the arts were growing. He had been a critic, and was now designing, commissioning and selling "art manufactures". He developed strong views on the needs of the artistic community, in particular their need for adequate recompense for their labours. One of the needs which Cole identified was for a national collection of British art. True to his utilitarian beliefs, at this stage in his career Cole did not believe that the state should take on the role of obtaining the collection and providing a gallery. He was a man of his time and saw government intervention as a policy of last resort. If the public wanted such a collection, the public must support it. Cole was quick to appreciate that through the Society of Arts he could promote artistic events and institutions. It was at a meeting of the Council of the Society of Arts on 13th January 1847 that Cole presented what, in his diary, Cole refers to as "my picture exhibition proposal".

Cole wished to use exhibitions sponsored by the Society of Arts to raise
money for a separate National Gallery of British Art. He proposed to hold exhibitions of the work of eminent living artists, Royal Academicians, through which the interest in the project could be proved at the same time as monies were raised. The paintings which would be purchased out of the profits made would be lent to the National Gallery until such time as there were sufficient for the opening of a special gallery. Cole's object, stated at the meeting, was "if possible again to make the Society the nucleus of British art"; Cole was careful to suggest that the Society had something to gain from its generous support of the artistic community (RSA, Minutes of Council; 13th January 1847). Hudson and Luckhurst describe the series of exhibitions which Cole masterminded in their chapter on the Society's encouragement of fine arts (Hudson and Luckhurst, 1954; 51-53).

The Society of Arts had had a long history of promotion of exhibitions, dating from the Exhibition of Agricultural and other machines which was held in 1761; Cole was not breaking new ground in proposing an exhibition, the novelty was in the purpose to which it was to be put. This was also the first time that Cole used a technique which he employed time and again in developing the South Kensington estate - the use of one scheme, in itself likely to achieve public support (in this case an exhibition of contemporary paintings), to promote another and bigger plan (the new Gallery). The Council of the Society adjourned discussion of Cole's proposals at that meeting, but at an Ordinary Meeting of the Society on 27th January 1847 Cole's proposal was formally put forward. Cole believed it was "not well read by Russell", but the scheme was agreed (Cole Diary).

In order to maximize support for the project within the Society, Cole began to recruit artists to membership of the Society of Arts. On 20th January 1847 Cole's diary records "Called on Webster, Horsley, Eastlake
& McClise who all agreed to be members of the Society of Arts. All of these men were eminent contemporary artists, the sort of men Cole would need as allies if his exhibition series was to be a success. Webster, Horsley and McClise had worked for "Felix Summerly". Eastlake was Keeper of the National Gallery and was to become Director during 1847.

During the following weeks Cole was very energetic in his recruitment of new members, both artists and other persons of influence, and in promotion of the first of the proposed series of exhibitions. He asked his old friends, Charles Buller and Edwin Chadwick, to become members on 1st February 1847, and on 7th February he was back talking to the artist Horsley, this time asking him to ask his patron Isambard Kingdom Brunel to join. Cole wrote to Prince Albert and to the artist Landseer about the National Gallery scheme. Landseer declined to be the first artist to be honoured with an exhibition of his work, but Mulready accepted and the exhibition of his work in June of 1848 became the first Cole-inspired exhibition sponsored by the Society of Arts.

On 21st February 1847 Cole visited Mr. Sheepshanks (a patron of the arts whom he had met in March of 1845 at the home of Mulready) to discuss the proposed picture exhibitions and National Gallery. Sheepshanks liked the idea of a National Gallery, but had very definite ideas about where it might be located. Cole's diary records that on the 3rd October 1847 he met with Sheepshanks again and notes that "He wd give his gallery to a safe place out of town & not with old pictures". Sheepshanks was not only in a position to lend works from his own extensive collection of contemporary works for temporary exhibition, but was willing to allow his pictures to go on permanent public exhibition under certain conditions. This information was to be put to good use by Cole some years later; the Sheepshanks Gallery was built at the South Kensington Museum.
In the event only two exhibitions were held in aid of the National Gallery. Mulready's in 1848 was followed by an exhibition of the works of William Etty RA in 1849. A small profit from the Mulready exhibition, referred to at the time as "the most interesting and instructive exhibition of the season" (ILN, 10th June 1848; 377), allowed the purchase of just three of the Mulready drawings. The Etty exhibition lost £500 and Cole and the National Gallery Committee of the Society decided to abandon this method of promoting the gallery.

At the election of the Council of the Society of Arts in June of 1847 Cole was elected a Council member, together with Richard Redgrave (an artist and a friend of Cole's since 1841), Lord Boileau (introduced to the Society by Richard Redgrave on 17th March 1847) and Cole's utilitarian friend Edwin Chadwick (introduced by Cole on 31st March 1847). The Society was soon to discover that a new and active faction was making a bid for control of its affairs. This new faction was very committed to the holding of exhibitions, which they saw as ideal vehicles for "the promotion of arts, manufactures and commerce".

Shortly after Cole and his allies were elected to fellowship of the Society a second exhibition of "select specimens of British manufactures and decorative art" took place at the Society's London premises. Encouraged by their President Prince Albert, the Society held competitions similar to that in which Cole had taken part in 1846, in order to discover suitable objects for exhibition. The competitions did not, however, produce sufficient exhibits, even when the winning exhibits from 1846 were added to the collection. Cole and Russell spent some time in visiting manufacturers and persuading them to lend suitable articles, gathering together about 200 objects and producing an exhibition catalogue which explained the Society's motivation in
The 1847 exhibition, though small in size and held over a short period, was a great success, visited by 20,000 people. Among this number were some very influential visitors. Cole had suggested that the members of both Houses of Parliament should be invited to a special "Evening Promenade" around the exhibition. The Society's Council thought this was too large a group to invite on one occasion and Cole was appointed to a sub-committee to select those who should be invited (RSA, Minutes of Council; 1st March 1847). The list which resulted indicates Cole's shrewd assessment of who might be influential in supporting such exhibitions, including government ministers, the "Members of Parliament for the Manufacturing Towns", the Presidents of various societies (e.g. Civil Engineers, Architects, Society of Practical Design), together with the senior officers of museums and of educational establishments (e.g. British Museum, College of Chemistry, Museum of Economic Geology, School of Design, but not University College or Kings College). The Governor, Deputy Governor and Directors of the Bank of England were also to be sent invitations, and Rowland Hill and Charles Dickens were among very few named individuals on the list. Further invitations were to be sent out under the names of the more influential members of the Society, it being resolved that "The Secretary be directed to write to the Vice Presidents and to forward them cards [invitations] and request them to use their influence to obtain the attendance of such persons of rank and influence as they may deem desirable" (RSA, Minutes of Council; 13th March 1847).

The success of this 1847 exhibition of manufactures led to the revival

5. The introduction to the catalogue stresses the value of such exhibitions to the designer and manufacturer and hopes that it will "tend to improve the public taste" (Hudson and Luckhurst, 1954; 193)
of an idea which had been previously proposed in 1844 and formally presented to the Society in 1845. This proposal was that there should be a National Exhibition of the Products of Industry in Arts, Manufactures and Commerce. Francis Whishaw, Secretary of the Society from 1843 to 1845, had supported the scheme, believing that the British should hold national exhibitions of manufactures similar to those which had been held in Paris and Berlin in 1844. The Paris exhibition, held in the Champs Elysees, had lasted for 60 days and had had 3960 exhibitors (Luckhurst, 1951; 220). The Society had decided to attempt a British exhibition on a similar scale and a National Exhibition Subcommittee had been formed. The proposer of the exhibition, William Fothergill Cooke, was a member of this subcommittee, and Francis Whishaw, Francis Fuller, and John Scott Russell were among the eleven members. They had succeeded in finding financial backers for the scheme and had decided that a suitable site for the temporary exhibition building would be Hyde Park. However, when the committee began to canvass manufacturers they were disappointed. Russell complained that:

The public were indifferent, manufacturers lukewarm, some of the most eminent even hostile to the proposition. The Committee neither met with sufficient promise of support in money, sufficient public sympathy, nor sufficient cooperation among manufacturers (quoted by Hudson and Luckhurst, 1954; 190).

The idea only survived in the form of the much less ambitious competition in 1846 which provided the material for the small exhibition of "select specimens" of that year.

In 1847 the more encouraging experience of Cole and Russell in their tour of manufacturers seemed to indicate that it was time to try again to find support for the more ambitious national exhibition. Cole drew up a scheme. It would seem unlikely that the brief intervening period
of two years had seen a complete change of attitude among British manufacturers; more probably the difference was in the participation of the determined and persuasive Henry Cole. He had been the initiator of the scheme to interest "influential people" in 1847, and brought his considerable administrative skills to bear in the planning of the exhibition. Cole's own motivation was partly in promoting "public taste", but he knew enough about the world of business to appeal to the manufacturing community on the basis of the financial advantage which participation in such an exhibition might bring.

On 17th November 1847 the third Annual Exhibition of Art Manufactures to be held in March of 1848, and the exhibition of Mulready's paintings to begin in June 1848 were both announced. The 1848 Annual Exhibition of the Society attracted 70,000 visitors and included "nearly one hundred specimens of Summerly's Art Manufactures" (Cole Miscellanies; VIII, f32). Cole was obviously not averse to sharing in the financial advantage which might follow from the exhibition of manufactures. The 1848 exhibition was to be another stepping stone towards the National Exhibition which Cole hoped would be the culmination of the series. Cole took the opportunity to mention the scheme in a letter to Prince Albert in January of 1848, enquiring as to whether he thought that the government would support the scheme, but Cole received little encouragement. A letter to Cole from the Prince's secretary, dated July 6th 1848, expresses the Prince's doubts. Phipps told Cole:

His Royal Highness has also been in communication with several members of the cabinet and has obtained their opinion upon the subject - I regret to say that opinion does not appear to be favourable.....it would not be advisable at this time to press the proposal (Cole Correspondence; I, 4).

6. This will be my convention for referring to the collection of Cole correspondence in the Cole collection in the National Art Library at South Kensington.
Cole was sufficiently sure of himself to ignore this very definite advice from high places. As we have seen in the National Gallery scheme, Cole did not believe that the government should have a wider sphere of action than was strictly necessary for the running of the state. He did not believe that the state should itself promote the national exhibition, but he did think that it was within the scope of acceptable government activity that it should encourage and support public action. It was through his contacts within the government that Cole continued the campaign.

On 5th April 1848 the Society of Arts held its annual election of officers. Cole cannot have been entirely happy with the results because the following day he was out again looking for new and influential members. He visited Buckingham Palace in order to persuade the secretary to the Prince Consort, Colonel Phipps, to become a member (Cole Diary; 6th April 1848). Phipps was proposed as a member by Henry Cole on the 26th April and elected on 10th May 1848. By this means Cole was strengthening his links with the Palace. The Prince Consort did not regularly attend meetings. Phipps would ensure that the Prince would be kept in close touch with the activities of the Society and that Cole would have an open channel of communication with the Prince.

January of 1849 saw Cole involved in four current projects (quite apart from his responsibilities to the Record Office!). First was the launching of his new publication, the Journal of Design (Cole Diary; 5th January 1849). The Journal of Design was, in what had by now become the Cole tradition, a journal published in order to expound Cole's views and publicise his schemes. Cole was an experienced journalist who could interest financial backers with relatively little difficulty. Cole had used the press to influence public opinion in respect of the Record Office reforms, writing articles for the Times, the Athenæum, Frasers,
Tait's and the Law Magazine. In 1837 Cole became one of the proprietors (with Charles Buller and William Molesworth) and editor of the Guide, a cheap newspaper which voiced the utilitarian opinions of Cole and his friends, and in 1840 he had become joint proprietor, with William Hickson, of the Westminster Review, the liberal-radical journal which they purchased from John Stuart Mill. The Post Circular had been the vehicle which Cole used in 1838 for communication with the members of the Committee on Postage; again it was published especially to promote the postal system which Rowland Hill and Cole were setting up. When Cole again needed to influence public opinion it was natural to him to do so by publishing a journal, the Journal of Design.\(^7\)

Cole was also making plans for the National Exhibition (Cole Diary; 10th January 1849) at meetings with the Society's Exhibition Committee, and was still attending meetings of the National Gallery Committee (Cole Diary, 10th January 1849). He was also investing a great deal of time in a review of the functioning of the existing government-funded School of Design (Cole Diary; 17th January 1849); the details of this major Cole project are discussed in Chapter 5.\(^8\)

The variety of projects in which Cole had become involved is indicative of his energy. It is also indicative of his strong interest in the decorative arts and their application to design for industry. Cole expressed this in a letter to Lord Granville (15th February 1849) in which he told Granville that he felt very strongly about reforming of the institutions concerned with design in Great Britain (Granville Papers; PRO PRO30/29/23/1 p.95). Through his critical, business and

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7. See article by Levine (1975) for an assessment of Cole's journalism.
8. This will be my convention for referring to the collection of papers relating to Lord Granville held at the Public Record Office in Kew.
personal contacts with the artistic community Cole had come to believe that the existing government funded education for design was badly managed, and that artists had insufficient protection in patent and copyright law; all of these were under the control of the Board of Trade.

In 1849 100,000 people visited the Society's rooms at John Adam Street near the Strand to see the exhibition of manufactures. The 20,000 who had visited the 1847 exhibition only two years previously had swelled to a throng. As Altig (1978) has shown in his history of exhibitions in London, exhibitions were very popular in early Victorian England. The entertainment they provided was a welcome escape from the "dullness, the mental vacuity, the constriction of horizons" which afflicted much of the population of London (ibid.; 2). They also met the needs of the non-literate population, providing an alternative to the printed word as a means of learning about the world outside of the individual's personal experience.

The visitors in 1849 were asked to sign a petition seeking the formal support of the government for a national exhibition in 1851. The petition was presented to parliament by Thomas Milner Gibson (a strong supporter of free trade and an anti Corn Law speaker) on 21st April 1849 (RSA, 1849) and was referred back to the same MP as chairman of the Select Committee on the Schools of Design for consideration. The Select Committee reported that a reasonable possibility existed that such an exhibition - which they felt to be an important and worthwhile project - could be made to be self-financing, and on this basis they recommended that the Society of Arts' request for the use of a public building should be met.

The Society of Arts annual election on 4th April 1849 marks the
beginning of the period during which Cole was the single most influential member of the Society of Arts. Cole's diary for that day records "Whishaws party defeated", which we can take as an indication that Cole believed that the exhibition lobby had gained control. Cole's takeover did not happen without a final battle with the "old guard" who had been in control of the Society's affairs before Cole and his friends became members. Some of this old guard were very much against the emphasis which was being put on involvement with exhibitions. When the new session started in November of 1849 the Council of the Society were not a harmonious body.

As Cole records in a notice to members of the Society (Cole Miscellanies VIII; 173, 175) "At a Finance Committee on the 11th December 1849 Mr Webster in the chair - present Messrs Farey, Payne, Gooch and Whishaw - the Committee recommended 'That the exhibitions BE DISCONTINUED' [Cole's capitalisation]. Again on the 17th December, the same Committee resolved 'That it is expedient to reconsider the policy of an Art-Manufacture Exhibition for the year 1850'". Cole complains that:

These advocates of the old system have lately been occupied in taking measures to gain a majority of votes in the Council. This they have already accomplished by rendering it impossible for the promoters of the exhibitions to co-operate with them, especially from the acrimonious and personal attacks to which the latter have been subjected; and, consequently, within the last few weeks the resignations in the Council have been so numerous as to give the old minority a present majority.

Cole's friend the younger Charles Wentworth Dilke had been insulted by Webster. Cole and Dilke were natural allies. Dilke had what Cole did not, money and position. He had spent time in Italy and had been at Cambridge. According to Jenkins (1958), the biographer of Dilke's son, Charles Wentworth Dilke the younger "did no work until his marriage at
the age of thirty;" the same biographer reports that in his young adult life "he was principally known to his friends for never missing a night at the opera" (Jenkins, 1958; 13). Cole too had spent many of his evenings at the opera and theatre, supplementing his income by writing critical articles. Dilke had money, contacts and a mutual interest with Cole in the arts. They were also of similar political views, Dilke becoming Liberal MP for Wallingford in 1865. Their characters and abilities were complementary and at this time they both felt strongly about the future of the Society. Within a few months the split within the Society of Arts became intolerable and Cole, Dilke and their allies resigned from the Council (Cole Diary; 18th March 1850; Cole, 1884, Volume 1, 380).

The "minority" Council (i.e. those left after the Cole faction had withdrawn) prepared a balloting list for the Council for the session 1850-51 which excluded the exhibition lobby. On 15th March 1850 Russell and Fuller came to see Cole to ask him to "write in turning out old list of Society" (Cole Diary) and on the 18th when Cole was at the Palace "both Col. Grey and Col. Phipps thought there ought to be a fight at the Society of Arts" (Cole Diary). Phipps has already been introduced as Cole's "mole" within the palace. Grey was Prince Albert's new secretary. In his diary Cole links the names of Phipps and Grey as supporters of the Cole faction; in the long term Grey's support was to prove the more influential. Cole prepared a note to all members of the Society, advising them of the peril of the situation and suggesting that they alter the printed balloting forms by hand and elect the list suggested by himself. Sir John Boileau (one of the more recent members and a Vice President of the Society) was persuaded by Cole that he too should write to his friends about the state of the Society (Cole Diary; 28th March 1850). A further note (Cole Miscellanies VIII; 177) informed members that J Bell, Henry Cole, C W Dilke, R Redgrave, F Fuller and J
Scott Russell would be meeting at the Society's rooms on the evening before the election to discuss the election and inviting members to join them. These men together formed a pressure group which intended to promote the Society and return it to financial health by the promotion of exhibitions.

The Cole faction won a resounding victory at the ballot. Of the twelve names on Cole's list eleven were elected to the Council. Cole's Diary of 15th April 1850 records "At Socy of Arts. Russell proposed Fuller & Winkworth. Went to ballot. Fuller & myself elected". Francis Fuller was Chairman at the beginning of the year, being replaced by Cole at the following annual election. Once the "right" people were at the helm the Society was able to pursue the promotion of exhibitions with some vigour. The Exhibition of 1851 is discussed in the next chapter. The exhibitions of 1862 and the series which ran from 1871 to 1874 were also connected with Cole and the Society of Arts, and these too are discussed separately.

Cole's influence at the Society continued for the rest of his life through these and other exhibitions, and various other activities which included the promotion of museums, patent law, memorial tablets, public "waiting rooms", military drill, examinations, the National Training School for Music, a School of Cookery and treatment of sewage. These activities are all discussed in Cole's autobiography as examples of his "Public Work". All were promoted with Cole's usual determination and vigour. The Society for the Encouragement of Arts Manufactures and Commerce provided Cole with a platform from which he could promote these very various reforms. A glance through the Journal of the Society

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9. Cole was involved in the campaign in 1851 which resulted in the opening of the first public convenience in London (Cole Diary; 11th May, 14th May and 18th June 1851).
of Arts, either for the years of Cole's membership, or indeed for recent years, provides evidence that this broad vision was not Cole's alone but was the basis of the Society with which he became so strongly linked.

The Society of Arts was from the beginning and has remained a generalist Society. It had and it has influential members. It had in Cole's time, and it still has, royal connections. Cole's ability to identify and make use of the potential allies within the Society, and to identify and recruit non-members who would be supportive of his aims, allowed him to make maximum use of the potential of the Society as a reforming body. In the following chapters of this thesis we will see that Lord Granville and Colonel Grey became members of the "South Kensington Mafia", the circle of allies who assisted Cole in the development of the South Kensington estate. The members of the "mafia" were from various backgrounds and variously employed, but they were almost invariably members of the Society of Arts. The term "South Kensington Mafia" is my own, and reflects the fact that the group with Cole at its centre was powerful, but invisible. Cole was the "godfather" who ruled over the South Kensington territory.
References Chapter 3


Cole, H. Correspondence, National Art Library, Cole Collection, 55.BB.1-


Granville Papers PRO PRO30/29.


Wyatt, M. D. (1858) "On the influence exercised on ceramic manufactures by the late Mr. Herbert Minton.", Journal of the Society of Arts, v7, 441-452.
The national exhibition which Cole had been promoting via the Society of Arts was to become the world's first international exhibition of "the works of all nations", an event which enthralled the world at the time, and which continues to this day to act as a marker of the historical fact that at that time Britain was really "Great".

The evidence of both Cole's and the Society of Arts' broad and proactive approach has been presented in the previous chapter. The Society promoted "progress" in industry as well as the arts, through exhibitions of inventions and through the offering of prizes where the Society saw the need for specific improvements. The membership of the Society came from various backgrounds and included those who were tainted by trade as well as members of the nobility and artists. The social acceptability of the Society had been confirmed by the Prince Consort's presidency. Membership of the Society of Arts was open only insofar as the individual could find sponsors from amongst the existing members. Those who had become the leaders in their field had little difficulty. The range of occupations and interests was large.

From this wide membership only five individuals comprised the committee which made the decision to hold an international exhibition in London in 1851. Apart from Prince Albert the other participants were not aristocrats but men with a strong desire to promote British trade and industry. They sought support in promoting the exhibition from the industrialists who would be exhibitors and the chambers of commerce around the country who represented these industrialists. Greenhalgh (1988) has presented his perception of the Society as an institution removed from the real world of industry and commerce; it is clear from
closer scrutiny of its membership and its activity that this is not the case.

**A vision of the new year**

But I am all the future's own,
These favoured hands shall bring,
The Dove-eyed Peace and Commerce, grown,
A giant 'neath her wing.

Before me, in a tournament,
Of peaceful emulation,
In arts, not arms, on triumph bent,
Shall nation strive with nation.

Spread wide for me, ye crystal roofs!
Oh noble strife begin!
With peace on earth, good-will to men,
The New Year cometh In.

Thus rang out the final verses of the poem published in the New Year issue of *Punch* for 1851 (v20, p11). This snatch of verse encapsulates the four main purposes of the nineteenth century exhibitions as proposed by Greenhalgh (1988), who suggests that the nineteenth century exhibitions as a whole had four main purposes; they were intended to promote trade; they emphasised peace, provided an educational experience for the people and demonstrated progress.

The French exhibitions of the first half of the nineteenth century were very much concerned with trade. The series of exhibitions, which had

1. Appendix 2 lists some of the members of the Society, particularly during the few years leading up to the Great Exhibition. They include the industrialists Abraham Darby and Joseph Whitworth, Hanbury of the pharmaceutical company, Hollins and Minton from the potteries, Gilbert Scott the architect and William Fairbairn the civil engineer.
been launched in 1797 at a time of revolutionary change in that society, had by 1851 become for the French a standard means for promoting their manufactures. Although the 1851 exhibition was promoted by the Society of Arts rather than by commercial or governmental interests, it was not, as Greenhalgh has suggested, born from the British tradition of the "curious aristocrat". Although there was (and is!) an element of the leisured classes amusing themselves in the affairs of the Society of Arts, this is to deny the other elements which were and still are present in the proceedings and in the complete name of the Society, which was for the "Promotion of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce". The manufacturing and commercial interests of the Society were by no means secondary to the interest in "the arts". The contemporary definition of "arts" was in any case very broad, including what we might now call technologies and which they generally termed the "useful arts".

This chapter will tell the 1851 story mainly inasmuch as it relates to Cole and illustrates the network of contacts which he was to exploit in establishing the South Kensington estate. Many good sources of information are available on the Great Exhibition; a useful bibliography which includes references to the literature on international exhibitions has been compiled by Anthony Coulson (1979). Cole's own version of the story is recorded in a chapter of his biography (Cole, 1884; Volume 1, Chapter 8).

2. The French had held a national exhibition of manufactures in 1797, which was intended to demonstrate to the world that France was still in business after the revolution. This exhibition, which lasted four days and attracted large crowds, was sanctioned by the government, and was sufficiently successful that the Minister of the Interior - Neufchateau - expanded the concept the following year when a second exhibition was held in specially constructed temporary buildings on a prestigious site. Exhibitions which came to be of educational as well as of commercial importance were held in 1801, 1802, 1806, 1819, 1823, 1827, 1834, 1844 and 1849. Each exhibition was bigger than the last, the 1797 event having 110 exhibitors and the 1849 exhibition 4532 (Greenhalgh, 1988; 17) - for a fuller description of the first French exhibition see Luckhurst (1951; Chapter 8).
Cole had no doubts as to the importance of the event - "The history of the world, I venture to say, records no event comparable in its promotion of human industry" - and prefaced his version of the story with the statement "Of the principal incidents of this International work I was a witness from its beginning to its end, and had the privilege of devoting myself to it with all my heart" (Cole, 1884; Volume 1, 116-117). Both of these quotations are significant in terms of Cole's approach to the exhibitions with which he became involved. The first because it refers to the promotion of human industry; Cole makes it clear that his interest is not only in the promotion of art or education. The second quotation is indicative of Cole's approach to the furtherance of his utilitarian goals; it was not in Cole's style to take on a job unless he could do it thoroughly.

In this case, having been elected a Council member at the annual meeting of the Society of Arts in June of 1847, Cole was in a position to communicate via the Society and thereby give some sort of official credibility to what was as yet an idea with little support. As we have seen in the previous chapter, Cole initially found Prince Albert rather lukewarm about the proposed large national exhibition of manufactures. He therefore abandoned for the time being the royal route to success and began to work on his contacts in government circles.

Cole had made the acquaintance of John Shaw Lefevre, Secretary to the Board of Trade. On the 16th February 1848 Lefevre was elected a member of the Society of Arts, having been proposed by Cole, and on 19th February Lefevre agreed to be part of an official Society of Arts delegation to the Board of Trade to seek government support for the exhibition (Cole Diary). Cole believed the exhibition would promote trade; therefore the sanction and assistance of the government department with responsibility for trade was desirable. Cole was not,
at this stage, in favour of governmental interference in matters which
the public could manage for themselves; however, the assistance of the
government in the provision of a sufficiently large site to accommodate
a building in which to hold the exhibition would greatly assist public
efforts. This had been the norm in France, where temporary exhibition
buildings had been erected in publicly owned spaces. Cole had
identified Lefevre as a man who could provide inside knowledge of the
government department most likely to assist, and had persuaded him to
act as intermediary.

On 24th February the Council of the Society approved the deputation to
the Board of Trade, which Lefevre had already been asked to join
(RSA, Minutes of Council). The deputation was to propose that "the best
specimens of the works exhibited at the Society's House [at the annual
exhibition of manufactures] should as far as practicable be placed at
the disposal of the Board of Trade to be exhibited in the towns where
Schools of Design exist and that at a period of three, four or five
years a large building should be provided for a national exhibition".
The deputation took place on the 2nd March 1848; members were Sir John
Boileau FRS, G Bailey (Curator of the Soane Museum), Henry Cole, Peter
Le Neve Foster (one of the Society's treasurers), Lefevre and Scott
Russell.

Once again Cole used his journalistic skills in support of his campaign.
The Art Manufacturers Circular (No 1, March 1848), of which there was
only ever one issue, announced the exhibitions which the Society of Arts
planned for 1848 and included a description of the deputation to the
Board of Trade and the proposals for a national exhibition. The
following extracts demonstrate the way in which Cole and his colleagues
made the Society's proposals very attractive to the President of the
Board of Trade:
Sir John Boileau ... submitted a plan by which the Schools of Design, the Society of Arts, and the Government might conjointly co-operate to bring about the important object which they all have in view — namely, to promote the union of art with manufactures, to cultivate the public taste, and to improve and disseminate the products of national industry. The proposed plan was read by Mr Scott Russell....

Cole, no doubt after discussion with Lefevre, was astute enough to ensure that the delegation emphasised those aspects of the scheme which related to the Board of Trade's own responsibilities.

The exhibition of the present year [at the Society's rooms] will demonstrate that these preliminary steps [towards a national exhibition] taken by the society for cultivating the public taste, and promoting the application of the arts to the improvement of the manufactures of the country, have been successful, and that the success of an enlarged and national exhibition is no longer doubtful.

Clearly, the government had to be persuaded that the public would give their support.

For the promotion of this important object it is most necessary that the same preliminary measures which have been successful in the metropolis should be extended to the provinces. The students in the Government Schools of Design throughout the country should be rendered familiar with the most recent works in art and manufactures; the manufacturers who must be the future employers of these students, should be more closely connected with them; and the public taste improved for the due appreciation of their joint productions. It is therefore proposed that the places where schools of design are established should, in rotation, have the advantage and use of the collection made in London every year by the society...

Again, the deputation were stressing benefits to the Board of Trade, who, as we shall see in the following chapter, were responsible for the
Schools of Design.

It is also proposed...that such national exhibitions shall take place in some large building purposely provided, if not at the cost of the government, at least with the Government's sanction. It is suggested that the site which offers the greatest advantages for such a building (to be of a temporary character) would be Trafalgar Square....

Here we get to the nub of the matter. The specific help which the deputation required was the use of a government owned site. Finally, the Secretary to the Board added his support to the very attractive case put forward:

Mr Lefevre... pointed out the advantages which the Schools of Design would derive from the liberal offer of the Society, which Mr Labouchere immediately accepted...... Mr Labouchere also expressed a deep interest in the proposed national exhibition and referred the Deputation to the Chairman of the Woods and Works (Lord Morpeth) to arrange the site of the National Exhibition.

Mr Labouchere (later Lord Taunton), President of the Board of Trade, was persuaded that the scheme was practical and that it deserved governmental support.

Matters proceeded slowly and it was not until a year later that the plans for the national exhibition reached the stage where a specific request could be made to Parliament. On 21st April 1849 the Council of the Society of Arts resolved to request that the government provide a site for a national exhibition in 1851. It is perhaps significant that in the Society's minute book the proposed exhibition is referred to as the "National Exhibition of British Manufactures" - but the word British has been crossed out. The petition which was presented through Milner Gibson (Vice President of the Board of Trade from 1846-48) was referred
Thomas Milner Gibson MP had been elected a member of the Society of Arts on 4th April 1849, and had been introduced by Cole. It is probable that Cole had identified another useful man, meant to obtain his cooperation in furthering his various projects and believed the best way to do this was through mutual membership of the Society of Arts. Not surprisingly, the Select Committee which Gibson chaired supported the Society's petition (Cole, 1884; Volume I, 122). Cole had been able to make and use the appropriate contacts in order to obtain at least a minimum level of government support for the exhibition.

The Society of Arts exhibitions of manufactures in 1848 and 1849 attracted 70,000 and 100,000 visitors respectively, indicating the enormous public interest in exhibitions of industrial products. This large number of visitors can be related to the population of London, which, at the 1851 census, was 2,362,236. The idea of exhibitions of industry was not new in this country. Toshio Kusamitsu (1980) suggests that the Mechanics' Institutes exhibitions, beginning with one in Manchester in 1837 and rapidly growing to become very popular and frequent occurrences, were important precursors helping to make the success of 1851 probable. The Mechanics' Institutes exhibitions had been priced to attract the working classes, had stayed open in the evenings to suit those working during the day and had even made use of railway excursion trains. A portion of the British public was thereby used, both in London and the provinces, to the concept of exhibitions of

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3. This exhibition was referred to in an advertisement in the Manchester Guardian 9th December 1837 as "a popular exhibition of models of machinery, philosophical instruments, works in fine and useful arts, objects in natural history, and specimens of British Manufacturers" offering the working classes "a convenient opportunity of inspecting the present state of our arts and manufactures".
arts and manufactures, and there were people in the industrial towns with experience of gathering together items for exhibition. In London there were members of the Society of Arts who were experienced exhibition organisers and there was a public which had supported exhibitions of manufactures.

On the 29th May 1849 Cole left for Paris to attend the French National Exposition. Whilst there Cole became aware that some of the organisers of the French exhibition had hoped that they could have arranged an international exhibition, but had met with powerful opposition. If the idea of internationality for the British exhibition had not already been conceived it must surely have been considered now. Cole made contact with the Palace on his return from Paris and it seems probable that he proposed that the planned London exhibition should be international in scope. A letter from Phipps, dated June 26th 1849, states:

With regard to your other suggestion [internationality?] there seems to be considerable difficulty. The Prince wishes to go on Saturday into the question of the Great Periodical Exhibition and I have requested Mr Scott Russell and Mr Cubitt to meet you here (Cole Correspondence; I, 15).

The Saturday meeting would be on 30th June. Cole's diary for 29th June 1849 records "To Buckingham Palace: saw Pr: Albert who agreed that the Exhibition should be a large one embracing foreign productions". Cole visited Buckingham Palace on the 29th to speak to Phipps, the Prince's secretary, about the meeting which was planned for the following day, and during that visit had an opportunity to speak to the Prince. Emerson (1977; 36) suggests that "by this apparently fortuitous encounter, Cole stole a march on his fellow delegates". The Prince,

4. The three Paris exhibitions of 1849, 1855 and 1867 are briefly discussed in Chapter 7.
cautious by nature, was now enthusiastic about an exhibition which had been shown to have support. Cole suggested that Hyde Park could provide a site large enough for an exhibition of the "works of all nations" and the Prince asked him to investigate whether such a site could be provided without interfering with the requirements of the army who used the park for manoeuvres (Cole, 1884; Volume 1, 125). It was certainly Cole who made the suggestion to the Prince, but it may not have been his own idea. Emerson, in his biography of Scott Russell, suggests that it was Francis Fuller who first suggested Internationality in a letter which he wrote to Scott Russell (Emerson, 1977; 36).

Cole returned to the Palace on the following day to attend the formal meeting convened by Prince Albert. Seven major decisions were taken at this meeting. Firstly they settled the kinds of products which would be accepted. They decided that they would commission temporary buildings since no existing building would accommodate an exhibition of the size now envisaged. They decided on Hyde Park as a site. They confirmed that the exhibition would be international, that prizes of money would be awarded to the best exhibits in each class, and that a Royal Commission should be formed to carry out the plan. The exhibition was to be financed by voluntary subscription, which would be organised by the Society of Arts.

On the 1st July Cole took his wife and children out for a walk "to look at site in Hyde Park" (Cole Diary). This large and publicly owned open space relatively close to the metropolis had been the site chosen when

5. The Prince must already have considered the idea of a permanent exhibition site because Cole's diary records after the meeting on the 30th June "Saw the Prince: he wd give up his plan of a permanent building for the present". It was agreed with the Prince that a temporary site was what was required.

6. Wood (1913; 411) says that the decision for a Commission was made at a second meeting at Osborne which Labouchere also attended.
the Society of Arts had made its first attempt to organise a national exhibition in 1845. It had an ambience which other large open spaces in less fashionable parts of London could not hope to match.

On the 2nd July Francis Fuller expressed to Cole his willingness to "contract to find a building & £20,000 for prizes" (Cole Diary). Cubitt had estimated the costs to be £50,000 for the building and £20,000 for prizes (Wood, 1913; 413). Fuller was not proposing to find the money himself. With the help of his father-in-law George Drew he persuaded the brothers James and George Munday\(^7\) to put up the money and to bear the risk of the preliminary expenses.

The Council of the Society of Arts were informed of these major developments at a meeting on 26th July 1849 (RSA, Minutes of Council). Apart from John Scott Russell as Secretary only five council members were present, not including Cole. They were told that "HRH Prince Albert would certainly take a prominent part in the proceedings and assist the object as much as possible". The whole Council formally agreed to go forward with the project, but, having no funds themselves to provide for the capital costs they agreed to "make enquiries for parties willing to advance the necessary funds". Cole, apparently, had not told the Council that likely investors had been identified.

At the next meeting of the Council on the 31st July 1849, this time in the presence of Cole, the terms under which the capital might be borrowed were discussed and agreed and on the same day John Scott Russell wrote to Frances Fuller and asked him to "offer your friend 5 per cent per annum on the money which he may advance and one half of the profits of the transaction". Russell also asked for reassurance that

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7. George Munday became a member of the Society of Arts on 9th May 1849.
the "friend" was "a man of sufficient capacity to execute the work in a truly National spirit, worthy of such an undertaking, especially that in no case shall our President HRH be compromised in anything we shall do, or have to cooperate with any one not worthy of working under so excellent and distinguished a leader in so noble a cause" (Russell, 1849).

Cole was insistent that a clause be entered in the contract to allow for its cancellation at a later date. Cole hoped that the government might be persuaded to become sponsor of the exhibition, at which point the Mundays could be politely asked to withdraw. The government was not persuaded, but the clause allowing cancellation of the contract was used when it became clear that the financing of the event by private speculation was unpopular. Wood states (1913; 414) that "as the experiment was of a national character, it ought to rely upon voluntary contributions and should not be made a question of profit and loss".

A Royal Commission to manage the exhibition could not be issued until after the summer parliamentary recess and it was suggested by Labouchere of the Board of Trade that the Society of Arts might canvass the opinions of manufacturers in the intervening weeks (Cole, 1884; Volume 1, 126). On 14th July and 1st August Cole made visits to Osborne to consult with the Prince, and on the 14th August, true to his usual style, he visited the offices of the Times newspaper, to discuss the possibility that the newspaper might give its support in promoting the exhibition. In his diary Cole recorded "To Mr Morris at the Times. He quite approved of the Exhibition".

8. A quotation from Cole's diary of 22/8/49 indicates the probable source of the idea - Mr Labouchere "thought the Prince ought not to be subjected to individual responsibility & hoped that there would be proper care taken by an arbitration clause in the agreement to end disputes".
A frantic campaign followed with Cole, Fuller and Scott Russell visiting towns throughout the British Isles. From 27th August to 14th September Cole visited Stoke, Manchester, Sheffield, Kendal, Glasgow and a number of other Scottish towns (calling in to see the Prince at Balmoral), Belfast, Dublin, Birmingham and Coventry. On the 27th September Cole called on Lord Langdale (Cole's boss at the Record Office) to report on developments relating to the exhibition. "He hoped I was going to be paid...thought we were quite justified in doing other things as our salary was too low - thought this business just as right as reviewing or writing history. He claimed no right to know how the vacations were spent - saw no objection to my having 6 days increased vacation" (Cole Diary).

There was a precedent in Cole's publishing and his Art Manufactures for having interests outside of his civil service employment, which at this time required him to attend his office for only six hours each day, and Langdale saw the exhibition as an acceptable employment for Cole. Cole later told Fuller that he thought £1200 a year would be a "fair remuneration for the job" (of being on the management team for the exhibition) (Cole Diary; 22nd October 1849). Cole's civil service salary at the time was £500 per annum. Cole wanted the prestigious job, but it is probable that he also needed the money if he was to keep up a lifestyle suitable to the company he was keeping.

After visiting Dover and Canterbury at the beginning of October Cole and Fuller presented a report to Prince Albert, dated 5th October 1849, of the Preliminary enquiries into the willingness of Manufacturers and others to support periodical exhibitions of the works of all nations (Cole and Fuller, 1849). The report not only gives an indication of support from particular people and places but also presents quotations arising from the survey commenting on the question of whether the
exhibition should be international in scope, on the type of exhibits which would be acceptable, and on the question of prizes.

On 17th October 1849 Cole gave a presentation on the planned exhibition at a meeting at the Mansion House in London. The London presentation came at the end of the nationwide tour; the London financiers and industrialists could be assured that the rest of the country was already behind the scheme. The meeting was a success and with this indication of support from the city it seemed that the scheme would be able to go ahead (Cole, 1849; Anon, 1849).

Cole took the responsibility for drafting the Royal Commission which was issued on 3rd January 1850. There were 28 commissioners in all, influential people from politics, the arts, sciences and business. Queen Victoria referred to them as "a curious assemblage of political and distinguished men" (Gibbs-Smith, 1981; 18). Few of the commissioners took an active role. It was Lord Granville, at that time Vice President at the Board of Trade, who became the most active of the commissioners, working with the Prince and the executive to see the project through.

Cole's connection with the exhibition suited him, but it did not suit everyone. In his diary Cole records Scott Russell's embarrassment when he let slip that "someone had said that [Cole] was a great jobber and wondered why he had connected me with the scheme. He rather stumbled out an explanation upon perceiving my indignation" (Cole Diary, 4th November 1849). The accusation would seem to be an unfair one. He was an achiever, but he had not worked for entirely selfish or financial motives. He had upset people, but always in what he believed to be good causes.

The 13th November 1849 saw one of the regular meetings of the members of the Executive Committee with the Prince. Fuller and Cole went to Windsor. The entry in Cole's diary "Proposed salary £1200, Fuller £1000" does not indicate who did the proposing. It would be unlike Cole to let someone else take the initiative! On December 21st 1849 letters were drafted by the Munday's solicitors relating to the payments for Cole and Fuller. Cole's exhibition salary was to commence from the date of his secondment from the Record Office (Trevelyan, 1850), but he was to be paid at the rate of £500 per annum for the work done up to that point.

The frustrations which Scott Russell and Fuller felt are indicated in Cole's diary - "Russell said the public wd regard £1200 a year as a job" (i.e. jobbery); "Fuller upbraided me with upsetting the nicest pail of milk worth to one £10,000 at least" (Cole Diary; 21st December 1849). If the project remained in private hands Russell, Fuller and Cole could have expected to take a share of the profits. A salary, as had been proposed (by Cole?) at the Executive Committee meeting on the 13th November was a guaranteed income, but potentially very much smaller. It is not surprising that Scott Russell and Fuller found Cole's attitude both irritating and damaging.
As we have seen, this was not the first time that Cole had been offered lucrative employment outside the civil service. For Cole it seems, it was important to remain a civil servant and to be involved in the exhibition in such a way that his superiors would approve. Cole's motivation for staying inside the civil service at this stage is unclear, but it may have been due to the fact that as a civil servant he was in a position to influence the politicians with whom he worked; these politicians formed an important part of his developing power base.

Cole's involvement with the exhibition was not universally popular. Milner Gibson told Cole of a Manchester Guardian article which questioned Cole's motives, informing him that the "rich looked upon [Cole] as worse than O'Connor" (the Chartist) (Cole Diary, 13th January 1850). If Cole really was as unpopular as these comments would tend to suggest it seems improbable that he could succeed in rallying support for his various causes. Cole was certainly an irritant to a number of people, but his abilities were considerable and the support of those who admired him seems to have been sufficient to protect him from his detractors.

On 22nd December 1849 General Charles Grey, who was to become one of Cole's most consistent allies, arrived at Windsor Castle to begin his employment as private secretary to the Prince. On 1st January 1850 Cole came visiting to talk with the Prince about the Commission for the exhibition. The following day, after receiving a letter from Cole, Grey was sent to have discussions with Mr Labouchere at the Board of Trade. Grey recorded in his journal "I see Mr Labouchere has considerable fear of Mr Cole & his friends of the Society of Arts - and I have seen enough of him, I think, to make me believe he [Cole] wishes to get the entire management of the proposed exhibition" (General Charles Grey, Journal; 2nd January 1849). It is clear that Cole had made an impression. Grey
had not had much opportunity to get to know Cole, but he was already aware that Cole was a force to be reckoned with.

The contract with the Mundays was becoming an embarrassment, not least to the Prince, who, once the Royal Commission was created, would be officially involved in a business venture. The cancellation of the contract was to reveal the tensions between those whose first and only interest was that the exhibition should take place and those for whom the financial implications were a vital concern. Cole's diary includes a number of cryptic remarks about the publication of the contract with the Mundays and about correspondence between Cole and the "contractors". The Mundays confided to Cole that they had put up the £20,000 "solely in hopes of getting the building" (Cole Diary, 9th January 1850). It seems the Commissioners felt that there should be no commercial speculation connected with the exhibition because, at their first meeting on 11th January 1850, they decided to cancel the contract.

The Society of Arts also agreed to terminate their financial interest in the exhibition. At a Council meeting at the Society of Arts on 19th January "all agreed that Socy cd be cut adrift in the contract" (Cole Diary, 19th January 1850). By the terms of the contract the Society of Arts had stood to gain one third of any profits which might result from the exhibition. At another Council meeting on the 23rd January, Webster (who had a longstanding interest in the Society's finances having been chairman of the special committee of the Society established in 1841 to address the problem of the unsatisfactory state of the Society) accused the Executive Committee of "betraying the interests of the Society by assenting to the determination of the contract" (Cole Diary).

Bad feeling persisted about the termination of the contract. On the 30th January "Webster attacked Dilke for corrupt motives" (Cole Diary),...
and in this case Webster was not alone in his suspicions. A Special General Meeting of the Society of Arts "in conformity with the requisition presented to the Council, and received on the 23rd inst.", was held on Friday the 8th February to "ascertain and consider the position of the Society of Arts with respect to the Industrial Exhibition proposed to be held in 1851" (Abstract of Proceedings of the Society of Arts, 1850, Session XCVI). Cole confided to Colonel Reid (who had been appointed chairman of the Executive Committee for the Exhibition) that he believed Francis Fuller had a "connection" with the Mundays (Cole Diary; 17th April 1850), and Cole while visiting the House of Commons on the following day was told that there was "a job somewhere in the contract" (Cole Diary, 18th April 1850). On the 22nd April Fuller denied to Cole that he had any personal agreement with the Mundays (Cole Diary). Yet another rift was revealed when Stafford Northcote (Secretary to the Commissioners) told Cole that the Commissioners didn't trust Russell (Cole Diary, 26th April 1850).

Cole reports the end of the contract with the Mundays very briefly in his autobiography: "the statement and the reasons for this decision were given and published. The subject of remuneration was referred to Mr Robert Stephenson, MP, for arbitration, and the award was £5,120, with costs of £587" (Cole, 1884; Volume 1, 148-149). This gives no inkling of the bitterness and unpleasantness which surrounded this reversal of the executive committee's decision to use private profit-making to finance a public event. Robert Stephenson had originally been appointed Secretary to the Commission, but had resigned this post and was made a Commissioner in August of 1850. Stephenson awarded the Mundays a little over £5000 in compensation and instructed that the Society of Arts should pay the Munday's legal expenses and his own expenses in carrying out the arbitration. The Society of Arts were not only to lose the right to one third of any profits (which would have amounted to
£60,000), they were to pay over cash to the Mundays— and within ten days. In the event the Royal Commission paid these expenses on behalf of the Society (Hudson and Luckhurst, 1954; 204).

Meanwhile efforts were made to create support for the exhibition among those who might be able to assist in the encouragement of British manufacturers to submit exhibits. A banquet was held at the Mansion House on the evening of the 21st March 1850 to which 150 "mayors etc" were invited. Cole's diary records that it was "as good as it cd be. Prince's, Stanley's & Peel's speeches capital.." Following on from the successful meeting, sixty of the guests met with the Commissioners on the following day to discuss further details of the scheme. The detailed planning of the exhibition could now begin.

Cole was disappointed that after taking a very active part in the initial planning of the exhibition, with the appointment of the Royal Commission his influence was reduced, and he had to work through the various committees rather than directly to the Prince. Cole recalled in his biography:

After the issue of the Royal Commission, however, my relations with the Prince were of necessity altogether changed. Up to that time I had had the privilege of being consulted by him on all occasions, for several months. The Prince relinquished his individual responsibilities, and placed himself more or less in the hands of the government, acting by the advice especially of Earl Granville, who worked as his deputy and as chairman both of the Finance Committee and of the Commissioners (Cole, 1884; Volume 1, 155).

Cole, with Russell, drew up resolutions for presentation to the Commissioners stating that since the establishment of the Commission had "changed the nature of their functions, and even superceded many of them" the Commissioners might wish to reform the executive and should
feel free to do so (Cole Diary, 7th and 8th February 1850). Robert Stephenson was replaced as Secretary by Colonel Reid\(^{10}\) of the Royal Engineers on 7th February 1850.

The new executive committee was not a lot happier. Cole reports that "We were not summoned to attend the early meetings of the Commission, and this we felt much impeded our work. We, indeed, received direct from the Commission few orders for any work. We were objects of suspicion...and were certainly uncomfortable enough" (Cole, 1884; Volume 1, 161). It must have been a very difficult time indeed. After being very central to the initiation of the Great Exhibition Cole was now completely sidelined. Cole, however, came to terms with Reid and came to respect him (Cole Diary; 18th February 1850; Cole, 1884; Volume 1, 155–156). Cole expressed to Lyon Playfair\(^{11}\) his belief that he still had the confidence of the Prince and Lord Granville "whilst Scott Russell appeared to have lost it" (Cole Diary, 11th June 1850). This was unhappiness enough, but the exhibition had enemies without as well as jealousies within. Colonel Sibthorpe and his antagonism towards the exhibition is a well known chapter in the story of the exhibition. A useful summary of the opposition to the exhibition is given in Gibbs-Smith (1981; 9–11).

Lyon Playfair was asked by Lord Granville to become a "Special Commissioner" and member of the Executive committee. It was hoped that he would become a bridge between the Commission and the Executive. Playfair recognised the difficulty of the position, but after consultation with the Prince agreed to the appointment. Playfair's autobiographical notes, published in the biography by Wemyss Reid,

10. Reid had been recommended by Cole's old ally Labouchere (DNB)
11. For details of Playfair and his career see Appendix 1 and Chapter 6.
The mainspring of the Exhibition from first to last was Sir Henry Cole. He was a man of remarkable energy and ability, and had no other object in regard of any work in which he was engaged than the best method of ensuring its success. He has often been accused of working with selfish motives. Never was an accusation more unfounded. The public good was always uppermost - I might say the only - motive in his mind. He was constantly misjudged, because his modes of work were not always on the surface. If he came to an obstacle it was his delight to tunnel under it in secret and unexpectedly come out at the other side. His purposes were, therefore, not infrequently misunderstood, and when I joined the Executive there was much want of confidence between it and the Royal Commission. This was unjust to Cole, with whom I was constantly associated to the end of his life, and for whom I had a sincere respect (Reid, 1900; 114).

Although this tribute must be read in the light of the fact that it was written after Cole's death and is therefore probably generous, it is very clear about two things, firstly that Cole was motivated to promote the public, rather than his private, good, and secondly that he was under suspicion due to his methods of working and his abrasive personality.

The series of events by which the Commissioners selected and arranged for construction of the building to house the huge exhibition which was now proposed were protracted and contentious. Cole's involvement in this was not because of participation in the building committee, which consisted of architects, engineers and builders and included Charles Barry, Robert Stephenson, I K Brunel, and William Cubitt, brother of the Commissioner Thomas Cubitt.

12. This is the source of the phrase "public good" used in the title of this thesis.
Although Cole was on the Executive Committee and had shown his interest in the building by preparing, at his own volition, a paper on fireproofing which would be necessary for the building, the Building Committee did not want his interference (Cole Diary; 4th June 1850). The committee had announced an open competition for design of the building, but reserved the right, if they thought fit, to produce a design of their own. The two hundred and forty five entries which they received were reviewed, but the committee found none acceptable and proceeded to work on their own design for a complex brick structure.

On 7th June 1850 Joseph Paxton\textsuperscript{13} attended a trial sitting of Parliament in the new House of Commons building. The defects of the design of the House set him thinking about the proposed exhibition building for Hyde Park and he decided to find out whether it was too late to send in a design (Gibbs-Smith, 1981; 11). Paxton must have gone straight from the House to the Executive of the Exhibition, because Cole's diary records that on that day "Mr Paxton called to propose his flat roof of glass". The Commissioners told Paxton that he could still submit a plan, providing he did so via one of the contractors submitting tenders for the committee design. On 20th June Paxton travelled down to London again to deposit his plans with the Commissioners. On this journey he travelled with Robert Stephenson, who was enthusiastic about the very innovative modular iron and glass design (ibid.). The Paxton plans were deposited, but on the 22nd June the plans prepared by the Building Committee were published in the \textit{Illustrated London News}. Paxton estimated that it would cost £80,000 to erect his glasshouse (Cole Diary; 21st June 1850), the Building Committee's more traditionally built brick structure would certainly be more expensive.

\textsuperscript{13} Although often referred to as the Duke of Devonshire's gardener he had by this time risen to become rather more than just a gardener to the Duke and was also a Director of the Midland Railway and was already a public figure.
A meeting of Cole (Executive Committee), Playfair (Special Commissioner), Reid (Secretary to Executive Committee), Northcote (Secretary to the Commission) and Granville (Commissioner) on 29th June 1850 discussed the problem of securing tenders for the exhibition building. It was agreed that Cole would visit Liverpool and Manchester "to endeavour to induce contractors to tender for a cheaper building than the one proposed" (Cole Diary; 29th June 1850). Cole left for Liverpool on the same day. He spent a day in Liverpool and a day in Manchester, but with no success. On the following day, the 2nd July, he travelled back via Birmingham and went to visit Fox and Henderson at Smethwick. Paxton had been there before him. Fox and Henderson were the firm he approached to submit his plans for him. On the 22nd June he had shown them his design and on the 29th June they had drawn up an agreement to put in a joint bid to erect Paxton's design (Hix, 1974; 134-135). Paxton's biographer has suggested that Cole, knowing that this was the firm submitting Paxton's design, called in at Smethwick to make sure that the Paxton plan would conform exactly to the conditions stipulated by the Commissioners (Chadwick, 1961; 110); Cole wished to ensure that the Paxton design could not be rejected on a technicality. Cole records that:

Fox said it would be hardly possible to erect the [committee's] plan in time - brickwork would take 13,000,000 [bricks]. Euston took 20 million and 5 months to lay. 3000 cubic yards of water in dome to evaporate before it is cut... Both [Fox and Henderson] agreed to tender in 3 ways [plan, economised plan and Paxton's plan]" (Cole Diary; 2nd July 1850).

These experienced building contractors were convinced that the brick design was impractical, and that Paxton's modular design could be built

14. Fox and Henderson had been the contractors responsible for erecting the iron roofs at Paddington and Waterloo stations.
to the required timescale at an acceptable cost. Meanwhile Paxton was making his own arrangements to promote his design. He published the details in the *Illustrated London News* of 6th July. By this very Cole-like means he earned immediate public support for his glass clad building.

On the 9th July Cole and Dilke took Fox financial details of the exhibition to assist in his calculations for the tender, and Fox and Cole collaborated again on the preparation of a statement of the advantages of Paxton's design. While the potential building contractors became more cooperative the Building committee remained unhelpful. Reid "declined to say [to Cole] what he knew about the tenders" and Digby Wyatt "said he could not talk about the tenders as he wished to be able to say he had told no one" (Cole Diary; 10th July 1850). Cole was, it seems, trying to get inside information with respect to the tenders which had been submitted, so that he could assist Fox and Henderson in the preparation of their own tender.

On 14th July Fox gave Cole his final tender for £93,250 and together they went to visit the site. There they met Paxton (who agreed to build a dome over the trees whose possible destruction was the cause of considerable public concern) and Brunel. On the 16th July the Commissioners met and officially adopted Paxton's plan. Despite the Building Committee, Cole had identified Paxton's as a workable plan and found a builder. The Commissioners at this late date had very little choice but to agree the Cole-backed scheme.

At last the building could get underway. Possession of the site was obtained on 30th July. The first castings arrived at the site on the 7th September. The first column was fixed on the 26th September. On the 16th October Cole met the *Illustrated London News* artist on site.
with a view to publishing reports about the progress of the building. Paxton gave a paper to a crowded meeting of the Society of Arts on 13th November. The final seal of approval for the building came on 23rd December when Lord Granville sent for Cole to be present at the site when the Queen and Prince Albert came to inspect the work. Cole's New Year celebrations with Colonel Reid, Milner Gibson, Playfair and Dilke must indeed have been a celebration.

An article in the Westminster and Foreign Quarterly Review, the periodical which Cole and Hickson had purchased from Mill, by "Helix" has quite a lot to say about the building (1850, April, p85-). Helix (W. B. Adams, identified in Wellesley Index) was very much against the idea of a temporary exhibition which would "render England the laughing stock of the world". Certainly it would be unnecessary to have a prestigious building committee to design a temporary building. Adams goes on to suggest that "The architectural principles that would have to be followed in the construction of a grand metropolitan conservatory or winter garden harmonize in every respect with those which would have to be carried out for the exhibition, whatever design may be adopted". The details for construction of such a large conservatory are referred to. This suggestion of a glass clad building predates Paxton's involvement by two months. Adams considered the Hyde Park site to be inconveniently distant from railway terminals, and the Classified List of Objects (which had been prepared to assist local committees in selecting exhibits) far too inclusive.

In a footnote added to the article before publication Adams refers to the publication of a notice that goods were not to be sold at the exhibition - "It is obvious that the plans of the Commissioners are at present altogether immature. The exhibition must now be postponed another year or the most abortive results may be anticipated". Unlike
some, Adams approved of the principle of the exhibition, it was the organisation which was found lacking.

Adams had reason to be concerned. Amazingly, when the Commissioners had made a decision on the building and had accepted a tender to build it, and had set in motion the necessary actions to ensure that the building could be filled with exhibits from around the world, they still had no money to finance the project! When the Mundays had been sent packing the general idea of a guarantee fund had been agreed, but in mid-July of 1850 no action had been taken to set up the fund.

At a meeting at the Society of Arts on 27th March 1850 Cole had met Samuel Moreton Peto, Liberal politician, building contractor, and one of the Commissioners, who had said that he was prepared to guarantee £10,000 for the exhibition if it were required. Shortly afterwards, in April of 1850, Cole prepared "A short statement of the nature and objects of the proposed Great Exhibition..." emphasising the facts that the exhibition was now to be funded by voluntary subscription and that the event was one of peaceful competition between nations (Cole, 1850).

The following extract demonstrates the tone of the pamphlet:

The exhibition has been adopted by the nation as its own perfectly voluntary work; and in this feature it presents another and noble distinction from the national exhibitions of other countries. Abroad, such exhibitions are paid for by the Governments - here, like our docks, our bridges, our railways, our churches, and all great national works, this Exhibition will be paid for by the free-will offerings of all classes of the people. In the same list of subscribers there appears the shilling of the parish Constable of Braintree and the thousand pounds of his Sovereign! - The Exhibition of 1851 will fulfil the prophesy of the sacred volume, and hasten the period "when men shall beat their swords into plough-shares and their spears into pruning hooks". It is a stage forward in that millenium which announces "peace and goodwill towards men".

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Again Cole is making clear his belief that governments should not be directly involved in the promotion of exhibitions. Cole was quite clear at this stage in the proceedings that great public events should be financed by voluntary subscription. In the following chapters we shall see how he came to use voluntary contributions in the provinces to support the local design schools and their students. As the years went by Cole, in parallel with many others, came to have a broader view of those events and institutions which should receive government funding.

On the 12th July, at the time when tenders for the building were coming in, Cole met Peto again. "As I passed Peto's office he came out and at my suggestion went to the Reform Club and wrote an offer to Colonel Grey to become guarantee for £50,000" (Cole Diary). Peto was sufficiently sure of the project that he guaranteed not the £10,000 which he had originally offered but a very generous £50,000. The short list of guarantors from which Cole had drawn examples for his pamphlet rapidly grew as others followed Mr Peto's example and the fund was soon up to £350,000. The Bank of England was then persuaded to make the necessary advances and at last the work could begin. The exhibition was to be opened on 1st May 1851.

On the 24th June 1850, when the committee's building plans were made available, Cole spoke to Granville and Bowring at the Board of Trade. Granville was worried about the public criticism of the choice of the Hyde Park site. Cole, also suffering anxiety, but in his case about the frustrations of being excluded from the policy making team, began to think seriously about resigning from the Executive Committee and discussed the idea with friends and colleagues. On the 25th June Cole told Colonel Reid that he wished to resign; "he begged me not" (Cole Diary). On the 26th he showed his proposed letter of resignation to Playfair who "urged me not to send it" (ibid.). For the next few days
Cole was busy with his successful journey to find tenders for the building but he was again depressed by what he heard at the House of Commons debate of the 4th July. The Commons, like so much of London society, found much to criticise in the proposed exhibition and its supposed potential to cause social upheaval and to damage Hyde Park. After the debate Cole called on Prince Albert to inform him of the result; despite the loss of their champion Peel, who had died on 2nd July, the exhibition lobby had won. The degree of antagonism, however, had surprised and upset the exhibition promoters. The Prince too was unsettled by the strength of opposition and told Cole "it had never entered his head that anyone could object". Cole was offended that the Prince did not thank him for calling and on his way home "called on Dilke - advised me not to resign" (Cole Diary; 4th July 1850).

Mulready, who had been the focus of Cole's first successful exhibition, tried to help when Cole called on him on the following day, telling him "never trouble to revenge yourself, there are always plenty of persons around with a tomahawk to do that work" (Cole Diary; 5th July 1850). On the 11th it was the artist Richard Redgrave who "strongly dissuaded" him from resigning. Despite the fact that all of his friends were advising him against resignation he again approached Colonel Reid, this time with letter of resignation in hand; "He said you won't send it, said I would if I had no work" (Cole Diary).

But he didn't send it. He was offered a trip to Dublin to visit an exhibition there, to talk about possible exhibitors for London and to call on likely guarantors on his way back. When this trip was confirmed by Granville on the 20th July Cole decided to postpone writing his letter of resignation to Colonel Grey. After this date things did get better. He had enough work to do. The Executive were invited to attend
a Commissioners meeting for the first time on the 14th November 1850. In hindsight Cole was able to say that "As the work began to manifest itself, in 1851 our positions became easier. On the 3rd March Colonel Reid said that Dilke and I ought to attend all meetings of Commissioners and Committees. I answered that I was now quite indifferent. He replied "I can understand that, for you have grown above it"" (Cole, 1884; Volume 1, 162 and Cole Diary).

Cole's major responsibility within the Executive Committee was for the allocation of space for exhibits. Some idea of the size of the undertaking can be gleaned from the fact that there were 14,000 exhibitors, from 13 foreign countries, 11 colonies, India and the British Isles. Cole was supported by Superintendents of Classes, who were responsible for grouping the objects by class as far as possible. Detailed lists of the kinds of exhibits which were acceptable had been drawn up. The plan was to display all of the goods within the four main divisions which had been originally suggested by Prince Albert - raw materials (4 classes), machinery (6 classes), manufactured articles (19 classes) and art applied to manufacture (1 class). This classification was used for the purposes of jury reports and prizes, but in the event the articles themselves were arranged by country of origin.

Cole's superintendents were officers of the Royal Engineers. Sappers (the name of the "other ranks" who comprised the Royal Sappers and Miners) acted as clerks and draughtsman, undertook customs-house duties, fire prevention, receipt and removal of goods, and sweeping of

15. A letter from Cole to Phipps suggests that the Registrar General used the exhibition classification in drawing up the classification which was used in the 1851 census (Cole Correspondence; I, 36).

16. Arrangements had been made for exhibits to be delivered from the docks to the exhibition where a temporary customs office was established.
the British area of the exhibition every morning throughout the exhibition. Colonel Reid had been appointed Commanding Royal Engineer at Woolwich in 1849 and knew the capabilities of his men. They provided a disciplined workforce which could be seconded to the work and accommodated at the nearby military barracks. Assembly of a similar number of civilians would have posed considerable additional problems for the organisers.

The use of the Royal Engineers was a great success. Reader (1966; 74-75) points out some of the peculiarities of the Royal Engineers within the British Army. The Engineers were a meritocracy. No commissions could be bought; practical training was required. This contrasted with other regiments where the most valued attributes were "honour" and horsemanship. As a result the Engineers were considered an unsuitable regiment for a gentleman to serve in. However, because wealth was not a requirement, the officers of the Royal Engineers were men with ability and ambition, just what was required to assist the Great Exhibition. Cole very much appreciated the versatility of the Royal Engineers, and he continued to use them on the site at South Kensington in the schools and museums and in the exhibitions held there over the following 25 years.

Cole was where the buck stopped for all the complaints about allocation of space, and the complaints were many. "Playfair said the Metrop: Committee were very angry with Ex: Comm:" (Cole Diary; 21st January 1851); "Jobson Smith sd all Sheffield was in arms against me" (Cole Diary; 23rd March 1851). It was inevitable that many would not be satisfied with the amount of space or its location. One organisation which caused problems was the British and Foreign Bible Society. According to Cole's diary their case was pleaded by Peto (who was a Baptist) on 13th February 1851. After his generosity in offering such a
large amount to the guarantee fund, it is not surprising that space was found for the Bible Society in the printing section (Cole Diary; 6th March 1851), but this caused questions to be asked and Granville and Labouchere visited the exhibition on 27th May specifically to inspect the Bible display before a meeting of the Commissioners on the 30th (Cole Diary). The problem was that "they did not show bibles as specimens of printing, but as a display of their religious enthusiasm in spreading the knowledge of the bible" (Cole, 1884; Volume 1, 195).

Another major cause of frustration to Cole and his colleagues was the building itself. The construction of the building for the exhibition of 1851 was an enormous achievement. A very innovative modular building was erected in a very short space of time. It was, however, a source of worry to the executive committee and the building committee. On the 20th January of 1851 "Cubitt prophesised that we shd not open by 1st May" (Cole Diary) and he had good reason to be concerned. Ten days later there was a violent storm. Cole's diary records (30th January 1851) that the building "leaked everywhere" and that a portion of the roof was blown off. At this stage the internal fittings were being put into place and painting was in progress but in mid-March the roof still leaked and Cole threatened Fox that if the roof wasn't watertight within a week he would publish the fact that it was a failure. (Cole Diary; 17th March 1851). Yet again Cole was ready to use the power of the press in whatever manner would best achieve his object. On the 20th March Cole's diary records that the the painters were vigorously at work on the roof, but on the 22nd there was another storm and again there was leakage and the roof had failed in the same place as it had on the 30th January. On the 7th April Cole recorded that the internal paintwork and removal of scaffolding were very much behind schedule. He wrote to complain to Fox & Co. and "stirred up Reid and Dilke". Fox was told that if the painters were not out by the 14th they would be thrown out!
A blow to Cole’s pride came on 25th April 1851 when "Reid Cubitt and Playfair [were] asked to the Queen’s State Ball" (Cole Diary). Cole was not. Whether this snub was due to the abrasiveness of Cole’s personality or because he was not considered to be of the right class is not clear. Cole felt that he had been done an injustice.

Despite all of the troubles the building was able to be opened on the appointed day, the 1st May. It was quickly clear that both the building and the exhibition were a great success. In view of all the criticism and difficulty which Cole had endured it is not surprising that in his diary he recorded those accolades which he did receive:

5/1/51 Fox referred to Cole as "The coal which raised the steam for the building and exhibition"

1/5/51 "Grey wrote instantly he got home to say how much obliged he was"

2/5/51 "Universal congratulations on the success of the opening"

13/5/51 "Lord Carlisle said he wd join any committee to which Mr Peto & I belonged"

21/5/51 "Fox.... said he wd take care that it was known that without me there would not have been the building"

12/7/51 "[Lord Granville] sd the Exhibition was the most successful thing ever done, but organisation was not good. At first it must be admitted I was under suspicion - now entirely removed and I had earned great praise"

30/7/51 "Met Cobden who said "I always say the Exhibition is the work of you and the Prince - I put you first"

Once Cole had plenty of work to do in connection with the exhibition one might expect that it would have taken up the whole of his time. It did
not. After the opening of the exhibition Cole found time to take on other projects and during 1851, usually through the Society of Arts, he involved himself in the campaigns for patent reform, for the provision of public water closets (Cole Miscellanies; VIII 229), for penny stamps on newspapers and for drawing schools. Of course, in addition to these Cole was prominent in two campaigns related to the Exhibition — to prevent the building being demolished at the end of the exhibition, and to make good use of the surplus funds which it was clear would be available when the exhibition was wound up.

The beginning of the campaign to prevent the destruction of the highly successful exhibition building was at a meeting on 16th June 1851. Cole recorded in his dairy: "Lord Granville, Reid, Dilke & Playfair held a Council abt keeping up the building — read my pamphlet to them in which all agreed. It was to be published anonymously". On this occasion, and not for the first time, Cole was not to allow the public to know it was he who was campaigning. On the 24th June Granville asked Cole to involve Milner Gibson. Cole was on very good terms with Milner Gibson after his chairmanship of the Committee on the Schools of Design and his involvement in obtaining government support for the exhibition. Cole had only recently come back from a trip to Holland on Gibson's yacht. Cole saw him and he agreed to get the matter raised in the House of Commons. By the 8th July other influential people were assisting in the campaign. "Lord Granville said Lord Campbell thought Paxton a great genius in persuading Lord Brougham to speak for the Crystal Palace" (Cole Diary). It was indeed an achievement, because Brougham had been among those opposing the exhibition in the House of Commons. The campaign to keep the Crystal Palace in Hyde Park was a failure, but due to Cubitt, the Crystal Palace was eventually dismantled and removed

17. See Chapter 5 for a detailed study of Cole's involvement in the early history of the Schools of Design.
to Sydenham where it opened to the public in 1854.

The first indication in Cole's diary of a plan of using the surplus funds from the exhibition comes on the 7th August 1851 when he refers to Playfair being "hot upon a school for manufactures". On the 10th Cole himself was busy "writing out a plan of International University". In the matter of the surplus the Prince Consort also had an opinion, but he did not wish to share it with Cole. "Dilke sd the Prince did not wish I shd be told of his plan for disposing of the surplus - enjoined them not to tell me" (Cole Diary; 11th August 1851). Cole continued to discuss the university scheme with Reid, but on the 13th Cole was summoned with others to Osborne where the Prince unveiled his scheme for buying land almost opposite the exhibition site, south of Kensington Road, and of bringing together on that site the major artistic and scientific societies. Cole records "general idea approved, but universal condemnation of details". On the following day the Prince's scheme was the subject of discussion among the staff at the exhibition - "all concerned strongly against the plan. Reid thought it wd be a great misfortune if he published it & it would tend to injuring the monarchy. Playfair had suggested a College of Arts & Manufactures which Reid assented to" (Cole Diary).

Lyon Playfair was invited to Osborne on the 18th August 1851 for further discussions, and on the 19th, following a meeting of the Commissioners "The Prince did not read his Scheme for distributing the surplus - but took Gladstone &c into his own room and told them of it" (Cole Diary). Over the days which followed various ideas were discussed - school, museum, college, university. Playfair suggested that a system of

18. Cole's collection of records relating to the Crystal Palace are to be found in the Cole Miscellanies collection (Miscellanies III 253, 254, Miscellanies VIII 157, 220, 228, 230, Miscellanies XI 1)
Industrial Schools in major towns might be a better option and he and one of the Royal Engineers attached to the exhibition visited several towns to seek views (Cole Diary; 26th, 27th, 29th August 1851). But by the 2nd September Playfair had abandoned that idea and returned to a Central School for Manufactures (Cole Diary). On the 12th of September Cole confided to Granville in a letter (12th September 1851; Granville Papers PRO PRO 30/29/23/1 p.125) that "Candidates for sharing the surplus are coming in daily - so numerously & so varied as to make it clear that the only safe thing will be to fund it to provide another exhibition when it is wanted!". The Prince's idea for a central institution on the site south of Hyde Park was eventually put into practice, the story of how this came about is told in the next chapter.

The Great Exhibition, which was a celebration of the success of the British industrial spirit, was, according to Wiener (1985; 28), "the high-water mark of educated opinion's enthusiasm for industrial capitalism". There would be other exhibitions, but in Britain they would never again command such widespread support. Through the Great Exhibition people of all classes were united in admiration for what was being achieved by the new, urbanised and industrialised Britain (Bedarida, 1976; 4-8). This was the system in which the utilitarian Cole believed. Britain's industrial success was, in Cole's mind, the key to improved conditions for all classes of society, and exhibitions had both an educational and a commercial role to play in fostering that success.

At the end of the Great Exhibition those who had been most closely involved in its organisation received honours. The Prince Consort wrote personal letters of thanks to Reid, Cole, Dilke, Playfair, Scott Russell and Stafford Northcote. The finance committee offered honoraria to Paxton, Reid, Cole, Dilke and Playfair, though Grey thought that they
would probably "be refused by all but Cole". A KCB was to be offered to Reid, CBs to Stafford Northcote, Playfair and Cole, and knighthoods to Cubitt, Paxton, Fox and Dilke (Papers of General Charles Grey; letter from Grey to Phipps, 16th October 1851). Cole, as a civil servant, received the same honour as his fellow civil servants serving on the Executive. The Colonel in command did refuse the honorarium, but accepted a CB. The "gentlemen", not on the Commission, who had made significant contributions to the successful outcome of the exhibition received knighthoods. Scott Russell and Fuller, so conspicuous in the early planning of the event, received no honours (Emmerson, 1977; 37).

Cole felt a very personal satisfaction with his role in the Exhibition of 1851 and with the personal letter from Prince Albert. In this letter Cole's contribution is summarized and his energy and determination recognised:

You have been one of the few who originated the design, became its exponent to the public, and fought its battles in adversity, and belong now to those who share in its triumphs, and it must be as pleasing to you to reflect how much you have contributed to them by your exertions, as it is to me to acknowledge my sense of them (quoted by Cole, 1884; Volume 1, 203).
References Chapter 4

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Chapter 5. The Department of Practical Art

At the end of the Great Exhibition Cole did not return to his humdrum work at the Record Office, but was given charge of a newly created government department, the Department of Practical Art. This change in status provided Cole with formal routes to promote his utilitarian ideals; the informal network centred on the Society of Arts was therefore no longer essential to the fulfilling of Cole's ambitions.

That this new department was created owes much to the efforts of Cole. As we have seen in the previous chapter, during the 1840s, in parallel with his involvement with the Society of Arts and the running of his own business (not to mention his full-time job at the Record Office), Cole had found the time to take an interest in the government funded Schools of Design. The central School had been established in 1837, under the control of the Board of Trade. Christopher Duke (1966; 34-38) has provided a detailed study of the establishment of the Schools of Design, concluding that "there is, however, no doubt that the schools were at first intended to be training grounds for designers, producing better qualified men for the manufacturers". Stuart Macdonald (1970; 67-68) suggests that it was the fact that British manufacturers were spending large sums of money buying in French designs which stimulated the Select Committee of 1835 which led to the establishment of the Schools. The Select Committee, established after a Liverpool MP, William Ewart, had brought the subject to the attention of Parliament, was to "enquire into the best means of extending a knowledge of the arts and of the principles of design among the people (especially the manufacturing

1. The terms "School of Design" and "Schools of Design" are confusing. I have taken the singular form to mean the central School in London whilst the plural includes both the central school and the provincial schools throughout Great Britain.
population of the country". The committee in effect recommended state aid to improve the design of British goods.

Cole was the enthusiast who determined, ten years after the first of the Schools had been founded, to make them meet the objectives which had been set for them. The practical and industrial objectives had been undermined and the schools were teaching mainly middle-class students what has been termed "ornamental art". Cole's enthusiasm for reforming the schools was firmly based on his utilitarian ideals. It is tempting to think that Gladstone had Cole in mind when, in the 1860s, he referred to the "low utilitarian argument in matter of education for giving it what is termed a practical direction" (quoted by Reader (1966; 86) from Gladstone's evidence to the Public Schools Commission, 1864 (Appendix F)).

The establishment of the first School under the control of the Board of Trade fits into the pattern described by Dicey (1905). Dicey identified the period from 1830 to the late 1860s as one in which reformers within Parliament worked together with other enthusiasts and experts (statisticians, scientists and social scientists, clergymen, Benthamites, utilitarians), to "deploy the rhetoric of improvement and reform" (quoted by Macleod, 1988; 9). MacLeod develops the well-known argument of Dicey, in the light of the more recent analysis by MacDonagh (1958) and identifies the emergence of embryo specialist government departments under the wing of the existing departments as a common sequence of events.

This was to be the case with the Department of Practical Art, which began as the Government School of Design under the Board of Trade. Following from the Select Committee of 1835, in July of 1836 £1500 was voted by Parliament for the establishment of a central School of Design,
which was intended to train designers for industry. When the provincial schools were founded (1842 onwards) they were intended to look to the central school for direction. With hindsight it is easy to understand many of the difficulties which the Schools encountered. There was no universal elementary education and students enrolled at the Schools generally needed to have elementary drawing lessons before they could embark on any course in industrial design. The manufacturers were suspicious of the Schools, and afraid of the loss of trade secrets; artists disagreed about the appropriate subjects which might be taught. An exceptional industrialist was Herbert Minton, the man who became involved with Cole in his "Art Manufactures" business. Minton supported the Potteries School of Design, which was itself atypical in that the majority of its students were employees of the local industry (Department of Practical Art, 1853; Appendix K).

In 1842 the central School of Design, together with the provincial schools, was put under the management of a Director, who would report to a Council (twenty four members) which would in turn report to the Board of Trade. The Schools did not flourish. The new Director wished to lead an establishment for the study of "high art" and certainly didn't want to see students studying with a view to business (Bell, 1963; 181). Macdonald (1970; 69-70) points out the antagonism of the Royal Academicians, who denigrated "mere" design, yet feared the schools might attempt to teach more than just ornamentation. The confusion of purpose resulted in the bad press which the schools earned both for their unsatisfactory management and for quarrels among the staff.

Cole's first involvement with the Schools dated from August of 1847. Cole met John Shaw Lefevre, a permanent secretary at the Board of Trade, "on board a Chelsea steamer". Cole does not record the topic of conversation, but notes that he was invited to visit Lefevre at the
Board of Trade, where he was "active in the management of the School of
Design" (Cole, 1884; Volume 1, 109). It was on the 29th January 1848
and at Lefevre's request that Cole called at the Board of Trade again
where he was introduced to Mr Labouchere (later Lord Taunton) the
President of the Board. It seems that Charles Buller had recommended
Cole as a useful man, because correspondence between Labouchere and
Buller discusses the difficulties with the Schools of Design, Labouchere
announcing "If I have any suitable opportunity of using the services of
your friend Mr Cole I shall be pleased to do so" (Cole Correspondence;
letter dated 18th September 184?, among Buller letters). Cole was
offered the chance to lecture at the central School of Design (Cole
Diary).

Cole had no formal qualifications which might have identified him as a
suitable member of the School's teaching staff. However, although by
profession Cole was an able civil service administrator, he had, as we
have seen, connections with many in the artistic community, he had
developed, in a small way, his own skills as an artist and had
experience in design through his art manufactures company. He was also
becoming a very active member of the Society of Arts and through the
Fine Arts committee of the Society was in the process of organising
exhibitions of the work of eminent contemporary artists. Cole therefore
was a man who might improve the management of the School, yet who might
be able to form good relationships with the artists employed there.
Cole discussed the matter with his artist friend Mulready who advised
him "to determine whether to go thoroughly into Art. Man. or to stand
still" (Cole Diary; 30th January 1848).

Cole declined the offer, perhaps because he did not see it as a good
career move, but he did begin an active campaign for reform of the
schools (Cole, 1884; Volume 1, 109). The minute books of the Board of
Trade contain evidence of the discussions which continued between Cole and the Board. Cole was, as we have seen, a member of the Society of Arts deputation to the Board of Trade on 2nd March 1848, which succeeded in obtaining Labouchere's support for the proposed national exhibition.

Following the successful deputation, on 12th March Cole visited Lefevre and "offered to be on the School of Design", by which he meant not that he would teach, but that he would be a member of the Committee of Management (Cole Diary). The problems of the Schools were well known. An anonymous article in the Art Union Journal (1848, 10, p31) complained that "Its ten years labour has scarcely produced a mouse, an expenditure of little short of £100,000 has originated hardly an atom of benefit to the manufacturers of Great Britain". A Board of Trade minute of 12th March 1848 records the reasons for a change in management structure of the School - principally the considerable investment of government money and the need, therefore, for a more direct governmental responsibility for the running of the School (Board of Trade, Minutes; PRO BT 5/57 p.155).

With public discussion of the waste of government money it was necessary that the responsible Department be seen to take some action.

Despite his offer Cole was not selected to be on the new Committee of Management. The Vice President of the Board of Trade and President of the Committee at this time was Lord Granville, who was to become Cole's most influential parliamentary ally and to be the man who offered Cole his kingdom at South Kensington. Granville, apparently, was not yet convinced of Cole's abilities. However, he could not for long remain ignorant of Cole and his talents, since Cole had decided that several

2. The Board of Trade dissolved the Council which had been responsible and set up a Committee of Management under the Vice President of the Board of Trade. The members of the Committee were Richard Westmacott, RA, George Richmond, Ambrose Poynter, John Shaw Lefevre, Stafford Northcote and the Joint Secretaries of the Board of Trade.
matters which came within the remit of the Board of Trade needed reform. Cole, with his experience of the Record Office, the establishment of Penny Postage and his increasing involvement with the Society of Arts, was an experienced reformer and knew how to "agitate" for the achievement of his aims.

He again consulted the Joint Assistant Secretary at the Board of Trade, John Shaw Lefevre. On 24th June 1848 Cole called on Lefevre and "discussed being on Council of School of Design; talked about patent law reform. He sd I shd receive a letter requesting me to report on them" (Cole Diary; 24th June 1848). Cole was not challenging the Board of Trade. He could not afford to do so because he was requesting their aid in promoting exhibitions. Cole was sure that he had something to offer the Board and sought to work with its officials to achieve improvements. By building up a personal relationship with the officers of the Board Cole was ensuring that he missed no opportunities. Cole was steering a parallel course to that of his friend Chadwick, who, having accepted the same philosophical radical ideals, was working through Commissions and Committees to achieve sanitary reforms. Their mode of working exemplifies the model put forward by Dicey (1905; 22-).

On 14th August Cole again "called on Mr J Lefevre who promised to speak to the Board of Trade abt Schools of Design & patent improvement" (Cole Diary). Yet again on the 18th the persistent Cole met Lefevre who was persuaded to say that he would write to the new Vice President of the Board of Trade, Lord Granville, about Cole's ideas. The persistence paid off and Cole was invited to meet Lord Granville on the 24th August 1848. It is an interesting reflection of Cole's utilitarian ideology that he linked the re-establishment of a successful School of Design which would genuinely train designers for industry with the creation of a legal framework which might protect their designs and thus give
financial encouragement to those with ability.

This first meeting with Granville was sufficiently successful that Cole was invited to a second meeting on the 26th August when Lord Granville personally asked Cole to lecture at the School, and asked him to see the artist McClise confidentially to ask whether he would be interested in succeeding Dyce who had just resigned as head of the School. McClise declined, Cole recording that McClise felt "more than talk" was needed to put the School to rights (Cole, 1884; Volume 1, 110). Cole reported back McClise's refusal on the 28th and had further discussions with Lord Granville on the possibilities for his own involvement with the School. On the following day Cole was invited to dinner at Lord Granville's London home. It can be assumed that Granville was exposed to Cole's view of the way the Board of Trade should function with respect to the encouragement of "Design applied to manufactures".

Cole, presumably on the advice of Granville, wrote formally to the Board about patent law, copyright and about the Schools of Design. When the letter was received the Board preferred to "defer for the present the consideration of that part of Mr Cole's letter which relates to what he regards as the defects of the Patent Law" (Cole, 1884; Volume 1, 110) but he was invited to prepare a formal report on the use of the Schools of Design to produce designs for the use of the government departments and on the operation of the laws on registration of designs (Cole Miscellanies; VIII 70). The non-interventionist Cole was of the opinion that the Schools of Design, which had such uneasy relationships with manufacturing industry, might derive benefit from a quasi-commercial relationship with government, carrying out design projects which might otherwise have been awarded to industry. This arrangement was, not surprisingly, seen as unfair competition; later it was all but dropped at the Department of Science and Art, where design projects were almost
That Cole's interest was much more than superficial is clearly indicated in a letter to Lord Granville in February of 1849 (Granville Papers; PRO 30/29/23/1 p.95). Cole confessed the intensity of his feelings with regard to design and its national importance:

Your Lordship will easily imagine that my head has been and is running a good deal on this Subject of Design and I confess I am grown incontrollably wilful in my views and resolutions. I may be quixotic, but I think I am bound to try and make my truth in this matter prevail and to do so without giving personal offence if possible. I would not have it thought that I am not prepared to tell openly to those who have a right to ask it what I am about. I feel your Lordship is one of them and if you were minded to listen I would unreservedly and candidly tell your Lordship all that I am doing and what I intend sooner or later to accomplish - But you may see an impropriety in such communication with me and indeed I do not ask it - I wish only to prove that I do not forget the confidence with which you have always treated me.

I believe the time will come when the government and the public will thank me for what I am doing and that it will then be quite consistent that your Lordship should avowedly sanction the object I have in view, which is not merely to obtain a reform of the School of Design - but a recognition and conduct of all the interests of commercial design worthy of their National importance.

Here Cole was being totally open with the man most likely to object to his "interference". A less tolerant man than Granville would undoubtedly have thought Cole was behaving in a manner unbecoming his station in life and his employment as a civil servant in interfering in the workings of a Department other than the one in which he was employed. The sincerity of Cole's words and the rightness of his cause seems to have impressed Granville and Cole was encouraged to continue his "agitation" for reform.
Cole wrote three reports to the Board, which were subsequently published as appendices to the Report of the Select Committee on the Schools of Design in 1849. Cole's third report criticised the management of the Schools and stated that "I am impelled to express my belief that by no means short of a complete change of system can the School fulfil its object and its duty to the public" (Cole, 1884; Volume 1, 114).

Cole used a method for reform which he had found successful in 1836 with the establishment of the Select Committee which investigated the Record Office. By identifying a sympathetic Member of Parliament who would ask questions in the House the inner workings of a government department could be made public and thereby challenged. On this occasion he identified Thomas Milner Gibson, a liberal politician who had been Vice President of the Board of Trade from 1846-1848. Cole met him on the 10th of February and secured his agreement to help in the campaign for reform of the Schools (Cole Diary). On the 18th February Milner Gibson agreed to "see Mr Labouchere & co" (Cole Diary). Cole himself saw Labouchere on the 19th and when Cole met Milner Gibson again on the 21st he was informed that Labouchere would be agreeable to a committee of enquiry (Cole Diary). On the 22nd Cole and Milner Gibson discussed the form of the motion to Parliament and on the 24th Cole records in his diary "Milner Gibsons. There was to be a committee".

The Select Committee was set up, chaired by Milner Gibson. Cole was one of those examined. Not content with having engineered the enquiry and making a substantial contribution to its proceedings, Cole - using techniques he had learned in his other reforming campaigns - was also publishing a journal. The Journal of Design, which first appeared in 1849 and continued to be published until Cole began to work for the new Department of Practical Art in 1852, was a journal for those interested in the application of art to design for manufactures, but it was also a...
vehicle for expounding Cole's ideas. Cole, as editor, included this statement in the first issue:

The Journal of Design will have, as it ought to have, politics of its own. In this matter of Ornamental Design, we hope to prove ourselves thoroughly conversive of the best interests of manufacturers, designers, and all parties concerned. We are the advocates for better laws, and a better tribunal to protect copyright in designs, and for a largely increased extension of copyright. We think the restless demands of the public for constant novelty, are alike mischievous to the progress of good ornamental art as they are to all commercial interests. We think that Schools of Design should be reformed and made businesslike realities. We shall wage war against all pirates; and we hope to see the day when it will be thought as disgraceful for one manufacturer to pillage another's patterns as it is held to be if he should walk into his counting-house and rob his till. These are some of the points of our political creed with which we start on our undertaking. In conclusion, we profess that our aim is to foster ornamental art in all ways, and to do those things for its advance in all its branches, which it would be the appropriate business of a Board of Design to do, if such a useful department of Government actually existed.

It is evident that Cole was beginning to change his ground. Cole had come to believe that the government should not remain aloof but had a role to play in fostering industry, and specifically in the training of designers and the protection of their designs. This vision of a structure in which the state fostered and protected what Cole might have called "practical art" was another which Cole sought to achieve through political agitation; it was also a vision shared with his utilitarian friends. Mill believed "It would be a gross immorality in the law to set everybody free to use a person's work without his consent and without giving him an equivalent" (quoted by Dutton (1984; 20). When Joseph Paxton suggested a committee to consider patent reform in 1856 he

3. For Cole's work relating to patents see Cole, 1884; 272-278

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included the utilitarians Cole and Chadwick (JSA, 1846, v4, 178, 220).

Two quite distinct public conceptions of what publicly funded art education was for existed at this time (Macdonald, 1970; 150). For the clergy, the Royal Academicians and many of the public the aim was charitable - help for the improvement of artisans. The second, progressive and unfashionable view held by Cole and his friends was that this was the best way of producing competent designs for British industry. The Select Committee reported, but failed to provide the kind of radical solution that was needed. Yet another Committee of laymen was established to manage the Schools. Not surprisingly, the reshuffle failed to secure the desired result of flourishing Schools. Minor adjustment of the structure was insufficient.

From the autumn of 1849 Cole's time was increasingly taken up with his responsibilities on the Executive Committee for the Exhibition of 1851; Granville was the most active of the Commissioners for the Exhibition. Neither had the time to continue to push for reforms at the Board of Trade. Nevertheless, the two years of intensive activity in bringing the Great Exhibition to its successful conclusion were effective in bringing Cole's vision nearer to fruition, because they gave Cole the chance to demonstrate to government, industry and to the Prince Consort his undoubted abilities and his seemingly limitless energy.

After the end of the Great Exhibition, on 31st December 1851, Lord Granville offered Cole the Secretaryship of the Schools of Design (Cole, 1884; Volume 1, 281). This implied a significant change in the management of the Schools, from management by committee to management by a civil servant at Departmental Secretary level. It was also a significant promotion for Cole, who, for the period of the exhibition, had been seconded from his position of Assistant Keeper at the Record
Office. Cole must have felt what Bedarida (1976; 48-49) suggests many of the middle class were feeling at this time - "self-satisfied at the really spectacular progress they had made".

When Cole had been invited to lecture at the School in 1848 the Board had been aware that he had many of the required skills. Now, after the Great Exhibition, Granville was convinced of Cole's outstanding managerial abilities and was ready to give him the opportunity to put into practice the reforms which he had been advocating. In 1852 the central School consisted of separate schools for males (Somerset House) and females (Gower Street) and had responsibility for 20 provincial schools. Although Cole's autobiography suggests that Granville had made an official offer to Cole on 31st December, Cole's diary indicates that it took some weeks before the initial suggestion became a permanent appointment. On 14th January 1852 Labouchere suggested to Cole that he should "undertake the management of the Sch: of Design". Cole objected to "conducting business through the Secretaries" (the Joint Secretaries to the Board of Trade, one of whom was Labouchere) and Labouchere conceded that Cole needed direct responsibility to the Vice President, Lord Granville. "He was particularly friendly" (Cole Diary).

On 15th January 1852, after consideration of the previous day's discussion, Cole wrote to Labouchere suggesting that a separate Department of the Board of Trade be created, with a special secretary through whom all business should pass for the decision of the President or Vice President. He suggested that the Department should be called the Department of Practical Art. Cole was at this time earning £500 per year in his post at the Record Office. He mentions in the letter that "I think I explained to you that this sum for many years has not been nearly my whole income, having been permitted to hold other appointments simultaneously" (Cole, 1884; Volume 1, 296). On the 31st January 1852
Trevelyan wrote from the Treasury to the Board of Trade agreeing to the establishment of the new Department of Practical Art, to be put in the charge of two persons, an artist (Richard Redgrave) who would be paid £300 per annum and a "layman" (Cole) who would be required "to give his whole time and attention to the business of the Department" and would receive a salary of £1000 per annum (Treasury Minute; PRO BT1/488/144/52). Cole took up the post, but he by no means gave all of his time to the Department.

Redgrave was already employed by the School, but Cole was to come in as a layman to be General Superintendant and run the schools whilst Redgrave supplied him with "advice and assistance". Fortunately, Redgrave, a friend of Cole's since 1841, was prepared to accept the proposed management structure. With his friend Redgrave as his partner Cole was prepared to accept the unacceptable - shared responsibility.

Almost immediately these appointments were confirmed there was a change of government and Cole temporarily lost his sympathetic political chief at the Board of Trade, but he was in post and intended to see his ideas put into practice.

Cole's habit, from the beginning, was to use minutes of the Board of Trade to achieve much of what he wanted for the Department. The Board of Trade was a board only in name, consisting of the President and Vice President only. Cole was able to draft "minutes" for signature by the President or Vice President. These "minutes" were in practice not a record of what had been decided, but suggestions from Cole as to what should be decided! This device allowed a rapid response to changing situations, providing only that "the Board" would approve Cole's minutes (Duke, 1966; 84). Thus, although in theory Cole was the servant of the Board, in practice he was usually in control - a situation which very much suited this autocratic personality.

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Control of the new government department put Cole into a position in which he could benefit both from the profits made by the Great Exhibition and the increased influence to be found within his circle. Cole's Department was the first occupant of the land at South Kensington which was purchased jointly by the Commissioners for the Exhibition of 1851 and the government. Cole had been a member of the "Surplus Committee" which considered the disposal of the unexpectedly large profit from the Great Exhibition. £186,000 was available at the close of the exhibition and a Supplemental Charter of the Commission dated 2nd December 1851 allowed the Commissioners to use the profit to promote educational schemes (PRO BT1 486 2475). Prince Albert and his Secretary General Grey had been involved in the Surplus Committee as had Lord Granville and Cole but it was the Prince who proposed the scheme which provided Cole with the opportunity to create and control the South Kensington estate.

The Prince had first presented his ideas to the Commissioners for 1851 at a meeting on the 13th August 1851, at which he proposed to use what by then was obviously going to be a profit from the exhibition to centralize "all the Societies" on land opposite the exhibition site. Cole and others had been evaluating the various suggestions for the use of the land which they proposed to buy. Lyon Playfair in particular spent considerable energy in investigating various schemes for setting up an educational establishment, at one time intending to "build up his scheme on the School of Design" (Cole Diary; 19th August 1851). To Playfair design for industry was not the main issue, but the School could be used as a convenient vehicle to achieve what was needed in education for science and technology.

On 5th January 1852 (i.e. between the informal offer by Granville and the formal offer of Secretaryship of the Department of Practical Art)
Cole visited Windsor where the Prince "Told his surplus plan - to buy plenty of ground at Kensington to provide collection of History of Manufactures, lectures, etc, to reform School of Design, to call it College of Applied Art". Cole records "I argued that to bring there the overflowing of the British Museum wd aid all other proceedings in that neighbourhood. He sd he shd not interfere. Grey thought he was "shaken" & that I was right and shd continue to agitate" (Cole Diary).

It is interesting that before Cole had control of the Department or could be sure of a move to the land which the Commissioners planned to purchase, he was already thinking of the removal of part of the British Museum collection to Kensington. At this stage which part of that collection Cole thought might be moved is not clear. Once at South Kensington Cole campaigned hard for the natural history collection to be housed within the Commissioners' estate; it was another of his successful campaigns, though it took twenty years of persistence on Cole's part.

On 19th February 1852 Cole visited Prince Albert. Cole's diary does not indicate what the reason for this visit might have been, or whether Cole had been invited or merely called on Grey in the hope of being allowed to speak with the Prince. Cole could legitimately ask for meetings with the Prince either in connection with the business of the Commissioners for 1851 or, as chairman of the Council, in connection with the affairs of the Society of Arts. The Prince asked Cole whether he would be interested in connecting the new Department of Practical Art with the scheme, and it was at this meeting that the Prince offered Cole the use of Marlborough House to ease the pressure on the space available to the School of Design at Somerset House (Cole Diary).

Cole's move into Marlborough House was precipitate, preceding the
necessary formal communication between the Board of Trade and the Office of Works (Cole, 1884; Volume 1, 284). Into the new premises went the collection of exhibits purchased by the Commissioners from the exhibition and the "Special Technical Classes" of the School of Design which were being run by Gottfried Semper. 4

Meanwhile, through "the zealous and disinterested instrumentality of Mr Kelk, the builder" (Commissioners for the Exhibition of 1851, 1852; 36) the twenty acres of the Gore Estate were purchased. 5. The government was in need of additional land to accommodate various bodies, including the new Department of Practical Art, and was persuaded to allocate £150,000 in order that a larger block of eighty six acres could be purchased jointly with the Commissioners (Gibbs-Smith, 1981; 26). This purchase has proved to have been a very sound investment; Cobden, who as a Royal Commissioner was in a position to see the extent to which the Prince Consort was instrumental in the decision to invest the "surplus" in land, expressed to Cole his "high opinion of the Prince's sagacity and ability in the purchase of the land", saying that "HRH would have made a fortune as a land agent!" (Cole, 1884; Volume 1, 319).

In 1853 when Cole's Department was required to move out of Somerset House the old School of Design in London was closed and the Normal School for Art was opened at Marlborough House. This signalled the very early change in emphasis in the work of the central School, away from the training of designers to the training of teachers. In January of 1852 Cole had seen the functions of his new Department as threefold: elementary instruction in drawing and modelling (in practice taught only

4. These classes included pottery, metalwork and furniture, moulding, enamelling and architectural drawing.

5. For a detailed account of the purchase and building up of the estate and the involvement of government funds see Survey, 1975; XXXVIII, Museums area of South Kensington and Westminster, Chapter 4.
at the provincial schools), "practice of art connected with processes" [art manufactures?] and "cultivation of the power of designing" (Cole, 1884; Volume 1, 296). However, Cole was dismayed by the quality of the teachers employed by his own Department. They had "sought their appointments by the usual means" [patronage]; "no proof was required that the candidate could teach a class" and their abilities as artists were not good (Cole, 1884; Volume 1, 298).

It was for this reason that Cole's son claims that the new Department began to train teachers. Three new functions for the Department were to provide for the training of school masters and mistresses to teach elementary drawing (on the basis of part time classes for elementary school teachers (Macdonald, 1970; 160)), for training masters for the various Schools of Art around the country (students were selected from local art schools and were awarded grants, but were required, in return, to teach in London elementary schools or within the Department (ibid.; 163)) and for advanced instruction of students of "technical arts" (Cole, 1884; Volume 1, 299). Macdonald (1970; 170) suggests that Cole had realised an enormous potential existed in teacher training, which had the added benefit that it would be funded not by his own Department but by the Committee of Council for Education, which had made elementary drawing a compulsory element in its teacher training programme. With the lack of interest which had been shown by potential industrial employers of the students of the School of Design, teacher training was an attractive alternative function. As the number of provincial schools grew, the argument ran, they would provide employment opportunities for the newly trained teachers. This was what happened, Cole appointing his students to vacancies as they arose. A similar shift towards teacher training occurred in the science schools of Cole's Department in the 1860s, when the move towards scientific education in elementary schools created a demand for science teachers (Bud and Roberts, 1984; 127-128).
Cole used the additional space at Marlborough House to set up a Museum of Manufactures, i.e. of examples which the students could copy. In doing this Cole created the institution into which he was able to introduce various collections over the following twenty years. Marlborough House became the centre from which came inspectors, qualified teachers, books, examples, casts, directives and advice to the provincial schools and the new Schools of Art which were created to provide elementary art education and thus provide better prepared students for the longer established provincial schools of design. The third function of what was now called the Normal School, advanced education in art and design, did not so flourish.

When in 1853 the Department was expanded to include science as well as art this marked the beginning of a central government-funded educational institute for art and science. Through the Department of Science and Art it was intended that science education would be supported in the same way as the Art Schools (local and voluntary and receiving limited government aid). Lyon Playfair, who had worked with Cole during the Great Exhibition and had no doubt discussed with the Prince and Lord Granville his ambitions for science education, was appointed joint Secretary of the new Department with Cole. Playfair's appointment, which took him from lecturer status at the new Government School of Mines and Science Applied to the Arts to become the Departmental Secretary for Science, and thus to management of the renamed Metropolitan School of Mines, must be seen in the light of his long-standing usefulness to government. Christopher Duke (1966; 141) has summarised the situation as follows:

A chemist who could apply his knowledge to a wide range of practical problems, he was known and liked by Peel in the 'forties, moving from Manchester where he served the 1843 Commission on the Health of Large Towns, to work in the Jermyn Street establishment [the Museum
of Economic Geology] in 1845. Through Peel's respect for his ability, and doubtless also because good chemists were so rare, Playfair carried out many official technical enquiries - into the sanitation of Buckingham Palace, the best coals for steam navigation, the nature of fire-damp in mines, the state of the Serpentine, and the extent of the '45 potato blight - before joining Cole on the Executive Committee of the Great Exhibition.

Correspondence respecting Lyon Playfair reveals the Prince Consort's interest both in the site which the Commissioners had purchased and the future tenant - the School of Design. Colonel Grey wrote to Lord Granville, on 5th January 1853, saying that "The Prince would be very glad to have some conversation with you and Dr Playfair on the subject of the School of Practical Design which he is anxious for the Government to take up....When [the purchase of the Harrington estate at Kensington] is settled we may look to a good deal of work, as the Commissioners must begin to act in earnest in carrying out the Plan" (Granville Papers; PRO PRO 30/29/23/3 p.5)⁶.

Playfair, like Cole, had gained still more in reputation through his involvement with the Great Exhibition, and had been intimately involved in the activities of the Surplus Committee and its schemes for an industrial university. Playfair, and not Cole, was at the meeting with Prince Albert on 20th January 1853 at which Cardwell (President of the Board of Trade) discussed with the Prince the creation of the Department of Science and Art and the division of the Secretaryship between Cole and Playfair, Cole being out of town on business when the meeting was called (Cole Diary; 21st January 1853). It is probable that the involvement of Playfair in the Department of Science and Art resulted at least in part from his public statements on the need for scientific

⁶ It is not clear whether the Prince wished to see Playfair in his role as Commissioner for 1851 or as a potential Joint Secretary of the Department of Science and Art.
education in Britain. Playfair had toured Europe during the previous year and on his return had given a very influential lecture at the School of Mines, which highlighted the lack of science education in Britain. Prince Albert knew, through their work together on the "Surplus Committee", that Playfair wanted to promote science education by creating a polytechnic on the continental model. It seems likely that it was the Prince who was behind the significant change in the remit of Cole's Department. Cardwell would have had no duty to involve the Prince; the Prince needed Cardwell's cooperation, and the Prince knew that Playfair's views on the matter were similar to his own.

The Department of Science and Art was to remain in isolation from the Education Department. The Inspector for Schools of the Education Department with responsibility for science education was Henry Moseley (appointed 1844). He wrote to Playfair in 1853, indicating his approval of the separation of the two Departments concerned with education:

I am sure that it will not do to mingle up the official duties of the two departments. Yours is secondary and ours primary education. We shall do our work best by acting cordially and helpfully but separately (Layton, 1973; 102).

The Commissioners too were anxious to define the boundaries of their interest in education. The Second Report of the Commissioners for the Exhibition of 1851 (1853; 41) includes the following statement:

By confining our attention to technical instruction, and not extending it to general education in science and art, we shall be

7. The lecture was entitled "The study of abstract science essential to the progress of industry" (in British eloquence; lectures and addresses, London, 1855)

8. The Department of Science and Art was moved from the Board of Trade to the Committee of Council on Education in 1857, but continued to be run separately from the Education Department.
adding to, without interfering with, the means of instruction already existing in schools and colleges. As a preliminary knowledge of the principles of science and art would be required by the students entering the institution proposed by us, the effect would be to give an impetus to general education, which could not fail to be of material advantage to those bodies.

If the Commissioners were to become involved in education they would need to be careful not to appear to compete with the existing agencies. By defining their interest to be in "technical instruction", which according to their statement they considered to be advanced study following on from a general education in the sciences and arts, they were targeting an area with very little contemporary support. The Commissioners did not, in the event, themselves become involved in education, but retained their interest in the education department at South Kensington.

That Playfair was delighted when Lord Granville was appointed Lord President of the [Privy] Council, and therefore responsible for the Committee of Council on Education, is demonstrated in his letter to Granville on the 6th January 1853, in advance of their meeting with the Prince. Playfair believed that Granville "may be made instrumental in changing the Education of the 13th Century into one adapted to the 19th. I can assure you your appointment has given the most lively satisfaction to all promoters of Education" (Granville Papers; PRO PRO 30/29/23/3 p.9). Cole was able to benefit from Granville's support in educational and other matters for the next twenty years.

The Government School of Mines, the Museum of Economic Geology, the Geological Survey, the Museum of Irish Industry and the Royal Dublin Society were all put under the control of the Department of Science and Art. Unlike the Education Department, the new Department also had
responsibilities in Scotland and Ireland.

Henry de la Beche\(^9\), Director of the Geological Survey, had engineered the founding of the Museum of Economic Geology in 1841. The museum had had an educational function, which was broadened in 1851 when it became the School of Mines and Science applied to the Arts. He and his staff were not pleased to be subsumed in the new Department; it must have been particularly difficult for de la Beche whose own vision for the development of science education was to be subordinated to that of Cole and Playfair.

Initially, the new Department's headquarters remained at Marlborough House. The Commissioners continued to consider possible uses for their estate. Though they held title to the estate at Brompton, they were not quick to put into action plans for its development. Cole published his Observations on the expediency of carrying out the proposals of the Commissioners for the Exhibition of 1851 for promotion of Institutes of Science and Art at Kensington, rather by the public themselves than by government and submitted the "Observations" to Prince Albert (Cole, 1853). Cole believed that "If [the Commissioners plans] were to be carried out in the spirit of the event which originated them, and to be commensurate with the present intelligence and wealth of the country, not only a very liberal expenditure will be necessary, but large discretionary powers of action" and that "In order to ensure the highest responsibility and unity of action in the management, it is advisable that it should consist, if possible, of only one person, or at most three persons" (Cole, 1853; Paragraph 1). Cole did not believe that the government would provide such funds or allow sufficient freedom in their management. Cole's advice was not taken and the Commissioners did not

9. See the biography by McCartney (1977).
appoint a manager for the estate; Cole took on the role for himself.

Cole produced some plans for the Brompton site in 1854 which included the Department of Science and Art, the National Gallery, the Museum of Inventions (the Patent Office collection of models produced in support of patent applications), the Society of Arts, the University of London, the Royal Academy of Music and an Industrial School for Youth as well as student accommodation on site (Physick, 1982; 22). Cole himself had influence at the Department and within the Society of Arts and could expect that they might be persuaded to move to Brompton. He had no right to meddle in the affairs of the other bodies mentioned, but he had powerful friends, among the Commissioners and his political allies, who might be able to supply the necessary pressure.

The management of Cole’s Department was again adjusted in 1855 when Playfair was made Secretary and Cole Inspector General. Not surprisingly, Cole makes little of this in his autobiography, but it must have signalled an undermining of his power, coinciding with the arrival of a new President of the Board, the conservative Lord Stanley. The new arrangement did not meet with the approval of Cole or of Murchison10, the new Director General of the Geological Survey (de la Beche had died in 1855). Cole wrote to Lord Granville suggesting that since the merger of the government funded institutions of art and science education his own post was superfluous and that when the new Department was transferred to the Education Department (and thus back under Granville’s wing), a change which was under discussion, “I am bound frankly to say that I think my present office ought to be abolished on grounds of public economy” (Granville Papers; PRO PRO 10. Murchison was a "gentleman scientist", a man of considerable personal means who had been one of the founders of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, was a Fellow of the Royal Society and had had a part in a scheme to obtain representation of the "educated intelligence of the country" in Parliament (Stafford, 1989; 10,18)
Cole was always keen to be seen to provide good value for government money; he was also keen to inform his friend that the management of the Department would need attention once Granville regained control and that Cole himself was not eager to remain in the Department should this management structure continue. Murchison wrote to Granville, in March of 1856, asking him to "dis-connect the official business of the Jermyn Street Establishment (the School of Mines) from that of the School of Design" (Granville Papers; PRO PRO 30/29/23/6 p.213). Murchison did not want to be managed by Cole, who was not easy to work for, being equally as autocratic as Murchison himself.

Nine months later Murchison was still trying to escape from the link with Cole and Art education: "All that we require is to stand on our own bottom and our own responsibility and not to be mixed up with tutorial systems and so forth..... in spite of Lyon Playfair all my associates here, including six of the most eminent men of science in Britain are decidedly opposed" (Granville Papers; PRO PRO 30/29/23/14 p.115). The tension between the art and science staffs was inevitable; but there was also tension on the science side between Murchison and Playfair.

Cole never liked to be part of a team, but wanted to be THE boss, believing (understandably after his Great Exhibition experience) that as soon as more people were involved the ability to make decisions was weakened. Despite Murchison's undoubted prestige and influence the Geological Survey and its associated museum and college remained as part of the Department of Science and Art, under the control of the Committee of Council on Education, until 1899. Murchison, like Cole, was a strong character who ran the Survey as a "virtually autonomous department, dedicated to field research and mapping" (Stafford, 1989; 27). Cole and Murchison were perhaps temperamentally too much alike to have worked together successfully.
Stafford, in his biography of Murchison, describes Murchison's methods in terms which very much echo Cole's own:

By catalysing existing trends in the Geological Society, the British Association, the RGS (Royal Geographical Society), the Geological Survey, and, to a lesser extent, the Royal Society, Murchison was able to match the corporate goals of these institutions with his own ambitions (ibid.).

Playfair, who was much more directly involved with Cole, had a great deal of respect for his abilities, but Cole seems not to have considered Playfair to be a very able administrator (Cole, 1884; 306-310). Cole never became very closely connected with the work of the Science Schools, and perhaps this contributed to the tensions between the two sides of his Department, nevertheless science prospered more under Cole than it did during the brief period of Playfair's headship. Under Cole the "South Kensington System" of teacher training and payment on results was applied.

Layton (1973; 164) suggests that "the adoption of the principle of payment by results by Cole's department was unquestionably an important factor contributing to the elimination of science from the elementary school curriculum". In 1858 it was ruled that elementary teachers could not receive payment for teaching science classes, and in 1859 it was decided that it was appropriate that science be taught at secondary and not at the elementary level (ibid.; 164-165). However, Layton accepts that it would be unfair to place all the blame at Cole's door. Payment on results (as it should more correctly be called) had been a device to encourage teachers to teach to a set syllabus and to prepare the students to pass the Department's examinations. Harry Butterworth (1982) has provided a useful summary of the development of the examination system at the Department, again highlighting the difficulty in promoting science at
a time when public support was weak and Granville's Vice President (Robert Lowe) "did not care for science" (ibid.; 31).

The Government School of Mines had grown out of the research activities of the Geological Survey and Murchison was more interested in research than in teaching. Playfair, though equally committed to promoting education, was perhaps less tenacious and less able to endure difficulties. He failed to stimulate science in the way that Cole had stimulated art education, partly because he and Murchison differed fundamentally in their approaches to the development of the School of Mines (Bud and Roberts, 1984; 90-91). Reader (1966; 140-141) describes the difficulties faced by the School of Mines as a result of the hostility of the mining industry; this was the same problem which the art side had had to face and the remedy imposed by Cole was the same in both cases - teacher training. After only four years with the Department of Science and Art Playfair found another more conducive appointment, as an academic rather than as an administrator, at the University in Edinburgh. Cole succeeded Playfair as Secretary of the Department and Captain J. F. Donnelly RE became Inspector for Science.

An Order in Council of 25/2/56 (PP 1856; XLVI) transferred the Department of Science and Art to the Education Department. This change was significant in that it removed the Department from overt connection with trade and made it clearly an, if not the, Education Department. Cole's Department continued to be concerned with secondary education and teacher training, and to be run quite separately from the Education Department which was concerned with primary education. Cole had wanted this division into primary and secondary education to be made explicit in a new title for his Department (Cole Diary; 24th June 1857), but in this he failed. However, by keeping its separate identity the Department of Science and Art under Cole and Donnelly was able to remain outside of the
conflict about religion and education. "Cole was one of those faithful Anglicans who did not wish to see their church stand in the way of education" (Duke, 1966; 157)11.

Cole's management of the Art and Science Schools, teacher training and "payment by results" are discussed in detail by Bishop (1971; Chapters 3 and 7). Cole's methods were opportunistic and often devious, resulting in the creation of a Department which Bishop considers to have been "one of the weirdest pieces of government machinery that England has ever known" (ibid.; 18).

The Department of Practical Art had begun in inadequate temporary accommodation at Marlborough House. The following chapter will trace the development of Cole's Department after its move in 1856 onto the South Kensington site.

11. Cole was an Anglican in what would now be seen as the evangelical tradition, persuading the incumbent at Holy Trinity, Brompton to introduce midweek musical services, aimed specifically at the working classes, and procuring the services of Arthur Sullivan to direct the music (Cole; 1884; 393-4).


Board of Trade, *Minutes*, PRO BT1 and PRO BT5.


Cole, H. *Correspondence*, National Art Library, Cole Collection, 55.BB.1-


Commissioners for the Exhibition of 1851 (1851) *Supplemental Charter* (PRO BT1 486, 2475).


Granville Papers PRO PRO30/29.


Playfair, L. (1855) "The study of abstract science essential to the progress of industry". In: British eloquence; lectures and addresses, London.

Privy Council (1856) Order in Council, PP 1856 XLVI.


Select Committee on the Schools of Design (1849) PP 1849 [576] XVIII.


Chapter 6. The Department of Science and Art at South Kensington

The removal of Cole’s Department to the site jointly owned by the Commissioners for the Exhibition of 1851 and the government marks the beginning of the establishment of what was to become popularly known as the "kingdom" of King Cole. This was the period of Cole’s greatest influence, during which he manipulated the funds and staff available to him to create a new and well stocked public museum and a rapidly growing structure for art education. It is remarkable that a civil servant, even of the high rank which Cole had now achieved, could become so strongly linked in the public mind with the control of the significant public asset which was to become known as South Kensington.

In reviewing Fifty years of the public work of Sir Henry Cole for the scientific periodical Nature in 1885, Newton Price summarised his view of Cole’s achievement at the Department of Science and Art:

The history of the Science and Art Department is yet to be told. It was conceived and constructed by a dogged inventive genius which knew how to turn difficulties into stepping-stones to success, and to wear out stolid opposition by vivacious pertinacity (Price, 1885).

Cole used all of his powers of persuasion, his "rollicking good humour" (ibid.) and not a little deception in order to obtain the necessary funds to pursue his plans for expansion of the role of the government department which was under his control. Price tells of:

How he kept on teasing the government for money, and spending more than was allowed, till at last he had put together a noble collection, and the Museum was a fact.

1. See for example Punch, 7th June 1862, p229.
Price's comment is interesting for the fact that he highlights not the educational functions of Cole's Department, but the museum, which, by the time of Cole's death, was universally acknowledged to contain a very fine collection indeed.

When Cole took control of his Department he had achieved a position of not inconsiderable power. As we have seen, he had strong utilitarian motivation and he had the support of both politicians and the Prince Consort. It was the link with the Prince Consort which provided Cole with the opportunity to create his kingdom at South Kensington. Prince Albert had spoken with Cole in February of 1852 about the possibilities for the association of Cole's new Department with the schemes which the Prince hoped would come to fruition on the Commissioners' estate. Cole first made use of this offer in 1853 when the vacant Gore House (at the northern edge of the Commissioners' estate; see plan on following page) was used for an exhibition of the work of students from the Department's schools. When, in 1855, the Prince instigated the erection of the first building on the Commissioners' site it was to house the museum collections of the Department of Science and Art.

Thus, from the beginning, the buildings erected on the Commissioners' estate were largely to house museum collections, a minor part of the remit of Cole's Department. Onto this base Cole grafted the offices, laboratories and studios which were necessary for the employees and students of the Department. In 1855 the museum collections, which were of "examples" which the students might copy, together with some exhibits from the Great Exhibition, which had been purchased by the Commissioners, comprised a significant collection which, Cole was able to argue, needed to be properly looked after.

On 14th June 1855 Prince Albert, presumably very much aware of the needs
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On 14th June 1855 Prince Albert, presumably very much aware of the needs
South Kensington, 1851
(road layout 1992 superimposed)
of Cole's Department and of the embarrassingly slow progress of the Commissioners towards development of the site, proposed the erection of an "iron house" to house the museum collections which had been built up at the School of Design since the very early days at Somerset House, and those purchases acquired by the Commissioners for the use of the government schools of design (Cole, 1884; Volume 1, 323). Like the Crystal Palace, the proposed building was to be of modular construction, but this time clad in corrugated iron rather than glass. It was "manufactured" by Charles Young, a specialist in iron-framed buildings, whose offices were in the same building as the 1851 Commissioner William Cubitt. Young sent specifications to the Commissioners only four days after the Prince's suggestion was made (Physick, 1982; 23). The Commissioners requested that the Treasury provide the funds for the building, which was for the use of a government department; Parliament was persuaded to vote £15,000 for the purpose (Physick, 1982; 24).

The formal proposal to the Chancellor of the Exchequer was on the basis that the government would in any case have to re-house Cole's Department, which would soon have to leave its Marlborough House accommodation when the Prince of Wales reached the age of eighteen and set up his own household there. As well as the Commissioners' collection, it was argued that accommodation was needed for the Society of Arts Educational Collection\(^2\), models from the Patent Office (the Museum of Inventions which Cole had included in his plan of 1854), the Museum of Economic Geology (which was now part of Cole's Department, though geographically remote at Jermyn Street) and the Kew Museum for Vegetable Produce\(^3\) (Commissioners for the Exhibition of 1851, 1856;

2. The Society of Arts held an Educational Exhibition in 1854 at the instigation of Harry Chester, Chairman of the Society and an Assistant Secretary at the Education Department. Cole had earmarked the collection as suitable for what was to become South Kensington in a letter to Phipps, 27th July 1854 (Cole Correspondence; Box I).

3. The collection formed the basis of the Food and Animal Produce Museum which was transferred to Bethnal Green in 1872.
This initial emphasis on museum buildings continued when it became clear to Cole that support for the development of the museum collections, which Cole claimed underpinned much of the Department's work, was easier to obtain than support for the education of artisans. The students, however, were not convinced that the museum was primarily for their benefit. Macdonald (1970; 219) quotes from the report of the Select Committee on the Schools of Art in 1864, in which students from the Central School complain that the public had better access to the collections than did the students. Both viewpoints have some validity. The collection of "examples" was central to the teaching method developed under Cole, and the "circulation" of exhibits from the museum to the provincial schools was an innovative and beneficial concept; Macdonald (1970) labels this concept "one of Cole's most progressive measures". It was, however, also true that Cole intended his museum to have a much wider utility than merely as a stimulus to designers in training. Cole's utilitarian vision required him to make the collections available to the public, for their educational benefit. His personal desire to improve "public taste" was a further stimulus to making the museum open to individuals of all classes.

Cole, who had no part in the planning of this first building, or the negotiations with government over its financing, being involved in the exhibition in Paris being held at this time

4. See Chapter 7 for Cole's role in the Paris exhibitions of 1849, 1855 and 1867.
The Brompton Bollers, 1863.

(watercolour by J C Lanchenick, V&A postcard)
museum, which had a corrugated iron roof painted in green and white stripes, attracted comment and criticism (for example see the Builder, 19th April and 10th May 1856). This new museum was very different in architectural style compared to other public buildings, and was far less attractive than the Crystal Palace, the only other building for which the Commissioners had been responsible.

Cole had to cope with the imperfections of the design. Several times in the first year in the building Cole recorded in his diary the trials he had to endure, for example on the 22nd September 1856 he "counted 21 places where the rain was coming in" (Cole Diary). Cole's son reproduces in the autobiography an excerpt from a letter from Cole to Colonel Grey, dated August 1856, in which Cole complains about the Boilers - "The public laugh at its ugliness and us" - about the bad design both in respect of visibility of exhibits and structural faults, and about the partnership between government and the Commissioners which was failing to develop the site (Cole, 1884; Volume 1, 323-324).

The various Museums moved into the Boilers; the educational collection, Professor Woodcroft's collection of inventions, the small beginnings of collections of domestic economy and architecture, and the Department of Science and Art collections. The Museum of Economic Geology was left at Jermyn Street, and was to remain there until the end of the century. Parliament voted a further £10,000 for the removal of the offices of the Department and of the central School to the new site. It was decided that Brompton Park House, on the same site, which had become rather run down and had been split into four homes, could be converted for Departmental use (see illustration preceding p125). Kelk, the builder who had been commended for his assistance in the purchase of the estate, was awarded the contract to renovate the old houses and some temporary
huts which could be brought with the School from Marlborough House for £1500 (Physick, 1982; 27). The office accommodation was designed by James Pennethorne as a temporary brick building, taking the form of a long corridor with offices, linking existing buildings on the site. The design was approved on 12th July 1856. Kelk was again the builder, this time estimating £5,500 for construction.

It was also agreed that Refreshment Rooms would be built next to the Museum. They were suggested by the Commissioners for the Exhibition of 1851. The idea was totally new, no other museum having such facilities at that time, but the Commissioners were aware that exhibition visitors appreciated being able to obtain refreshments during their visits, and that there were not local facilities at this new site such as might be found near museums which were situated in central London. On 29th December 1856 Cole discussed the Refreshment Rooms with Prince Albert at Windsor (Physick, 1982; 30). Once Cole was aware of the proposal he acted with his usual speed and was back at Windsor on New Years Eve with plans drawn up for the Prince's approval.

The hastily designed and constructed refreshment rooms infringed the London building regulations and the Commissioners were threatened with legal proceedings. Cole found a devious way of avoiding the problem. The government were exempt from the building regulations; if they were the owners of the building they could not be forced to demolish it. Cole had written to Colonel Grey in August of 1856, suggesting that the joint ownership of the site was not effective, and he had sought and won the agreement of the Prince Consort (Cole, 1884; 324). Almost two years

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5. See Cole Miscellanies VIII insertion after f253 for a pencil drawing of the refreshment rooms dated Dec: 56 and looking remarkably like the postcard of the original refreshment rooms which was available until recently from the V&A shop.
Brompton Park House, 1863.

(watercolour by Anthony Stannus, V&A postcard)
later, as a result of the building regulations problem, Cole had the satisfaction of entering in his diary "Commission meeting decided to separate from the government & pay it off" (Cole Diary; 1st May 1858). The partnership between the Commissioners and the government in ownership of the site was dissolved, and the government retained ownership of the part of the site on which it had buildings for which it had paid, i.e., the Department of Science and Art site. Through this change of ownership Cole achieved what he had wanted; he now had only one authority to whom he was responsible for his management of the Department and its museums. Cole did not, however, allow the fact that his Department now occupied government-owned land to discourage him from taking an active interest in the development of that portion of the site which now belonged exclusively to the Commissioners.

The foregoing paragraphs describe the early architectural development of the site. Cole was equally active in building an effective team to carry out the various functions of his Department. It was at about this time, between 1856 and 1858, that we can see the establishment of the team which would be responsible for the development of the Department of Science and Art over the next twenty to thirty years. On Playfair's departure in 1858, when he was elected to the chair of Chemistry at Edinburgh University, Cole was put back into sole command, thus making best use of his undoubted administrative ability. Argles (1964; 19-20) suggests that there was rivalry between Cole and Playfair and that this contributed to the relative lack of progress on the "science side" before 1859. As we have seen in the previous chapter, Playfair had other difficulties than Cole's personality (including Murchison, with whom he certainly failed to agree), and, in hindsight at least, expressed admiration for Cole and his achievements. Cole saw himself primarily as an administrator, telling Lord Granville in a letter from Paris in 1855 that "although considered to be on the Art side, I belong
to the business part of the work" (Granville Papers; PRO PRO 30/29/23/5 p.265 - the underlining for emphasis is Cole's). When Cole became Departmental Secretary Captain J F Donnelly RE was appointed Inspector for Science. In appointing Donnelly Cole was not replacing like with like. Playfair was a scientist, appointed, perhaps not to best advantage, to an administrative post. Donnelly was an administrator with some technical and scientific ability. He had come to the Department in 1856 as lieutenant in charge of a detachment of sappers to do the ground work for new buildings and spent the rest of his career in the Department, rising to become Secretary in 1884.

Also in 1856, Francis Fowke, a captain in the Royal Engineers who had worked with Colonel Reid (the Secretary to the Executive Committee for 1851) in Bermuda and had been seconded as Secretary to the British Executive at the Paris Exhibition of 1855, was seconded to the Department. For ten years, until his death in December of 1865, Fowke worked as architect for the Department of Science and Art buildings, in London and elsewhere, and as site engineer at South Kensington. Among his surviving buildings, designed during his time at South Kensington, are the National Gallery in Dublin and the Industrial Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh (now part of the National Museums of Scotland).

Ateliers and architectural offices had existed from the beginning of the process of removal to the Commissioners' estate. They functioned both as teaching departments and as the architectural office for the Departmental building programme. They relied heavily for staffing upon the secondment of Royal Engineers. This was very much a Cole hobby-horse; he was very impressed by the competence of the Engineers who had been seconded to the Great Exhibition and he soon perceived that they could also be of use within his Department. Cole believed that what was needed in buildings at South Kensington was a basic structure,
designed by competent structural engineers, to which any necessary decoration could be added. Royal Engineers could design a good engineering structure, and the students at the Art School could help with more superficial artistic details. By this means Cole was putting into action the recommendation which he had made in 1848 — that the students at the Schools of Design could be usefully employed in carrying out work for government departments.

In 1856, through the generosity of the art collector John Sheepshanks, the opportunity arose for Cole to achieve his first "permanent" buildings adjacent to the Boilers. The temporary buildings which had been erected on the Department of Science and Art site, though functional, were inadequate to meet the long term needs of the Department, particularly for galleries and museums. There was popular opinion to this effect, the Boilers in particular attracting criticism both for unattractiveness and inadequate structural design. Sheepshanks, with whom Cole had discussed art collections back in 1847, wrote to Richard Redgrave at the Department of Science and Art offering to give his collection of modern British paintings (233 oil paintings and 103 drawings) to the nation, and specifically to Cole's Department. Sheepshanks insisted that his paintings must be kept outside of central London, where he believed the polluted air would soon damage them. The National Gallery was therefore not an acceptable location. When the government decided to accept the gift on behalf of Cole's Department they agreed to provide suitable accommodation for the large and valuable collection and voted £3,500 for that purpose.

The financing of the gallery was complex. Cole took advantage of this in what was to become his standard strategy. At the Department of Science and Art money voted for one purpose was almost invariably used for something slightly different. The technique was effective and Cole
had sufficient freedom of action to allow him to continue its use. A letter from Edgar Bowring, Secretary to the Commissioners, dated 21st November 1856, illustrates Cole's method. Bowring laments the fact that Cole proposed to use £2000 "scraped together out of the removal vote of £10,000 for the purpose of a picture gallery". Cole had reallocated monies between the budgets which the government had approved. Together with the vote of £3500 for the Sheepshanks collection this £2000, reallocated by Cole from the monies allowed for the removal of the schools and offices of the Department to the new site, would allow the construction of a larger building which could also house some of the Commissioners' more valuable objects which were being used by the Art schools. Bowring believed that if Cole didn't get the full £6000, which was estimated to be necessary for this larger gallery, from the Treasury the Commissioners might be required to make good the deficit (Granville Papers; PRO PRO 30/29/19/7 p.95). Cole went ahead with the building; the Commissioners were not asked to contribute to the building fund.

Captain Fowke was asked to design the new gallery (see illustration on following page). A report in the Builder magazine of 27th February 1858 describes the Sheepshanks building and its several innovative features, not the least of which was the fact that it was to be provided with gas lighting, thus allowing the gallery to be open in the evenings when working class people would be able to visit. We have already seen that Cole, true to the utilitarian beliefs of his youth, was sure that it was his duty to educate all classes in what he saw as "good taste". The official role of Cole's Department was to provide educational opportunities for "artizans"; the museums and galleries allowed Cole to provide opportunities to a far wider population than could the Department's central schools, or indeed the classes around the country.

The Sheepshanks Gallery.

On the right can be seen a portion of the Brompton Boilers.

(watercolour by Anthony Stannus, V&A postcard)
which were supported by the Department. It was not until Cole's "payment on results" scheme gave a financial incentive to teachers that numbers of students became large, and even then local success was dependent upon the support of local industrialists and ratepayers.

Much of Cole's energy and enthusiasm went into the establishment and development of the Departmental Museums; though other Departmental functions were attended to it was perhaps with less vigour. Cole had appointed the headmaster of the Stoke on Trent School of Design, J C Robinson, as superintendent of the museum at Marlborough House. Though at first Cole and Robinson worked well together it became increasingly clear that there were fundamental differences in their approaches to the development of the collections. In the new premises at South Kensington where Cole brought together the utilitarian collections relating to education, building materials, architecture, animal products and food, Robinson, who disliked the "modern industrial art" acquired by the museum (Robinson, 1858; 5-6), began to add to the art collections by building up a historical collection with an emphasis on renaissance sculpture. Cole did not want his collection to be centred on "fine arts" but wished to combine the "useful" artefacts and examples of decorative art into one great collection. He won the support of the members of the Committee of Council on Education; in 1863 they ruled that the South Kensington collections should consist of postclassical art "applied to some purpose of utility" (quoted by Alexander, 1983; 161). After this ruling Robinson found it increasingly difficult to work for Cole; he was sidelined as "Art Referee" and was not allowed to make the purchases of Italian and Spanish medieval and renaissance decorative art which were his chief interest. Robinson left South Kensington in 1868, when his refusal to obey departmental rules had become impossible for Cole to condone; Granville was saddened that these two men who both had the best interests of the museum at heart were not
able to resolve their differences (Bonython, 1982; 44-45).

Cole wanted maximum publicity for the opening of the new buildings at South Kensington. He had experienced the excitement of the royal opening of the Great Exhibition and wanted to see the same seal of approval given to the new museum. He wrote to Lord Granville suggesting that the museum should be opened by the Queen and that prominent politicians should be there, because on the support of these men depended "the rapid or slow development of the Scheme..... or perhaps even its abandonment" (Granville Papers; PRO PRO 30/29/19/2 p.43).

It was at this point that Cole suggested that the new museum needed a name. In December of 1856, in conversation with Prince Albert, he suggested that the Boilers and the new Sheepshanks gallery should be collectively known as the South Kensington Museum (Cole, 1884; Volume 1, 326). The site of the museum was technically in Brompton, but nearby Kensington was a much more salubrious and fashionable address. South Kensington was Cole's invention. The South Kensington area of London was named after the Museum, and not the other way around. On 20th June 1857 the South Kensington Museum was formally opened by the Queen and on the 22nd June it was opened to the public. Cole, having decoupled the Commissioners and the government in terms of the ownership of the estate now reunited them in the new name. In effect it was to become a short form of "the land purchased with the profits from the Great Exhibition". It suggested a unity which was no longer true, with the division of the estate into separate ownership by the Commissioners and the government.

A typical manoeuvre by Cole, who already felt that South Kensington was his kingdom and that he should be aware of all that was proposed to happen within the estate, was his suggestion to Lord Granville, who as Lord President of the Council was again Cole's political boss, that the
Commissioners for 1851 should be invited to use the Department's Board Room at South Kensington to hold their meetings, so that Cole's Department "might give assistance in many other ways & the workings would be very cheap" (Granville Papers; PRO PRO 30/29/23/10 p.59). It was not an unreasonable suggestion, but it stemmed from Cole's desire, as a senior civil servant who was on the spot, to keep open his channels of communication with the Commissioners. It is not surprising that the Commissioners should accept his offer. What is more surprising is the degree to which he was allowed to assume responsibility over the larger part of the estate which was outside his official remit.

It was in 1857 that Cole made public his policy of maximum publicity for the Department. In a speech (Cole, 1884; Volume 2, 294) presented in that year Cole put forward his two main principles of operation. The first was that there should be the maximum amount of individual responsibility. This principle Cole had borrowed directly from Bentham, quoting in his autobiography Bentham's advocacy of "single seated responsibility" as a requisite of "good administration" (Cole, 1884; Vol 1, 5-6). Cole's second principle (when it suited him!) was that nothing should be hidden from the public but that all of the Department's activities should receive the maximum amount of publicity. Enormous volumes of paper emanated from South Kensington; among the heaviest items were the annual reports which contained much more detail than Cole was obliged to include, and the Art Directory (1857-) and Science Directory (1860-) which were vehicles for conveying facts about grants available as well as propaganda for the Department. Propaganda for the Department was, in effect, propaganda for Cole's ideas. He believed that not only must he secure good value for public money, but he must be publicly seen to do so.

Now that Cole effectively had his own publishing house he had less need
to submit articles to influential newspapers and journals, or to privately publish his own campaigning journals. The need was only diminished, as we shall see, and Cole was still prepared to use non-official publication when he deemed it necessary.

The creation of additional buildings at South Kensington was achieved by Cole's preferred method – deviousness! Cole's strategy was to build up the museum collections (and in this he missed no opportunities) and through them to justify the need for additional accommodation. Two further important collections of paintings were acquired by the Department of Science and Art at about this time. The landscape artist Turner, who had died in 1851, had bequeathed his unsold paintings to the nation and it was decided that they should go to the National Gallery. However, the National Gallery had not the space to display them publicly and as a result they had been temporarily lent to the Department of Science and Art and hung at Marlborough House. The Vernon Collection, donated in 1847 not by an artist but by another wealthy collector, had been displayed in a basement at the National Gallery. This collection had been removed to the ground floor of Marlborough House, before the arrival there of Cole's Department. Sir Charles Eastlake, Director of the National Gallery, wanted these two collections to go to Carlton House Terrace when they had to be removed from Marlborough House, but Cole began a campaign to have them at South Kensington.

In his position as a civil servant Cole was restricted in what could be sanctioned for publication by his Department. In this case, therefore, he used commercial publication to promote this cause. Tracts upon National Promotion of Art and Science, which only had one issue, was published in 1857. It was a blatant propaganda sheet suggesting that it was outrageous for the government to spend £160,000 (the sum estimated for the accommodation at Carlton House Terrace) to obtain a gallery for
collections when land was already owned by the government at South Kensington and a mere £20,000 would cover the cost of building there. Reluctantly the Trustees of the National Gallery accepted the South Kensington solution, but insisted that their collections be kept separate from those of the Department of Science and Art, with any communicating doors being kept locked! "In their customary precipitate manner, the officials at South Kensington had begun to build before all these arrangements were finalized" (Physick, 1982; 40). Fowke was visiting Lord Salisbury at Hatfield when Treasury approval for the building came through. When he heard the news he contacted South Kensington, only to be told that the foundations were being dug already (Cole, 1884; Volume 2, 352). Francis Fowke, the Departmental architect, was available to begin work on the new galleries as soon as Cole saw the need, certainly before the Treasury had been persuaded to provide the funds. The buildings which were designed by Francis Fowke were substantial brick structures, not the temporary galleries which the Treasury sanctioned.

In the event only £8198 was voted for the construction of buildings to house the Turner and Vernon collections (Select Committee on the South Kensington Museum, 1860; i-ix). The structure which Fowke designed was a two storey building which was to have the Department of Science and Art's Art Museum and Art Library on its ground floor. Fowke's explanation to the Select Committee of 1860 which investigated the Department reveals the existence of a Cole-like if not Cole-dictated strategy. Fireproof floors were necessary below the paintings, since the Treasury vote had stipulated that the building to house the Turner and Vernon collections must be fireproof. It was not possible to put a fireproof floor above a temporary building, therefore the ground floor rooms for the Department's Art Museum and Library, which was funded from the "removal" vote, must be solidly built. By designing a building on
two floors which would accommodate aspects of the Department as well as
the collections belonging to the National Gallery, Cole and Fowke had
made maximum use of the permissions which had been given in order to
achieve substantial and permanent buildings for the museum collections.

On the basis of permission to build temporary picture galleries and to
replace the facilities at Marlborough House, and using the three sums of
money which had been voted, ie £10,000 for the removal to South
Kensington, £3500 for the Sheepshanks collection, and £8198 for the
Turner and Vernon collections, Fowke had designed and was in the course
of constructing, buildings for a museum, library, female art school and
picture galleries. The series of relatively small votes for buildings
for specific purposes had in Cole's hands become a single budget from
which he financed the complex of buildings to house both the
Department's art schools and the rapidly growing Museum. The Select
Committee of 1860 approved of what had been done and what was planned,
agreeing that it was necessary that the "wooden schools" and
"dilapidated houses", in which so much of the Department was
accommodated, should be replaced (see illustration on following page).
It was true that government funding had been well used in terms of
achieving value for money; the Select Committee was, apparently,
unwilling to criticise the fact that Cole had done rather more with this
money than had been sanctioned by the Treasury.

Lord Salisbury, who was briefly Lord President of the Council in 1858-9
and who Cole knew socially, had given the formal permission for the
Turner and Vernon galleries to be built. Cole was out of the country,
on an extended European tour, during the critical months when the new
buildings were sanctioned and building was begun. The description of
the sequence of events given by Physick (1982; 39-45) makes it clear
that both Fowke and Redgrave maintained contact with Cole and carried
The grounds of the South Kensington Museum, 1863.
The attractive glass dome in the background is part of the 1862 exhibition buildings.

(watercolour by Anthony Stannus, V&A postcard)
through Cole's plans with all the speed and energy which he would have
required. Redgrave wrote to Cole ("resting" in Italy) in January of
1859 to tell him the building "has been pushed on at a tremendous rate-
and will be completed in 8 weeks from the first brick laid" (Cole
Correspondence; Redgrave, R., Letter to Cole, 6th January 1859).

Eastlake at the National Gallery was in need of extra space but it was
Cole who was given permission for the erection of a second building in
January of 1859. This building was to house the paintings for which
Eastlake had no space at the National Gallery; Cole and Fowke planned
that the building would be of two storeys and accommodate the Female Art
School on the ground floor. This was the same strategy that was
successfully employed with the Turner and Vernon galleries; a permanent
gallery was to be on the floor above the "temporary" accommodation for
the art schools. Redgrave wrote to Cole in Italy to confirm that the
formal permission had been granted (Cole Correspondence; Redgrave, R.,

Not surprisingly, considering the limited finance and the haste with
which they were built, these two galleries were not visually attractive.
They provided the necessary environmental conditions for the paintings,
and basic accommodation for the library and female art school, but the
stark facades were not, Powke explained to the Select Committee in 1860,
intended to be visible once the development of the site was complete.
Powke described to the Select Committee his plans for a quadrangle of
galleries; these first two permanent galleries were to become the
western and northern galleries of a quadrangle to which the Boilers
provided the southern part and which Powke envisaged would be completed
by the addition of eastern galleries, so that the enclosed space could
be covered in glass to form two more large galleries (Department of
Science and Art, 1859a)(see illustration on following page).
Kellc was the builder who was responsible for both of the new galleries. His contracts were awarded as small subcontracts which begin to be recorded in a log book of tenders received (Department of Science and Art, 1859b). The log begins with a tender from Kelk, dated 5th December 1859, for "the new galleries south of entrance to the Turner and Vernon galleries". Kelk's predominant position with regard to these early buildings on the South Kensington site is indicated by the fact that it is not until the 22nd entry in the logbook that we find any work which is not Kelk's. Kelk's tender for the new galleries had been in the log book long before formal permission to carry out the work was granted.

The "north and south courts" to be created by putting a roof over the quadrangle were to be built by Kelk and Grissell respectively. Grissell might appear to be a new name being brought into the circle, but in fact he was linked to Cole, being the cousin and business partner of Samuel Moreton Peto (who had been the first substantial contributor to the guarantee fund for 1851). The north court was opened on 30th April 1862 and was used to display, among other things, objects from the Soulages collection, a collection of "very fine objects of Italian art - in pottery (majolica), wood carving, bronzes, together with some pictures, and various objects of French origin" (Cole, 1884; Volume 1, 290). Like the Sheepshanks and Turner and Vernon collections, this was a ready-made collection which could be easily amalgamated into the growing museum, broadening the collection from its bias towards painting and providing "examples" for the broader range of "art manufactures". Again the needs of the museum were to be the justification for the building programme. Cole had viewed the Soulages' collection when it became available for

7. The purchase of the Soulages collection was achieved by Cole despite the opposition of the government, with the help of the executive of the Manchester Art Treasures Exhibition and Lord Salisbury, who allowed Cole to hire the collection from the Manchester executive and buy it from them gradually as Departmental funds allowed.
sale in France; he later claimed to have obtained it believing it to be his duty to buy it for the nation, because "it would be of great use to manufacturers" (Cole, 1884; Volume 1, 290-294).

The smaller south court, opened in June of the same year, was a more lavishly finished space, the blank south wall of which was designed to be the starting point for yet another extension when the Boilers could be removed and replaced with a permanent building. Fowke had begun work on the design of this extension. After Fowke's death General Scott, yet another Royal Engineer, who had been a lecturer in analytical chemistry at the Royal Engineers School at Chatham in the 1850s (Coles, 1984; 135) used Fowke's sketches as a basis for his design of the building which was erected in 1869.

The opening exhibition in the south court, entitled simply the "Loan Exhibition", was a collection of paintings loaned by many private individuals. John Physick (1982; 54-55) claims it to have been a "glittering special exhibition". This exhibition was run in parallel with the Exhibition of 1862 which was being held at South Kensington. Cole was, it seems, too concerned with his second Great Exhibition, which was taking place on the Commissioners' land across the road from the museum, to involve himself in the detail of the loan exhibition.

The new courts were very much admired. Unlike the Treasury the British public had not been fooled into thinking that the buildings at South Kensington were temporary. A contemporary article in the Times (4th June 1862) expressed the belief that "Captain Fowke has been rearing the first installment of a permanent art gallery". Parliament had never voted funds for the creation of such a building, but the funds which Cole had obtained for the use of his Department had been creatively managed. It was not until 24th May 1866 that the Treasury sanctioned
the carrying out of a plan for permanent buildings at South Kensington "as recommended by Mr Bruce" (Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education). The cost of completing the scheme already in progress would be £195,000, and would be spread over a period of 6 years (PRO ED23 629). The funds to make the jumble of old and "temporary" buildings into a cohesive whole were now explicitly made available.

The Treasury twice held enquiries into the affairs of the Department of Science and Art. The first was in 1858 and was "to enquire into the establishment of the Department of Science and Art" (Treasury Commission, 1858). "Establishment" is civil service jargon, still in use today, and meaning the staff and their status and salaries, the buildings and property and their administration. Staff working for a government department became "established" if their position was permanent. The enquiry was therefore interested in the Department both in terms of the establishment or creation of a wholly new government department, and in its structure and efficiency. The Treasury report emphasised the temporary nature of most of the Department's buildings, stating: "Unless the strictest precaution be observed the danger from fire would be very great... If however this Museum become permanent, a very large outlay will be required at no distant date to place the whole building in a suitable condition" (ibid.; 10). When discussing Cole the report states "It cannot be doubted that to his able exertions is the credit chiefly due of its present state of efficiency". They suggested that his fixed salary of £1000 per annum, which had been steady at that level since 1852, should be changed to a scale from £1000 to £1200 by increments of £40 and that "if our estimate of Mr Cole's services be concurred with he might be allowed, as a special mark of favour, at once to receive the maximum rate of salary". Cole's manipulation of his budget, which was not unnoticed by the Treasury team, had not been considered serious in the light of the overall achievements of his
Department. It is probable that Cole saw this report as giving the "green light" to his methods, certainly he continued to be very flexible in his use of the funds made available to him at the Department.

In the same report it is suggested that Professor T H Huxley, who was at that time "naturalist" to the Geological Survey and professor at what Cole referred to as the "Science Schools" (Huxley was employed at the Government School of Mines) should be on a salary scale of £400 to £600 with increments of £15 per annum. The comparison of Cole's salary with that of Huxley is indicative of the value placed upon their work. Then, as now, senior administrators in the civil service were much more highly paid than senior academic scientists, and generalist civil servants were believed to be suitable managers of scientists.

At this stage in the development of the Department of Science and Art it would be fair to say that most of Cole's energy had gone into creating the South Kensington Museum, some had gone into developing the structure within which art education could be fostered, and very little attention had been paid by Cole to science education. It was in 1863, at a period when Cole was still held in high regard, that his old friend John Scott Russell again sought his company. Russell had returned to his career as a naval architect, and with some success. He had become Vice President of the Institute of Naval Architects and was in the process of campaigning for the government to fund a College of Naval Architecture (the school which had previously existed having been closed) and he hoped that Cole would help. Russell later wrote a book, *Systematic Technical Education for the English People* (1869), describing his concept of a Technological University fed by Technical Colleges which might select their students from County Trade Schools. Although Russell's ideas were very similar to Cole's, Cole could not be persuaded to join the campaign, claiming it was "incompatible with [his] office"
This claim seems to have been by way of an excuse to Russell, because Cole was fully prepared to campaign for his own vision of science education. Cole's desire was for a general science school, to be built on the South Kensington site, equivalent to the art school which he had created there. This would bring onto a single site both the art and science schools of the Department. The scientific institutions already under his control were not as yet on the South Kensington site, and Cole had not yet persuaded his political masters that they should be. If Cole could get the School of Naval Architecture onto the South Kensington site, this might be a step on the way towards this ideal, a series of science-based monotechnic institutions (School of Mines, School of Chemistry, School of Naval Architecture) on a single site which might in time be moulded by Cole to become a technical university (Bud and Roberts, 1984; 124-5). Cole discussed the need for a new School of Naval Architecture with the First Lord of the Admiralty; he was prepared to fund such a school and to locate it at South Kensington. The school was opened, in temporary accommodation, in 1864 (Coles, 1984; 303-309).

The School of Naval Architecture added to the subjects on offer at South Kensington one which was conspicuous by its absence at Jermyn Street, mathematics. The work of the school, and particularly the mathematics taught, were favourably commented upon by the Select Committee on the Provisions for Giving Instruction in Theoretical and Applied Science to the Industrial Classes [Samuelson Committee] in 1868 (Samuelson Committee, 1868; xix). The School of Naval Architecture at South Kensington was considered to have been successful, despite its not inconsiderable disadvantages, not the least of which was the fact that it was land-locked. A paper published anonymously in the journal
Engineering (1923, v116, 101-103) fifty years after the School was established at South Kensington, praises the school in glowing terms:

It must be stated that the South Kensington School did wonders....it set up a standard of teaching and an intensity of study which having regard to its purpose has, we think, never been surpassed.

The school, unlike its predecessor which had been under the control of the navy, selected its students by ability and not status or wealth. The majority of students were selected by competitive examination among dockyard shipwright apprentices and dockyard engineering students. The one criticism of the school in this paper was of the accommodation; there was no student accommodation and "the school building was very far from satisfactory. It was not much more than a rough wooden shed often too cold on cold days and too hot on warm days". This was very much par for the course at South Kensington. Cole had attracted the school to South Kensington, where only very inadequate accommodation was available, and then proceeded to point out to his political masters the need to upgrade the accommodation.

Plans for new buildings at South Kensington, drawn up by Fowke in November of 1865 included "Schools of Naval Architecture and Science". The day after Fowke's death, 5th December 1865, this plan was sent to the Treasury, together with Fowke's estimates. The Treasury approved expenditure for parts of the scheme, including the Science Schools. It was Scott who drew up designs for the building which John Physick (1982; 110) describes as a "less than completely coherent building, showing signs of hasty planning as well as of experimental decoration". This perceived lack of coherence is perhaps indicative of the limitations of Cole's approach to architecture. A building which is designed by two teams - the engineers and the artists - was inevitably less coherent than a building whose structure and appearance were designed as one.
The building was completed at the end of 1872. The School of Naval Architecture moved from South Kensington to Greenwich in 1873, never having occupied their new building. It is unclear what Cole's feelings were about the loss of this school. He may not have been unhappy - he had achieved a new building into which he would move the science schools of his Department. Physics, chemistry and natural history teaching was transferred from the Royal School of Mines into the new building; the geological work of the Survey and teaching in mining, mineralogy, metallurgy and palaeontology remained at Jermyn Street (Bud and Roberts, 1984; 152-3).

The second Treasury enquiry into the Department of Science and Art occurred in 1865. On the 15th June 1865 Mr Bruce, the Vice President of the Council to whom Cole was responsible, wrote to the Treasury requesting an enquiry. This was not because Bruce had anxieties about its management, on the contrary he was concerned to increase the salaries of certain of the Department's staff. In his letter Bruce stated that "Since the last enquiry in 1858 into the establishment of the Science and Art Department its duties have more than doubled" and therefore it was desirable that the management structure and salaries be reviewed. This was agreed to and Sir Charles Trevelyan, the civil service reformer, was appointed to undertake the enquiry together with Mr Bruce and a representative of the Treasury. The enquiry reported in December of 1865.

Various changes were proposed as a result of the enquiry, including the separation of the South Kensington Museum from the Department of Science and Art, but the Treasury deferred any action in response. Interestingly Cole makes no reference to this enquiry in his autobiography; he must have had strong opinion on this matter; if the split were to take place he must have had a preference as to which half
of his Department he was most concerned to retain under his control. However, there was to be no action, and Cole was in no immediate danger. Mr Bruce objected to the delay and, nearly a year later in November of 1866, requested permission to carry out the recommendations of the enquiry, but the Treasury refused, saying that since many of the staff concerned were in receipt of "Paris Exhibition allowances" [i.e. they were seconded to Paris to manage the British section of that exhibition] the time was "inopportune for making changes to ordinary salaries" (Department of Science and Art, 1874; letters dated 30th January, 1st February, 30th November and 7th December 1866). In December of 1867 Lord Montagu, who had replaced Bruce as Vice President of the Committee in Council on Education and who was a supporter of technical education (DNB), requested that the recommendation that the roles of Secretary to the Department and Director of the Museum should be separated should remain in abeyance. The Treasury agreed and Cole retained his dual role until the end of his career.

Between this second Treasury enquiry and the end of Cole's career with the Department there were two major parliamentary enquiries into scientific education in Great Britain. The first was the Select Committee chaired by Samuelson and reporting in 1868, the second was the Royal Commission chaired by the Duke of Devonshire and reporting in 1871-1875. These committees both made detailed investigations of Cole's Department but had quite different remits from the earlier Treasury committees. They were much less concerned with the financial efficiency of the Department and much more concerned with its educational effectiveness.

The Samuelson committee was appointed "to enquire into the provisions

8. Montagu died in 1902; at that time he was a resident of South Kensington, living at 91 Queens Gate (DNB).
for giving instruction in theoretical and applied science to the industrial classes". As we have seen, science had not been Cole's first interest. His management of the "science side" had been by application of the principles which he considered had been successful in art education. Cole was the first individual to be interviewed by the Samuelson Committee. In the past Cole had been the instigator of enquiries which looked critically at government departments; now Cole was the one being investigated. He didn't care for it, commenting in his diary that the Committee was "all wild & adrift wanting to go abroad for information. Offered to superintend proper evidence" (Cole Diary; 8th April 1868). It seems that Cole wanted to ensure that the Committee saw things his way.

Cole gave evidence on three occasions, providing information on the overall management of his Department, the basis upon which payments were made to science teachers, the difficulty in retaining teachers, and the geographical spread of science schools. The committee enquired of Cole concerning the teaching of "special trades". Cole defended the principle upon which the Department operated, that they would support the teaching of "principles", but not specific trades. Cole was asked a series of leading questions by Lord Montagu (Samuelson Committee, 1868; Minutes of Evidence, questions 301-304):

Q Your object would rather be to educate the mind of the artizan than to enable his fingers to earn money?

A Certainly; the utmost you can do is to teach all those general principles of science which tend to improve the industry of a country.

Q Your object being, not the work, but the intelligence of the man in his work?

A Certainly.
A few minutes later, in response to questions from the chairman, Cole stated:

I would not teach China painting or specific designing for manufactures or any special trade. I do not think that the government should keep a workshop. (Samuelson Committee, 1868; Minutes of evidence, question 312)

Cole's views were changing. He had, twenty years earlier, suggested that the School of Design students should carry out projects for the government. In the creation of the complex of buildings at South Kensington he had put this into practice. It is probable that the changes in Cole's philosophy were pushed by the reality he experienced. He had wanted to train artizans to produce better manufactured products, but had met opposition both from manufacturers and from within his own Department. Teaching of principles was acceptable, teaching of practice was not. Now he was very careful in laying out the boundaries of his Department's courses. They could teach principles, but not in any way "interfere" in training which should properly be carried out by manufacturers. Cole's views (and the difficulty in interpreting his terminology) are illustrated in some comments in his diary for January 1868. On a visit to the Mechanics' Institute at Bristol, Cole "advocated serious science teaching" and proposed a Bristol "Centre for Technical Instruction" (Cole Diary; 9th and 10th January 1868). Here Cole was wishing to establish, in the provinces, science-based educational establishments which would support British industry. Like Playfair, he had been made aware in Paris in 1867 that the British had something to fear from foreign competition. He explained to Donnelly that "the national urgency required a national action" (Cole Diary; 22nd January 1868). The Society of Arts proved once again to be the most suitable vehicle through which Cole could promote public discussion. The conference on technical education which they held on 23rd January
1868 was considered by Cole to have been "very influential" (Cole Diary; 23rd January 1868).

Samuelson called Cole to a private meeting on Saturday 16th May 1868. He asked Cole to "give evidence that a college might be made up out of Jermyn Str: materials & to avoid deciding where it should be so as not to excite jealousy of SK". Samuelson wanted Cole to advocate a "separate establishment for science", implying a separate management structure from that which was already in place at South Kensington. To this Cole could not agree (Cole Diary). Cole did not again appear before the Committee.

Among the recommendations made by the Samuelson Committee were that there should be improvements in elementary education and that science should be introduced into secondary schools. State assistance in the formation of "superior colleges of science" was proposed, and in particular the establishment of colleges in industrial areas. The extension of Cole's system of "payment on results", by which elementary school teachers were rewarded for successes in examinations in drawing, to science teaching to the older pupils was proposed. The Education Act of 1870 went some way towards meeting the Samuelson Committee recommendations relating to elementary education, but reform in science education came more slowly. In May of 1870 another Royal Commission was established to investigate "Scientific instruction and the advancement of science".

The Devonshire Commission was required "to inquire what aid .... is derived from grants voted by Parliament or from endowments belonging to the several universities in Great Britain and Ireland and the colleges thereof and whether such aid could be rendered in a manner more effectual for the purpose" (Devonshire Commission, 1872; iii). The
first two reports of the Commission were published in March 1871 and March 1872. The first report recommended the removal to South Kensington of the Royal School of Mines and the Royal College of Chemistry. This was what Cole had been working towards, the bringing together on one site of the monotechnic institutions under his control. Thus the "science schools" which Cole had desired to draw together were to become what Cole had wanted, a single institution, though the report recommended that it be under the control of a "council of Professors". A recommendation for the improvement of instruction in science for elementary teachers was made; details of this and the reorganisation of the Science Schools were to be given in a second report (Devonshire Commission, 1872; vii-viii).

This second report concerned "Scientific instruction in training colleges and elementary day schools under the Education Department, and in science classes under the Science and Art Department". The Commission recognised the contribution of the Department of Science and Art in teacher training in that students at the Training Colleges, under the Education Department, were being prepared for the Department of Science and Art science examinations. The "payment on results" system was an encouragement for trainee teachers to qualify themselves for these payments. The system had "given a remarkable impulse to elementary scientific teaching throughout the United Kingdom" (Devonshire Commission, 1872; xix, paragraph 41). Some deficiencies in the system were pointed out - the "irregular and unsystematic manner in which students take up subjects for the study of which they are unprepared" (ibid.; xxvii, paragraph 91), the lack of practical instruction and the lack of effective inspection of science classes. However, the Commission sought to build on what existed, and recommended the continuation of the Science and Art Department as a distinct and separate Department.
The management and remit of the Department had been affirmed, but just a few months later in April of 1873 Cole's civil service career was terminated in less than happy circumstances. Cole's son relates the events leading up to Cole's resignation thus: "Mr Cole had, on the 4th December 1871, handed in his resignation to Lord Ripon (the Lord President). On the next day, however, a letter from the Treasury was received at South Kensington by which it was endeavoured to fasten upon him (Mr Cole) the blame for the defalcations of the professional Accountant. He, therefore, at once asked Lord Ripon to allow his resignation be held in abeyance until the question as to who was to blame had been disposed of. Thus he did not actually retire until April 1873" (Cole, 1884; Volume 1, 351). The letter from Lingen at the Treasury referred to here was dated 30th November 1871. We are asked to believe that the resignation and accusation "crossed in the post".

In 1871 Cole was 63 years of age, he was, in addition to the management of his Department, managing a series of exhibitions at South Kensington being held under the auspices of the Commissioners for the Exhibition of 1851, and he was increasingly out of sympathy with the people with whom he had to work. By the end of the 1860s Cole's power base was declining, he no longer attracted sufficient support at high levels. Granville was by now involved in foreign affairs; Ponsonby had not proved the equal of Grey (who died in 1870) as Cole's supporter at the Palace. The era in which a civil servant could be allowed almost complete control of his own Department was at an end. As we have seen, Cole had become an expert in the bending of the financial rules under which he was required to operate. When, in 1871, less sympathetic eyes studied the accounts of his Department they were found wanting, and Cole was held responsible.

Cole had many talents, but money making was not among them. When the
Select Committee on the South Kensington Museum had questioned Cole in 1860 they had asked him both about the finances of the Department and of his Art Manufactures company. With regard to the Department Cole told them "ever since I have been connected with the department they [the accounts] have always mechanically been sent to the Audit Office every 2 months". When they asked him about Felix Summerly's Art Manufactures he told them that his connection with that business had ceased in 1849. They asked if the business had failed. He said it had not, but that "as far as [Cole] was individually concerned [he] had just about cleared the amount of capital which [he] risked in the matter". Quite what he meant by that is not clear. At the time he had had no capital to invest; his input to the business had been management and promotion, others had invested the money.

Cole's son makes very little reference to the finances of the Department in the Cole biography but what he does say is revealing:

His contentions with the Treasury in securing grants for proceeding with the buildings for the Museum were numerous. In the course of them he was supported by the political heads of the Department, who, almost without exception, cordially urged him to get as much as he could from the Treasury. As a rule he did not strive without some compensating success, but eventually, a year or so before his retirement, the Treasury decided to transfer the charge of the buildings and their erection to the First Commissioner of Works, in consequence of which, the ateliers and architectural offices gradually ceased to exist after his retirement (Cole, 1884; Volume 1, 337-338).

There were two particular strands of opposition to Cole's programme at South Kensington which were now used, together with the fact that his finance officer had been dishonest, to deprive him of his Department. One was the dislike of his "creative accounting", the other was dislike of his successful avoidance of the controlling influence of the Office
of Works. The enquiry into the accounts and the "defalcations of the professional accountant" took two years. The Report of the Committee of the House of Commons on Public Accounts which refers to the problems at the Department of Science and Art was published 13th May 1872. Cole finally retired in April 1873.

Cole the individual may have fallen from grace, but the Department for which he had been responsible had not. Captain (eventually Major-General) Donnelly became Secretary of the Department in 1884. Cole's son Alan spent his whole career at South Kensington, becoming the Departmental expert on textiles and lace and eventually becoming Assistant Secretary. Although the Commissioners no longer owned the land upon which the Museums at South Kensington stood they retained a strong interest. The Seventh Report of the Special Committee of Enquiry set up by the Commissioners (Windsor Archives; Minutes, 24th May 1876; Appendix B, 14-20) contains the statement: "The South Kensington Museum has at the moment more immediate and perhaps stronger claims upon the Commissioners than that of any other institution which would fall within the scope of its legitimate aims".

By the time that Cole retired he had created on the government owned section of the original Commissioners' estate a complex of buildings to accommodate the Schools of his Department and their associated museums, (see plan and illustration on following pages) and he had achieved a place for South Kensington in the minds of the public and the government which was to allow for its continued growth, both in reputation and in terms of its buildings, after the man who had so strongly influenced it was removed. He had also maintained a strong influence over the rest of the South Kensington estate, an influence often mediated through his continuing connection with the promotion and management of exhibitions.
The South Kensington Museum, 1873.

The Science Schools (Henry Cole Wing) are in the background.

(watercolour by Charles E Emery, V&A postcard)
References Chapter 6


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[Windsor Archives] (Archives of the Commissioners for the Exhibition of 1851, held at the Archive Department of Imperial College.)
The Paris exhibitions of 1849, 1855 and 1867 are important to this thesis not because of their importance to the development of Cole's circle, but for their influence on Cole's thinking and for the contacts which Cole made or strengthened whilst in Paris. They also contributed to Cole's reputation as an exhibition organiser, and kept these abilities in the public view in the relatively long gaps between exhibitions in London.

The Paris exhibition of 1849 was a very strong influence on Cole and, as we have seen in Chapter 4, a major factor in the events leading up to the Great Exhibition of 1851. Cole's visit to the Paris exhibition was during the period when he was in the midst of negotiation with the Board of Trade for governmental support for a national exhibition of British manufactures. At a meeting of the Council of the Society of Arts on 16th May 1849 "Mr H Cole was requested to endeavour to ascertain from Mr Digby Wyatt whether he would be willing to visit Paris and prepare a report for the Society on the effect of the French National Exhibition and its result on the Trade of that country during past years" (RSA, Minutes of Council).

Matthew Digby Wyatt, architect and developer, was not a member of the Society. His membership dates from 1852, after his connection with the Great Exhibition. Digby Wyatt was financially very secure, following his successful activity as a developer in the Paddington area of London, and he was therefore free to spend time away from his business. He had, earlier in the same year, visited an exhibition at Birmingham on behalf of Cole for the Journal of Design (Robinson, 1979; 205), and it may be that Cole himself had recommended Wyatt as a rapporteur. Cole accompanied Wyatt on this trip to Paris.
Cole's own account of this first visit to Paris (Cole, 1884; Volume 1, 124-125), includes a translation in full of M. Buffet's circular to the French Chambers of Commerce which suggested that the 1849 Paris exhibition should be international. Cole recalls that:

We discussed the idea, and I collected all the opinions that I could on the question if the British Exhibition of 1851 should be National or International. I recollect standing before the stall of bronzes of M. Deniere in the Exhibition, and asking Mr Herbert Minton, who was of a somewhat conservative turn of mind, what he thought of it; he instantly declared for the International idea.

Cole was very much impressed by the Paris exhibition, and his visit modified his own ideas as to the kinds of exhibitions which could be organised by the Society of Arts. Buffet's idea of internationality had particularly appealed to Cole and there can be no doubt that it was Monsieur Buffet's circular which stimulated the change in plans for London in 1851.

The 1851 exhibition was a stunning success and soon other nations were attempting to carry out their own international exhibitions on a similar or even larger scale. Cole was considered, it seems, to be the man to be consulted when Britain took part in international exhibitions, wherever they were held. Cole's son explains (Cole, 1884; Volume 1, 207) in his discussion of the Paris exhibition of 1855, that:

The success of the Exhibition of 1851 had led many influential personages to regard my father as a principal authority upon the management of kindred enterprises, and in the course of his work on the reform of the Schools of Design he attended the Lord Lieutenant (Earl of Clarendon) in June 1852 upon the occasion of the opening of the Cork exhibition. Early in 1853 I find entries in my father's

1. Probably referring to himself with Digby Wyatt, Francis Fuller and possibly Herbert Minton who were all present at the exhibition.
diaries relating to his preparation of instructions to the Commissioners appointed to proceed to the Exhibition which was held in that year in New York.

When Paris attempted to emulate the great success the British had had in 1851 by holding their own "Exposition Universelle" in 1855 it was Cole who was asked to manage the British contribution.

By 1855 Cole was firmly in place as an employee of the Board of Trade in command of the Department of Science and Art. It was the Committee of Privy Council for Trade which decided in February of 1854 that the new Department of Science and Art would manage the British Section of the Paris Exhibition. It was unthinkable that Britain should not be represented there. The government was of the opinion that it should take an active role by coordinating the exhibits of British manufacturers; the Board of Trade was the appropriate department and one of its employees was the experienced exhibition organiser Henry Cole. Cole, on behalf of his Department, agreed to take on the responsibility, although with some hesitation. In his biography he claims that this was due to his belief that his "first duties and thoughts" were to his new Department (Cole, 1884; Volume 1, 208). This is confirmed by a comment made by Cole in a letter to Colonel Phipps on the 27th July 1854 - "I continue to think that the Exhibition itself and its incidents may be made to act usefully in the formation of the Kensington plans..." (Cole Correspondence; Box 1).

Cole suggested that Charles Wentworth Dilke, also experienced but not a government employee, might be an appropriate Chief Commissioner 2, but in the event Cole took on the responsibility for organising the British

2. After his work on the Executive Committee for 1851 Dilke was elected a Commissioner for 1851; in 1853 he was sent to New York as a Commissioner to that exhibition.

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contribution whilst "[seizing] every opportunity for benefitting the Department through the Paris Exhibition" (ibid.).

Cole visited Paris in April of 1854 to inspect the site of the exhibition and to confer with the British Ambassador and the exhibition organisers. Cole was dissatisfied that although his department had been charged with the administrative responsibility for the British contribution to the Paris exhibition there was no Royal Commission as there had been in 1851 and for the New York exhibition in 1853. On his return he visited Colonel Grey, Secretary to Prince Albert, and made it known that he felt that the Commissioners for the Exhibition of 1851 should become involved in the Paris Exhibition. Perhaps this was because Cole sensed the lack of decisiveness on the part of the government. On the 11th May 1854 Cole recorded in his diary that the government did "not like the Paris Exhibition at all, nor the probable expense it would entail". Cole had estimated that the total cost to the government would be £70,000, a considerable sum for which the returns were uncertain and very difficult to quantify. It is not surprising that the government were reluctant; there would be no profits (for the British) to offset against this expense. Cole needed the aid of his influential friends.

Cole's son records that "Mr Cobden agreed to ask questions in the House of Commons" (Cole, 1884; Volume 1, 209-210). Cole, in what was by now his usual style, was using an acquaintance in the House to put forward his case. This manoeuvre was effective and Lord Granville (President of the Council) was asked to form a Commission of Management together with Cardwell, the current President of the Board of Trade, and Lord Stanley. Cole's opportunity to involve Prince Albert came when, on the 17th May, the Prince visited Cole's Department to see an exhibition of the students' work. The Prince commented that he "hoped the French
Exhibition would be carried out well" and that "as we are spending so much in destruction [in the Crimea] we ought to spend some more in construction" (Cole Diary). Cole seems to have made maximum advantage of this apparently off-the-cuff remark, because, within a few days Cole's Department was confirmed to be the agency through which the British government would participate in the Paris exhibition and Cole, Playfair and Richard Redgrave were appointed to the Executive Committee.

Captain Henry Cunliffe Owen, the first officer of the Royal Engineers to be seconded to the Department of Science and Art (and elder brother of Philip Cunliffe Owen who was to spend twenty years in Cole's Department) was appointed to be financial officer and secretary to the Executive Committee for 1855. When Owen resigned as secretary at the beginning of 1855 in order to go to the Crimea, he was replaced by Captain Francis Fowke. As we have seen in the previous chapter, Fowke was to become a close ally of Cole's and the architect of the early buildings at South Kensington. The Paris team for 1855 brought together Department of Science and Art colleagues, friends from the Society of Arts and seconded Royal Engineers. This combination of sympathetic groups of people was Cole's preferred method of achieving his ends both in exhibition management and in his Department at South Kensington. The individuals were known to Cole, but they were chosen only because they had expertise which could be put to use; no-one would be selected who did not have suitable qualifications.

Among the jurors appointed to report on the exhibition to the British government were some who were already used to working with Cole. John Scott Russell reported on "naval and military arts". Thomas Fairbairn, owner of a thriving engineering company, reported on "machinery in

3. Henry Cunliffe Owen had been a "computer of space" at the 1851 exhibition.
general and iron". Arnoux, who worked for Herbert Minton as an artist/designer, reported on pottery. The architect Matthew Digby Wyatt was responsible for "furniture and decorations" and Richard Redgrave for "design in manufactures". Committee members included Lyon Playfair on the Committee for Products of Mining, Industry, Forestry etc, an appropriate appointment for this man who, in addition to his many researches on behalf of government, had been on the staff of the Museum of Economic Geology before becoming joint secretary of the Department of Science and Art in 1853. Thomas Milner Gibson was on the Navigation Committee and Charles Wentworth Dilke on the Horticulture Committee.

Unlike the 1851 exhibition, the Paris event did not open on time. The opening had to be delayed from the 1st to the 15th May. However, on the 22nd May Cole wrote to Lord Granville:

I am sorry to say that the Exhibition here is very much of a 'muddle' - heat and rain spoiling the goods. Exhibitors in rebellion & demoralised by the rules - which seem made on the principle of rather preventing people from enjoying the Exhibition. Unless a great change is made the Exhibition will be a commercial failure........ (Granville Papers; PRO PRO 30/29/19/9 p.8).

When he wrote again on the 2nd July he was able to tell Granville that:

The Exhibition is beginning at last to show signs of Final Arrangement - but it will be the end of this month before the hammering in the buildings will cease, even if then. When the detail is done, the detail will be most imposing" (Granville Papers; PRO PRO 30/29/19/8 p.21)

Cole made his personal report on the management of the exhibition as part of the overall Report presented to Parliament in 1856 (Cole, 1856). He records the major differences from the 1851 exhibition as being that "the whole cost of the central management of the Exhibition was borne by
the French Government", the inclusion of "pictures", the special customs tariff of 20% on goods "normally prohibited either absolutely or partially"\textsuperscript{4}, the fact that articles exhibited could be priced and the award of prizes to foremen and workers (in 1851 medals had been awarded only to manufacturers, for novelty of design or excellence of production or workmanship). The British government had not been willing to fund the Exhibition of 1851. Cole believed this to be right; national governments should not take over what the public could do for themselves, but they should encourage and assist them. To underwrite the whole exhibition as the French had done was to go too far. Cole had not asked for this in 1851, nor would he in future exhibitions with which he became involved. In his report Cole was able to declare the success of his method:

In obtaining British exhibitors, and adapting their demands to the space afforded by the [French] Imperial Commission, it was a ruling principle to invite the cooperation of voluntary associations of the country representing science, art and industry and to induce them to take an active part in the work of organisation. Entire success attended this course" (Cole, 1856; 6).

Cooperation was obtained from, for instance, the Royal Agricultural Society to superintend the exhibition of agricultural machinery, the Institution of Civil Engineers to manage the section of machinery in general and the Royal Society to take charge of the section on scientific and philosophical instruments. In 1851 important individuals from these organisations were involved by membership of the Royal Commission. In 1855 Cole approached potentially useful organisations directly and persuaded them of the importance of the exhibition and the necessity of their cooperation.

\textsuperscript{4} Goods which normally would have been refused entry into France, to protect French industry, were allowed into the country on payment of this special tariff.
The British government was itself an exhibitor in 1855, having representation from the Ordnance Survey, the Geological Survey and the Department of Science and Art. The Department was directly under Cole's control and the Geological Survey, directed by Murchison, was closely allied to the School of Mines for which Murchison was responsible under Cole's Department. The British government was also responsible for national exhibits of coal and of agricultural produce. In this case the government was assisting where industry could not do the job adequately itself, these industries both being characterised by the very small size of individual businesses. The export potential of the overall industries was, however, large; it was therefore appropriate that the Board of Trade should ensure that suitable exhibits were on show in Paris.

Cole felt that:

As a whole, the British Section, although necessarily much less in quantity, more completely represented the productions of the United Kingdom and its Colonies than the Exhibition of 1851 (Cole, 1856; 7).

Although, of necessity, the size of the British contribution to this exhibition was smaller than that of 1851, Cole believed that the range of goods on show was adequate and that the trend in exhibitions was towards trade oriented national displays. Cole voiced his opinion about the future of international exhibitions in his report to the government:

Exhibitions will therefore lose in completeness, but gain in utility. Nations by this means, will learn how each one may best exchange with the other the productions in which they naturally excel, and these Exhibitions will become international affairs. Thus England is likely in any future Universal Exhibition to send more cotton and woollen goods than furniture or stained glass, more common earthenware than decorated porcelain and more tools than polished steel grates (Cole, 1856; 13).
Cole's utilitarian ideals are reflected in this statement. Through exhibitions, nations, like individuals, can be educated and shown where their interests lie. The statement also reflects the fact that Cole operated on the basis that there was an enormous difference between selection of goods for such international exhibitions and the collection of artefacts for display in museums. Although his Department had been chosen to manage the British section, Cole saw the aims and emphasis of the exhibition as quite distinct from those of the museum collections at South Kensington. In the Museum furniture, decorated porcelain and polished steel grates were just what was exhibited, in order to develop the good taste of the museum visitors and to educate the students at the art schools and their future employers, the manufacturers. To this end, and in keeping with Cole's desire to "benefit the Department", some items were obtained from the Paris exhibition to add to the South Kensington collection. For instance, Fowke selected items from the construction department to be added to the Trade Collection (Fowke Correspondence; 5th December 1855).

"The ultimate purpose of all industrial exhibitions" states Cole, "is commercial" (Cole, 1856: 13). Cole was voicing an opinion which was in tune with his commercial friends and with the values which he promoted through his Department; it was not a universal opinion. As we have seen, Cole himself believed that exhibitions might also have an educational function, but this was subordinate to the commercial role. Exhibitions might also have a political role, but this does not seem to have been Cole's concern.

Cole, having masterminded the Etty and Mulready exhibitions, and knowing both artists and art collectors, was able to produce a fine art display in the British Section of the Paris exhibition. Unlike the situation which Cole experienced in Britain, in France there was no conflict
between fine art and applied art, and Napoleon III, supporting both, included the Palais des Beaux Arts as an important aspect of the 1855 exhibition. Despite the fact that Cole, in his report, emphasised the industrial aspects of the exhibition, it was for this display of art, which at least one French commentator considered to have been "most uncommonly fine" (Allwood, 1977; 35), that Cole was most praised.

Twelve years later, when the French held yet another Great Exhibition, it was Cole who was again asked to coordinate the British response. The costs in 1867 were considerably higher than those of 1855 and Cole was suspected of causing the high costs by mismanagement. He produced a series of memoranda to defend his position (Cole, 1866a, 1866b, 1867). Cole contrasts the arrangements of 1855 with those of 1867. In the first memorandum, dated November 1866, Cole noted that he expected the cost of managing the British Section in 1867 to be double that of 1855. In 1855 Cole had estimated that the British costs would be £70,000 but had in the event managed to keep expenditure down to £40,000. In 1867 Cole's initial estimate of approximately £80,000 was an underestimate, the final bill amounting to £128,315. Despite Cole's memoranda which explained all of the expenditure, in February of 1867 the government demanded to see copies of "all correspondence between the Treasury, the Department of Science and Art, and the Commissioners for the Paris Exhibition, relative to the expenditure to be incurred in connection with that exhibition, and the sums to be provided in the Estimates or Supplementary estimates for 1865, 1866-7 and 1867-8" (Cole Miscellanies; XIV, 191-264). In this case Cole could not be faulted on his accounting; he should perhaps have expected the careful scrutiny of the Department of Science and Art accounts which led to his downfall four years later.

Although the Department of Science and Art was heavily involved in both
of the Paris exhibitions the responsibility given to Cole was much less in 1867 than it had been in 1855. In 1855 Cole had led a small Executive of staff seconded from his Department and responsible to the government. In 1867 the Executive had to work under the instructions of a Royal Commission led by the young Prince of Wales. Cole's relationship with this Prince was quite unlike that which he had had with the late Prince Consort. Prince Albert had used and had been used by Cole. They had shared similar visions and the Prince had tolerated Cole's impertinence. There was no such close relationship with Albert's son, the Prince of Wales, and Cole made use of General Charles Grey, who since the death of Albert had been able to provide Cole with a route for communication with the Queen. As we shall see, particularly in relation to the Albert Hall, Cole and Grey working together could achieve a great deal - particularly if the Queen could be persuaded that her late husband would have given his support.

The first meeting of Her Majesty's Commissioners for the Paris Exhibition (1867) was held at the South Kensington Museum on 27th May 1865 (Commissioners for the Paris Exhibition (1867), 1865). Cole was not on the Commission, but he was Secretary. He had been able to provide the meeting room and he would at least be able to keep an eye on what the Commission proposed to do. The Prince of Wales, President of the Commission, was in the chair at this first meeting. Also present were Lord Granville, various other noble Lords, Samuel Moreton Peto, Charles Wentworth Dilke, C L Eastlake, F R Sandford, T Baring, T Bazeley, T Fairbairn, T F Gibson, M D Hollins, R Redgrave, H Thring, and Henry Cole as Secretary. Each of the named men had been associated with Cole in previous exhibitions and Cole knew them well. He would be able to influence their proceedings.

The minutes of the succeeding meetings of the Commissioners provide
little evidence of any concern with the day to day organisation of the exhibition, but rather with selection of suitable persons to be members of the various committees or to be made ex officio or substantive commissioners. This remoteness of the Commission is illustrated in the lack of any meeting between 28th July 1866 (the 4th meeting) and 11th January 1867 (the 5th). Cole states that "the functions of the Royal Commissioners were deliberative; the responsibility for all executive measures rested solely on the Lord President" (Cole, 1884; Volume 1, 252). Granville was Lord President and Granville was very much used to Cole and his methods; Cole could be sure that Granville would make full use of the South Kensington staff and that he would keep Cole fully informed at all times.

Cole had been wrong about exhibitions becoming more trade oriented. In his Report on the 1867 exhibition (Cole, 1867) Cole stated:

The Paris Exhibition differed in many respects from all previous universal exhibitions. It was at least four times as large as any former one. It embraced many new features in respect of the objects to be exhibited; besides the representation of modern works, it comprised an exhibition of ancient works of art, even from a prehistoric period. It aimed at representing not merely the process of manufacture, but the manners and customs of nations, and dancing, singing, various theatrical representations, sports and shops were permitted within its scope.

Great Exhibitions were entertainment. Whatever other functions the organisers sought to meet, they were dependent upon success in attracting the public. The industrial exhibits in 1867 were but part of a much larger display of the art, industry and culture of many nations. In this enlarged exhibition the space allocated to the British section was larger, the exhibitors more numerous, the number of classes increased from thirty to ninety five. In 1855 the British Executive had
been responsible for organising nineteen reports on the event, whilst Cole expected that in 1867 there would need to be sixty five reports.

British government departments were again among the exhibitors in 1867. As well as the Board of Trade and the Science and Art Department there were exhibits from the Admiralty, the War Department, the Post Office and the Treasury; government involvement was increasing. Clearly there was good reason for the greatly increased costs in 1867. Additionally, the exhibition of 1867 had been organised in a less generous manner by the French hosts, the contributing nations having been asked to meet a larger proportion of the costs.

Among Cole's papers at the Victoria and Albert Museum is a copy of an article from Lloyds Newspaper of 3rd March 1867, defending Cole against the allegations that he was responsible for overspending. Cole's defender lays the blame elsewhere:

> It is notorious among all who have been in any way closely connected with the great International Exhibitions that have already taken place, that Mr Cole has appeared always as the rectifier of the blunders of his superiors, and not as the originator of blunders.

It would not be surprising if Cole had not merely inspired the article but had written it himself! Cole's response to the request of the House of Commons was printed on the 20th June 1867.

Because of the bad press that he was getting it was particularly important to Cole that he should be seen to be careful with government money. On 21st June, at a meeting of the Commissioners for the Paris exhibition, Lord Granville informed the Commissioners that arrangements had been made for the publication of the jury reports "free of cost to the Science and Art Department". Cole was making good use of his
contacts with the Illustrated London News, which had reported at length on the 1851 exhibition and which had devoted a great deal of space to the exhibition of 1862. It was not politic for Cole to incur costs in publishing the jury reports, but thanks to his friends in the publishing world, who might be able to make a profit whilst assisting Cole, the reports were made public.

The fact that Cole had supporters and admirers as well as those keen to blame him for the high cost of the exhibition is demonstrated in a testimonial letter to Cole from many of the jurors and associate jurors who had prepared the reports on the various classes. The letter had been organised by A J Mundella, one of two honorary secretaries to the Commission and President of the Nottingham Chamber of Commerce. The letter, dated 20/5/67, was printed along with Cole's reply. The testimonial recorded the jurors' "high appreciation of the services you have rendered and the great satisfaction which we have personally felt". Cole's reply expresses thanks to all who have helped him, including "an army of volunteers, exceeding three thousand in number" (Cole Miscellanies; XIV, 184).

Because of the suspicion about excessive spending, Cole was careful to ensure that social events held in association with the exhibition were organised and paid for separately from the official activities which the government were funding. For example Cole and John Kelk (Cole's builder at South Kensington) are among those recorded as contributing to the cost of a British Regatta to be held in Paris during the exhibition. A banquet was arranged by the French for the end of the exhibition but, in keeping with their attempt to cut down on costs, it was to be charged to the participating countries. The British government was unwilling to pay for the British officials to participate so Cole requested subscriptions from those who might wish to make it possible for the
British team to attend. So successful was this ploy that more than sufficient money was obtained and Cole organised another, less grand, dinner for the sappers and artisans employed by the Commission (Cole Miscellanies; XIV, 335).

One of the indirect results of the 1867 exhibition was that Cole found another platform for the promotion of his educational ambitions. One of the jurors for the 1867 Paris exhibition was Lyon Playfair, currently Professor of Chemistry at Edinburgh but with a continuing public role. Playfair was in a good position to have a perspective on the success or otherwise of the British contributions to the exhibitions and what he saw in Paris in 1867 prompted him to write to Lord Granville in some despair. He told Granville that "out of ninety classes there are perhaps half a dozen in which our preeminence is undoubted......taken as a whole I fear that the evidence is irresistible that we are making little progress in our staple industries...." (Granville Papers; PRO PRO 30/29/19/4 p.76).

Playfair puts the blame for the sluggishness of British industry on two main causes - the lack of suitable education for those destined to be managers of factories and the antagonism existing between capital and labour. This communication between Playfair and Granville, stimulated by Playfair's dismay at the British displays in 1867, was the beginning of a sequence of events which led to the Parliamentary Select Committee on Scientific Instruction of 1868, which was chaired by Bernard Samuelson and which made recommendations on primary, secondary and scientific education. As we have seen in the previous chapter, Cole was able to put over his own views to the Committee. As a senior civil servant, expert on exhibitions and head of the government department with responsibility for higher education, he was in a strong position and could expect that his views would be taken seriously.
Cole had wanted to derive benefit for his Department out of the 1867 Paris exhibition, and this he achieved in two respects. Firstly, through the support of various royal personages who attended the exhibition, Cole drew up a "Convention for promoting universally Reproductions of Works of Art for the benefit of Museums of all Countries". The Prince of Wales was the first signatory. The second benefit was in the purchase of "works of art and of technical scientific interest, ancient and modern, for the collections of the South Kensington Museum" (Cole, 1884; Volume 1, 260-261). In this Cole secured the assistance of the Chief Commissioner of Works, who suggested to the House of Commons that a Select Committee should be formed to recommend on purchases. This was granted (Select Committee on the Paris Exhibition, 1867), and the Committee recommended a maximum expenditure of £25,000. However, no additional monies were voted for this purpose and any purchases had to be made using the sums already voted for the exhibition. On this occasion it was the Duke of Marlborough (President of the Committee of Council on Education) who suggested that the rather small balance which might remain should be put together with "the balance of the ordinary annual vote of the Kensington Museum for art purchases" to give a total fund of £5000 which could be spent during the course of the exhibition. Cole, for once, was made nervous by this suggestion, recording in his diary "I said it was unconstitutional - he said I am the judge of that" (quoted by Cole's son Alan in Cole, 1884; Volume 1, 262).

Cole also made an attempt to use the 1867 exhibition as a ploy to achieve additional buildings on the Commissioners' portion of the South Kensington estate, suggesting that an exhibition of the exhibits awarded gold medals in Paris might be put on show in "the buildings overlooking the Horticultural Gardens at South Kensington, where, if need be, additional temporary accommodation could be found" (Cole Miscellanies; -168-
XIV, 190); this suggestion seems not to have been taken up.

Cole had been accused of jobbery in 1851. He could more fairly have been accused of nepotism in 1867. Cole's son Alan was Secretary for the Stained Glass Class in Paris. The son of Captain Fowke, F. R. Fowke, was a clerk to the Executive. Cole's Department saw little benefit from its involvement in the Paris international exhibitions, only the £5000 sanctioned by Lord Marlborough being spent on exhibits to be placed in the South Kensington Museum. Both Paris exhibitions, however, served to strengthen Cole's ties with the organisations and individuals who supported his Department's aims, and to strengthen Cole's belief in exhibitions as vehicles which could be used in the development of trade, education and, by now closest to his heart, the development of the South Kensington estate.
References Chapter 7


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Granville Papers, PRO PRO30/29.


Select Committee on the Paris Exhibition (1867), Report, PP 1867 [433] X 605 (Cole Miscellanies XIV 269).
Cole was without doubt the man most responsible for the Great Exhibition which was held in London in 1862. He was at the high point of his career and his circle was powerful. The exhibition of 1862 has not attracted the attention of historians to any great extent. This is unfortunate because the second Great Exhibition has relevance not only to the history of the South Kensington estate but also to the history of exhibitions, the history of museums and the history of the Commissioners for 1851 as well as the history of art and of industry. The reader of twentieth century history books might be forgiven for believing that there was only one "Great Exhibition" in nineteenth century London. The exhibition of 1851 steals the show, as indeed it must, being the first of its kind and serving to highlight the achievements and the self-confidence of Great Britain at mid-century. Many a historian has used the 1851 exhibition as a "marker" dividing the social, economic and political history of the period. Because of the lack of secondary sources relating to the exhibition of 1862, this chapter contains a greater proportion of narrative relating to the exhibition itself than would otherwise have been necessary. The conception, execution and results of the exhibition of 1862 will be described and the importance of the exhibition in relation to the development of the South Kensington site will be discussed, together with the reasons why, at its centenary, this exhibition could be referred to as "the forgotten exhibition" (Allwood, 1977; 41)

In many ways the Exhibition of 1862 was a successful event. It attracted more exhibitors and more visitors, and took slightly more money in entrance fees than the Great Exhibition of 1851. However,
despite the expectations raised by the enormous success of 1851, the
exhibition in 1862 failed to make a profit. This was due to increased
costs, much higher than those of 1851 due to the attempt to provide a
permanent exhibition building. It was thanks only to a gift of £11,000
from Cole's contractor at the Department of Science and Art, John Kelk,
who was also one of the building contractors for the exhibition, that
the Commissioners for 1862 were able to balance the books at the end of
the exhibition.

The exhibition of 1851 was, financially speaking, the exception which
proved the rule. The New York exhibition of 1853 lost $340,000
(£70,000), the Paris exhibition of 1855 lost £325,000, and the 1867
Paris exhibition lost £375,000 (Luckhurst, 1951; 220). It is remarkable
that in 1862, without the novelty of 1851, without the Prince Consort
(whose death cast a shadow over what might otherwise have been an event
rich in pomp and pageantry), and with a summer of unusually high
rainfall, the organisers of the exhibition successfully carried out what
was to be the second and last Great Exhibition to be wholly financed
without recourse to public money. The lesson of the nineteenth century
exhibitions was that a country which decides to hold such an exhibition
must expect the undertaking to be expensive. However, although there
might be no profit for the organisers there would be financial benefits
to national industry and to the local tourist trade, as well as prestige
for the host country.

The second Great Exhibition in London was sited at South Kensington, on
the land belonging to the Commissioners for the Exhibition of 1851.
Cole wanted this because buildings erected there could be permanent and
could be used both for future exhibitions and to house museum
collections. The Commissioners had already been persuaded, in relation
to the South Kensington Museum, that the erection of buildings for
museums was an acceptable use of their funds and that this was an appropriate use of their land. Although there is no documentary evidence in the report of the Commissioners for the Exhibition of 1862, it is difficult to avoid the suspicion that it was Cole who was "agitating" for a permanent exhibition building at South Kensington.

The exhibition of 1851 had been such an overwhelming success; it was a very hard act to follow. A contemporary magazine article summarised the situation thus:

Ten years ago we did a great thing, which our neighbours imitated, with more or less success, as was natural. Now that the little circle of imitations is over, we have had the temerity to take our place again in the field, and boldly to repeat the grand experiment. The attempt was, under any circumstances, almost rash in its boldness (Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, 1862, June, 663-672).

The author of this statement, the novelist Mrs Margaret Oliphant, and many of her contemporaries, considered the exhibition a success. That this view was not held by all is demonstrated by an article in Punch magazine which declared an "additional regulation" of the exhibition that "the public is informed that the International Exhibition is a grand success, and the noblest thing ever heard of. The police have instructions to enforce the universal acknowledgement of this sentiment" (Punch; 3rd May 1862, 181). The satirical magazine found Cole an easy target; he was very effective in forcing his views on others and he was rather inclined to the promulgation of rules and regulations.

The exhibition of 1862 expressed the state of the nation in 1862. It was less confident and less flamboyant than the exhibition of 1851. To a greater degree than in 1851, its organisers had commercial results in mind. They also intended to demonstrate the progress of British industry in the decade since the first Great Exhibition. In contrast to
the organisers, the influential classes of society were more interested in the new exhibition as spectacle, or as an educational experience. These tensions, between those who understood the exhibition to be a commercial enterprise and those who wished it to be otherwise, were contributory factors to the relative lack of success in 1862.

The first indication that Henry Cole was to become involved in a second Great Exhibition can be found in his diary, where he records that on the evening of the 19th February 1858 he discussed the possibility of promoting such an exhibition with Charles Wentworth Dilke. Dilke, who had worked with Cole under the umbrella of the Society of Arts in promoting the Great Exhibition of 1851, was by now a Commissioner for the Exhibition of 1851, was in 1858 Chairman of the Council of the Society of Arts and also a council member of the Horticultural Society1. He was an ally who could be expected to be willing and able to assist Cole in the enterprise. Their private discussion very soon became a solid proposal to the Council of the Society of Arts, to hold an exhibition in 1861, intended to be the second in a decennial series. At a council meeting of the Society on 10th March, with Cole in the chair, the proposal was discussed, and on the 24th March 1858 resolutions in favour of the exhibition were passed by the Council (Cole, 1884; Volume 1, 226).

The speed with which this was achieved reflects the influence which Cole had achieved as a member of the council of the Society of Arts, and the eagerness of the Society to repeat the great success of 1851, despite the fact that the benefit to them had been only in their association

1. The Horticultural Society were at this time in negotiation with the Commissioners for 1851 with a view to becoming tenants of the Commissioners on the South Kensington estate; this is discussed in Chapter 9.
with the project's initiation; as we have seen there was no financial
benefit to the Society. Great Exhibitions, however, were very much
consistent with the aim of the Society which was to "encourage arts,
manufactures and commerce". Cole and his allies were now the elder
statesman of the Society and were in a position to push their proposal
forward.

The Prince Consort was not so certain of the wisdom of having another
exhibition so soon after 1851 and the Paris exhibition of 1855. Cole's
diary records that on the 20th March 1858 "Prince opposed, but agreed to
receive proposals from the Society of Arts". Four days later the
Society made the decision to go ahead with the scheme. The Society
proceeded with its plans and a few months later the Prince, as their
President, agreed to "head the guarantee fund for 1861 with £50,000"
(Cole Diary; 16th July 1858). It is not surprising that with Cole's and
the Society of Art's connections with the Commissioners for 1851, who
could be expected to take a great deal of interest in any future
exhibitions and to provide the site free of charge, and with Cole's
position at South Kensington where he would be on hand to assist in the
management, the Council of the Society were persuaded that the
Commissioner's estate was the most appropriate site for the exhibition
in 1861.

With the basic plan worked out Cole took the advice of his doctor and
took a holiday for the sake of his health\(^2\). The "holiday" was far from
restful. For six months from August 1858 Cole toured Italy and
Switzerland, visiting sites of artistic, architectural and historical
interest, and although he had been expressly forbidden by Lord Salisbury
(Lord President of the Committee of Council on Education) to do so (Cole

2. His doctor recommended twelve months rest in Italy (Cole Diary; 22nd
July 1858.

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When Cole returned to England, almost his first action, the day after his return, was to renew his promotion of the exhibition. On 5th March 1859 Cole contacted Dilke to enquire about the progress of the exhibition arrangements (Cole, 1884; Volume 1, 228). In fact very little had been done in his absence, other than the issuing of circulars announcing the exhibition to members of the Society of Arts, at home and abroad. On March 14th 1859 Cole began to discuss "principles" for the design of the exhibition buildings with Francis Fowke. John Kelk, contractor for the buildings of the South Kensington Museum, was soon brought into the discussions and persuaded to support the proposed exhibition by tendering for the erection of the buildings and undertaking to allow £50,000 to be "left unpaid for a time" (Cole Diary, 23rd March 1859). That Cole's first actions were to hasten the progress towards a building, rather than to promote the exhibition to prospective exhibitors, likely visitors, or even his influential friends, reflects his vision of the exhibition as the means of continuing development of the Commissioner's estate.

That Cole's primary interest in this exhibition was his intention to have the use of the buildings - either in his capacity as a Council member of the Society of Arts in the promotion of future exhibitions, or in his capacity as director of the South Kensington Museum in expanding the museum collections or promoting temporary specialist exhibitions - is illustrated in his remark to Dilke that he "only cared to see after

3. Cole's superiors felt they must specifically instruct him not to purchase exhibits. Wherever he went he had his Museum in mind; he was likely to buy first and ask later.

4. Kelk, who became a member of the Society of Arts during 1859, agreed to commence building and to carry out £50,000 worth of work without invoicing the organisers until such time as they had accrued funds with which to pay.
the building in '62", (Cole Diary, 12th May 1860); this emphasis on the
development of the site was not to be diminished as time went by. In
the above quotation Cole refers to the buildings "in '62". The
exhibition which had been planned for 1861 had to be postponed in the
early summer of 1859 when the Franco-Austrian war broke out. A war in
Europe would obviously have a detrimental effect both on exhibitors and
visitors from the continent, so that on the 3rd of June the Society of
Arts were forced to announce the postponement of the exhibition (Cole,
1884; Volume 1, 229). In the event the war was not to last for long,
and on 1st November 1859 Cole was able to approach the Prince Consort to
seek his approval for the resumption of efforts to promote the
exhibition. Cole recorded in his diary that the Prince "said my view
was unimpeachable". The Council of the Society of Arts subsequently
passed Cole's resolution to proceed with the exhibition, and announced
the rescheduling of the exhibition for 1862.

A guarantee fund was established to fund the exhibition. In contrast to
the situation in 1851, on this occasion there was no difficulty in
finding guarantors. In the inaugural address of the 1860-61 session of
the Society in the autumn of 1860, the chairman of the Council was able
to announce that "Although no public appeal by advertisement has been
issued, and no public meeting held, the guarantee fund now amounts to
£366,800, subscribed by 662 persons" (JSA, 1860, v9 (1) 5). Five
trustees were appointed from among the members of the Society of Arts,
namely: Lord Granville (Lord President of the Privy Council), the
Marquis of Chandos (Chairman of the London and North West Railway),
Thomas Baring (financier, MP and Commissioner for 1851), Charles
Wentworth Dilke (architect and Commissioner for 1851) and Thomas
Fairbairn (son of the engineer William Fairbairn, active in the family
business and Chairman and promoter of the Manchester Art Treasures
Exhibition of 1857). These five trustees were subsequently nominated to
be Commissioners for the Exhibition now planned for 1862, a charter being granted on 14th February 1861.

The Commission for the Exhibition of 1862 was a much smaller Commission than that of 1851, which had had the Prince Consort as President and included Earls, Lords, the Prime Minister and several Fellows of the Royal Society among its 28 members. The inclusion of Fellows of the Royal Society in the 1851 Commission is perhaps indicative of the intention of that exhibition to demonstrate advances in science and technology. In 1862 the Commissioners were chosen for their experience in exhibition organisation. Two of the 1862 commissioners had been Commissioners for the Exhibition of 1851 (Granville and Baring), and another had been on the executive (Wentworth Dilke). Thomas Fairbairn was made a Commissioner for the Exhibition of 1851 in 1860 and had recent experience of exhibition management. Chandos, who was subsequently made a Commissioner for 1851 in May of 1861, brought to the Commission the necessary financial expertise. Most importantly, from Cole's point of view, two of the five, Granville and Dilke, were very close to Cole and would both support Cole's agenda for the exhibition and defend his methods.

Before the Commission was established this small team began to make significant decisions. Within a week of the announcement of the Commission F R Sandford (Secretary to the new Commission) wrote to Thomas Phillips, at the Society of Arts, to explain the position:

The Commissioners, unwilling to lose valuable time, have, during the interval required for the preparation of the requisite legal powers, taken such provisional steps as their position permitted. The most pressing point was the building required for the Exhibition. In 1850, notwithstanding the possession of considerable funds, and the assistance of the most eminent architects and engineers, seven months elapsed before a design was

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adopted. The Commissioners felt that if they postponed the consideration of this subject until they were a legally constituted body, the cost of the building would be greatly increased, and a serious risk incurred of its non-completion by the appointed time (Sandford, 1861a).

Sandford goes on to explain that plans had been submitted to them by Captain Fowke, tenders had been invited, but all of the quotations received were too high, so that modifications to the plans had to be made in order to cut costs to an acceptable level.

It is clear that Cole's conversations with Fowke and Kelk, his architect and builder at the South Kensington Museum, had become the basis for what was now presented as the decision of the Commission. Cole's scheme was accepted without amendment, and by October of 1861 the details of the design and the award of the building contract could be published in the Society's Journal (JSA, 1861, 2, 764-766).

The Commissioners had accepted Cole's vision for the exhibition buildings, though at this stage he had no formal basis for involving the staff of his Department in carrying out the design work. On 5th April 1861, three years after Cole had presented his proposal to the Society of Arts, Lord Granville formally asked him whether he would be prepared to take office under the Commissioners in the organisation of the exhibition. On the following day Cole attended the Commissioners, and was asked to become joint manager of the exhibition with Colonel Shadwell. Shadwell was to be the Colonel Reid of the 1862 exhibition, an army officer who would command the Royal Engineers seconded to the exhibition. Cole refused the offer. He felt "he ought not to give up his work, even temporarily, at the South Kensington Museum and the Department of Science and Art" (Cole, 1884; 240). More importantly, Cole adhered to the Benthamite principle of "single seated
responsibility" which the proposed shared managership would have violated. Later, at South Kensington, Dilke proposed that Cole should be given responsibility for space and arrangement, catalogues and juries, for which he should receive a fee of £1500 (giving up 3 months salary from the Department). Cole felt able to agree to this arrangement, which gave him a specific and defined role, and he was subsequently employed as "general adviser" to the Commission (Cole Diary, 5th and 6th April 1861).

By the time this formal arrangement was agreed all of the major decisions had been made and much of the preparatory work had been done - by Cole. He had already ensured that this second exhibition would take place on "his" estate, the buildings would be erected to "his" plans and by "his" builder. That Cole was able to achieve this degree of control over the exhibition whilst appearing to have a minor role as advisor was made possible by his influential position in the Society and his close contacts with the Commissioners for 1851, and particularly with Lord Granville. Both the Society and the Commissioners gave Cole access to the Prince Consort; what the Prince approved others were less likely to oppose.

Cole was a thick skinned individual, which was an advantage in his chosen role as "agitator" for worthwhile causes. Criticism, both of the buildings for the 1862 exhibition and of the way in which they had been commissioned, began very early in the planning of the exhibition, and continued until the buildings were demolished. Although Cole was never on the Building Committee (which consisted of Lord Chandos, Thomas Fairbairn, Earl Shelbourne, William Baker and William Fairbairn), the

5. William Baker was Lord Chandos' engineer for the London and North Western Railway (Survey, 1975; XXXVIII, p139)
public seemed not to be in doubt about whom to blame. For instance Punch (7th June 1862; 229) published a verse which made Cole's power quite clear:

Old King Cole, you're a potent old soul,  
and long may you potent be,  
To spread Fowke's design, in spite of the Nine,  
from the Boilers far and free.

It is not entirely clear who the "nine" might be. They are not the Commissioners, nor the Building Committee, but may possibly be the combined Commission, Committee and Executive.

Cole's office was the venue for meetings to discuss Fowke's plans for the exhibition buildings with Dilke and Fairbairn in the autumn of 1860 (Cole Diary; 10th September and 6th November 1860). Discussions among the Guarantee Committee (official guarantors were not announced until January 1861) continued, and on 4th December 1860 Cole accompanied Fowke and Lord Granville to Windsor to show the plans to the Prince Consort. Paxton, the man who had provided the very successful design for the international exhibition building in 1851, was now invited to view the plans. Cole records that Paxton "made no objections except as to cost" (Cole Diary; 16th January 1861). It is probable that this objection followed from Paxton's superior financial competence. Cole wanted a permanent building and to him the financial considerations were secondary. Paxton viewed the plans in terms of their functionality and the overall profitability of the exhibition, and feared that the building costs would be too great. Fowke, who up until this time had only to satisfy Cole and his friends the Commissioners, objected to his design being vetted by Paxton, and wrote a letter of complaint to Granville (Cole Diary, 15th January 1861).
On the 17th January 1861 the drawings for the exhibition buildings were deposited with Francis Sandford, Secretary to the Commissioners for 1851 who would have to approve any buildings being erected on their property. When Fowke met with Chandos and Fairbairn on the following day he was told that these two Commissioners considered the plans settled (Cole Diary). However, Cole also records that when the trustees met on 30th January Lord Chandos and Fairbairn proposed to shelve Fowke's drawings and invite prospective contractors to make their own! (Cole Diary). Perhaps the trustees, not yet a formal Commission, were beginning to regret that they had allowed Cole to provide them with plans for the buildings. The architectural profession had not been consulted. Decisions of such importance should really have been made by the Commission; however time was very short. Cole supported Fowke in objecting to any change at this late stage, and was sufficiently confident that he would have his own way that he could promise the builder, Kelk, later the same day, that he would receive "tracings" within two days (Cole Diary).

When tenders for the erection of the buildings were received Kelk's was the lowest (Cole almost certainly provided him with the necessary information to maximize his chances of success), although even his price was too high (Cole Diary; 9th February 1861). Negotiations followed between Fowke and Kelk, altering the plans to reach a compromise which could be built at an acceptable cost. On 21st February Fowke approached Cole with the suggestion that the Great Hall, which Cole had particularly wanted as part of the development, "should be given up to secure all the rest" (Cole Diary). Cole wanted a large hall at South Kensington which could accommodate events such as concerts and soirees as well as temporary exhibitions, and he had sought to include such a hall among the buildings for the 1862 exhibition. However, both Cole and Granville agreed to the necessity of the deletion of the hall from
the plan, and Cole and Kelk, with the help of staff of the South Kensington Museum "coloured a revised ground plan leaving out the Hall" (Cole Diary; 21st February 1861). The Great Hall was eventually achieved in the shape of the Albert Hall; this is discussed in Chapter 10.

The buildings which resulted attracted criticism. One of the kinder remarks on the architectural merits of the buildings was made in Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine (1862, DLX (June); 663), where they are described as belonging to the "School of Accidental Architecture", a "perfectly simple and natural production of the native railway-station style of architecture". A more common reaction was displayed in a letter to the Times on 18th March 1862, in which a visitor from France refers to a "horrid building", a "big shed", and hopes that when the Emperor of France attends the exhibition he will be brought into the building blindfolded!

Although, as in 1851, the Society of Arts was the body responsible for the promotion of the exhibition it was not until October of 1861, just six months before the opening of the exhibition, that the members of the Society were given, through the Society's Journal, a chance to see the plans, and were notified of the names of the contractors, and of the Royal Engineers who were again to be involved both as civil engineers and as managers (JSA, 1861, 2 (464); 764-766). In the same journal on the 6th December 1861 the membership was treated to a more detailed account of the buildings, prepared by Captain Philpotts of the Royal Engineers. Philpotts compared the buildings with those of 1851, stressing their permanence, and the lessons which had been learnt since 1851 in exhibition building design. This exhibition was more compact, the noisy and smelly machinery was in a separate annexe and scientific principles had been applied to the lighting of the picture galleries.
The meeting at which Philpotts presented his papers offered the ordinary membership of the Society of Arts their first chance to comment on the exhibition. The first question, from Henry Ottley who was preparing articles about the building for the *Illustrated London News*, asked whether any architect had been invited to submit plans or give advice? Other questions asked included; how had the design been chosen?; had any other designs been considered?; were rumours about changes to the design because of fears about its structural safety true? All of these questions reflected a concern that such a prestigious project should be entrusted to an amateur rather than a professional architect. Cole's son, in the autobiography, refers to the "jealousy....stirring in the architectural profession, on account of the part Captain Fowke was taking as architect of the buildings" (Cole, 1884; Volume 1, 241). The members of the Society had no reason to trust that this Royal Engineer, protege of Cole, was competent to design such an important building or to manage so large a civil engineering contract. Cole had deprived the architects of the opportunity of designing the 1862 building; the young architectural profession was angry.

Cole was ready to defend Fowke and the decision not to involve the architectural profession. He spoke at length on the famous designers of buildings who were not architects, and criticised some who were - specifically Sir Charles Barry, whom Cole accused of being able to design a "pretty architectural building", but not one which was functional. The architect Marsh Nelson, outraged by Cole's attack on

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6. The Royal Institute of British Architects was founded in 1834. The profession was well established, though voluntary examinations were not begun until 1862 and compulsory examination was introduced as late as 1882. Fowke was not a member.
his profession, moved that the discussion be adjourned, but the debate continued. Cole was eloquent in his championship of Fowke. Fowke "had the highest constructive ability - amounting almost to genius". He knew about exhibitions because of his Secretaryship to the British section at the Paris exhibition of 1855. Cole reminded the meeting that Fowke had been responsible for the design of the National Gallery at Dublin and the Industrial Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh. He had also laid out the gardens for the Royal Horticultural Society at South Kensington. Fowke may not have been a professional architect, but he was a professional engineer, a very experienced man, well aware of the character of the site and the requirements of an exhibition building.

Cole's "very ingenious speech" upset some of the membership. It was obviously well prepared, and the rules of debate prevented those who had asked the questions from making counter arguments. Sir Thomas Phillips, chairman of the Society's council, had the unenviable task of trying to calm the meeting. Although criticism of the building itself was in order he thought it unfair that the question of how the design had been chosen was being discussed when those who were technically responsible, the Commissioners, were not present. Clearly, the members of the Society understood that Cole was the man who in had, in practice, controlled the design process. The mood of the meeting was both pro-architect and anti-Cole. The members of the Society were faced with a fait accompli. They could make clear their disquiet that the architectural profession had not been consulted, but it was too late to right the wrong.

The erection of the buildings went ahead, and the progress made was reported in the press, not only in the Society's own Journal, but for a more general readership in, for example, the Illustrated London News and the Times. Each of these publications, though they pointed out the
problems as well as the achievements on the exhibition site, gave considerable praise to the building contractors, Kelk and Lucas, who had achieved so much in such a short time through "their own untiring personal exertions" (Times; 13th February 1862, 4). The Times reported the official handing over of the buildings to the Commissioners, which, despite the problems which had arisen, and the extremely tight schedule, took place on the appointed date. The date of the opening of the exhibition was near and there was hectic activity on the site:

With the progress of the Exhibition now being urged forward with unremitting activity, painters, carpenters, bricklayers, smiths, excavators, scaffold builders, engineers, custom-house officers, Superintendents of Classes, all, up to the Royal Commissioners themselves, are toiling in and at the building, hour after hour, from morning to night. The whole executive staff have now moved to South Kensington, where they are lodged in a series of small wooden huts, scattered irregularly over the space, like a miniature Aldershott, and quite as cold... (Times; 13th February 1862, 4).

At the centenary of the exhibition in 1962 the Architectural Review published a critique of the buildings. The professional bitterness which had surrounded the design was forgotten and Fowke's abilities recognised:

Unlike the 1851 Exhibition building, it aimed to provide specific conditions suited to the various types of exhibit. This produced a complex group of structures, in contrast to the compact, unified design of Paxton. It was erected in an astonishingly short time for so vast and solid a building, and appears to have fulfilled perfectly the requirements of the Exhibition (Bradford, 1962; 15-21).

The 1862 exhibition buildings cannot be said to have had the visual appeal of Paxton's Crystal Palace and we have already seen some of the adverse comment on the buildings which Philpotts described as
"utilitarian" in the sense that they were unadorned and functional. There were those, at the time of the exhibition, who admired their suitability for the purpose. Nevertheless, the functionality was not sufficient to ensure the survival of the buildings.

There were twice as many exhibitors in 1862 as there had been in 1851. The majority of the 14,000 exhibitors of 1851 had been British, now the larger proportion of the 28,000 participants were foreign. "Commissions" were established in the colonies and in foreign states to coordinate exhibitors, and at home "Local Committees" were formed with the same purpose. The Journal of the Society of Arts published lists of Commissions and Committees and their members. Local committees tended to be run by the Mayor or the Town Clerk, rather than by industrialists. Manufacturers could be persuaded to exhibit, but a local "agent" was needed to facilitate communication between industry and the exhibition organisers. Cole found suitable administrators in local government officers.

The enthusiasm with which these same manufacturers who were so unwilling to be committee men came forward to avail themselves of the opportunity to exhibit was seen in the sometimes unseemly manner in which they fought for space. In 1851 most were allocated about one third of the space they had requested. In 1862 some asked for many times the amount of room they actually needed, in the hope that at the end of the day they would be allocated something near their actual requirement. The Times reported (23rd January 1862) that "Every foot [was] allocated to the various trades and manufactures with the most rigid impartiality", and as a result some manufacturers decided against exhibiting at all, rather than make do with less space than they felt was necessary to display their goods properly. The term "rigid impartiality" was intended to be complimentary. Cole, as general advisor, had provided
guidelines which could be used by the officers in his team to ensure that space was allocated fairly.

The assembly of such an enormous volume of exhibits and their arrangement, was not achieved without a great deal of public and private discussion and criticism. The discussion which took place through the medium of the Society's journal began in January of 1861 (JSA, 1861, 9 (426); 131) when Daniel Hanbury, member of the Society and pharmaceutical manufacturer (with the firm Allen and Hanbury), wrote stating that "it became all those who feel an interest in the movement (to promote the exhibition) to offer what assistance they can towards its successful accomplishment" and that therefore "suggestions derived from the Exhibitions of 1851 and 1855 (be) drawn up and communicated through the Journal, to committees abroad". Mr Hanbury went on to express his own opinions about the best arrangement for chemical and pharmaceutical products.

Others agreed that specialists should voice their opinions in the same manner, and a lively debate developed in the Journal. John Jackson, curator of Kew Gardens, believed that "To anyone acquainted with (the exhibitions) of 1851 and 1855 the deficiencies must be notoriously apparent". As an example he complains that "very many fine specimens of wood that were exhibited in the Exhibition of 1851, which must have cost great labour and trouble to procure, were quite valueless for want of information as to the species producing them, and in many cases their country" (JSA, 1861, 9 (431); 226-227).

Professor Ansted, a geologist and Inspector for Science at the Department of Science and Art, expressed similar sentiments to Jackson's and made "suggestions for the collection and arrangement of minerals and mineral manufacture" (JSA, 1861, 9, (434); 274-275). It is clear that
Cole did not have the same loyalty to Ansted that he had demonstrated for Powke. Perhaps the scientific staff of the Department resented the fact that it was the staff of the arts side of the Department who had been seconded to exhibition work and had therefore had the opportunity to be party to the executive's discussions about arrangement. Ansted's paper on the arrangement of geological specimens, which proposed a scientific arrangement, elicited a rapid and scathing response from Cole. His response, which was also reported in the Journal (JSA, 1861, 2, (434); 287-288), reflects his understanding of the differences between exhibitions and museums. Scientific arrangement was appropriate in a museum setting, but Cole could not agree that it might also be appropriate for the exhibition.

Ansted had been unable to be at the meeting at which his paper was read. Cole said that he regretted the fact that Ansted was not present because "the observations he should hold it his duty to make would be such as he should like to have heard answered by that gentleman". Cole's general complaint about Ansted's suggestions was that "the Commissioners and their employees were to do all the work and the exhibitors none". Ansted had suggested that eminent scientists should be employed in the arrangement of exhibits, but Cole felt strongly that "having had some considerable experience in the first exhibition, he would say the most suitable persons in his opinion for arranging the articles were the exhibitors themselves".

Cole pursued his argument against using scientific arrangement. Why, he asked, did exhibitors send their goods to be exhibited? A member of the audience gave him the reply he was seeking - "It was for the sake of profit". Cole was quite certain that the goodwill of the manufacturers was essential to the success of the exhibition. This goodwill would be lost if outsiders were to interfere in the arrangement of the
merchandise. This argument has some validity for manufactured goods, but seems somewhat lacking when applied to geological specimens. As the comments of Daniel Hanbury illustrate, manufacturers in the science-based industries felt that scientific arrangement of their products was appropriate. It seems probable that Cole's disapproval of Ansted was not so much of the scientific approach which he wished to bring to bear, but of the "interference" in the organisation of the exhibition which was proposed. The arrival of numbers of "experts" to argue over details of arrangement was at odds with the principles to which Cole adhered. Some aspects of the exhibition might indeed be best arranged scientifically, but the arranging should be carried out by Cole's team with the cooperation of the exhibitors.

Cole views were shared by Harry Chester, member of the Council of the Society, civil servant at the Education Department and enthusiastic promoter of the Society's educational aims. He spoke in Cole's support. Although well known for "an anxious desire that the exhibition of 1862 be of as educational a character as possible", Chester was convinced that in order to make it educationally useful the Society had first to ensure that it was successful commercially. It is significant of Cole's prominent role in 1862 that, as had been the case with the criticism of the building, it was Cole, and not one of the Commissioners, who took on the public role of defender of the decisions which theoretically should have been made by the Commissioners.

These public discussions about the arrangement of the exhibition in 1862 contributed to the impression that this exhibition was to be more educational, earnest and utilitarian than that of 1851. On the 16th of March 1861 the Commissioners published in the Journal of the Society of Arts some "decisions ..... on points relating to the exhibition" which laid down the ground rules by which it was to be governed. Foreign and
colonial exhibitors could only take part through the appropriate Commission of that country. No charge would be made for exhibition space. The goods were to be arranged in forty classes, thirty six industrial and four for "fine arts". Although goods could be marked with their prices none were to be sold during the exhibition.

The principle of voluntary effort which was central to Cole's philosophy was also central to the organisation of the exhibition in 1862. This was made clear by Lord Granville, at the 107th Annual Dinner of the Society of Arts held at the Crystal Palace in June of 1861. Lord Granville believed that "there is one point in which we defy Europe to compete with us - that is in the results which produce from voluntary efforts and voluntary association. We wish, as the Commissioners for 1862, to carry that principle as far as possible". Granville was voicing the underlying principle by which Cole ran the Department of Science and Art. Cole's son summarises Cole's creed thus:

Voluntary enterprise in promoting instruction in art should be fostered throughout the country. Pecuniary assistance granted by Parliament should encourage its development and not supercede it. Cooperation between voluntary enterprise and Government assistance was to be systematically encouraged. Permanence of character was to be looked for in the work growing out of this cooperation (Cole, 1884; Volume 1, 279).

The Commissioners invited the leading men of particular districts and particular trades to take part in the planning and arrangement of that aspect of the exhibition for which they were best qualified, a technique which Cole had applied successfully in Paris in 1855. In "guiding" the exhibition the Commissioners also established committees to advise on finance, building, fine arts, and the "organisation of committees of classes".
The intention of the organisers was to have as complete a coverage as possible of the products of British industry. The Commissioners therefore arranged for the compilation of an "alphabetical and classified" list of all the trades operating in the British Isles, which could be used to assist the allocation of goods to the exhibition classes. The list, which is an interesting "snapshot" of the character of British industry ten years after the Great Exhibition, was published in the *Journal of the Society of Arts* (1861, 9, 688-). Industrialists were required to make formal application for space at the exhibition and, when the 10,000 "demands" were received and sorted, the space was allocated for each class accordingly. It was then up to the "class committees" to allocate the space within each class. Some of the committees were for classes which were of "national interest", such as railway plant, naval and military engineering and education. Local committees were established to oversee the exhibits for other classes, these committees deciding at local level which products were acceptable to represent their locality.

One of the class committees was that for "Art Designs", one of the four fine art classes. Art designs were defined by the committee as "designs in all departments of art industry, capable of reproduction.....designs for glass and ceramic wares, precious and other metals, furniture and carving, plastic decorations, and other objects in relief - also designs for textile fabrics, paper-hangings, mural decorations, tiles, mosaics, inlays, stained, painted and decorated glass etc" (*JSA*, 1862, 11, (478); 122). These were very much the areas of design which were of interest to Cole, and he, together with his friend the architect Matthew Digby Wyatt, was a member of the class committee of ten chaired by the Marquis of Salisbury. The public notices about this part of the exhibition requested that designs "be delivered for inspection of the committee... at the South Kensington Museum". Cole made sure that "his" subject
would be discussed on "his" territory and very much under his influence.

The Commissioners had originally intended to divide the exhibition into four "great sections" - raw produce, machinery, manufactures and fine art (these being the divisions suggested by Prince Albert for the 1851 exhibition), and to arrange exhibits within these sections geographically. They made two exceptions to the geographical arrangement, photography and educational works, where they felt an international comparison would be particularly helpful (Commissioners for the Exhibition of 1862, 1863; xl). These plans, however, were upset by objections from some of the foreign commissions, who insisted on their right to display their exhibits together in one place. The Commissioners were forced to adopt a completely geographical (that is national) arrangement, with the exception of the oil and water colour paintings, which were to be displayed in a specially designed picture gallery on the site now occupied by the Natural History Museum.

Cole was a member of only two of the many committees which regulated the exhibition, but they both gave him influence where he wanted it, first in the Art Designs committee already mentioned, and secondly in the "General Committee on Organization for the Industrial Department". This committee included six Members of Parliament, the Lord Mayor of London, the Presidents and Chairmen of various professional bodies and societies such as the Institutions of Civil and Mechanical Engineers and the Society of Arts, and both Cole and Lyon Playfair (Commissioners for the Exhibition of 1862, 1863; Appendix 1). Membership of the General Committee gave Cole the freedom to involve himself in most aspects of the exhibition - which of course he did.

In the Report of the Commissioners for 1862 particular reference is made to Cole's management of the two main ceremonials of the exhibition, the
Opening and the Declaration of Prizes;

On the occasion of the two ceremonials which did take place, and indeed throughout the whole course of our proceedings, we received the most efficient and zealous assistance of Mr Henry Cole, CB, and the officers of the South Kensington Museum, whose experience in similar undertakings rendered their services to the Exhibition of very great value, and call for our cordial thanks.

Many of the "officers" of the South Kensington Museum were of course officers in the military sense, being seconded from the Royal Engineers. Additional officers drafted in for the exhibition were under the command of a major from the Royal Engineers.

Cole's use of the military man to carry out his instructions has been discussed by Levine (1972), who suggests that men who were accustomed to taking orders without question, and who could be returned to military service when their skills were no longer required, were ideal subordinates for the impatient, dictatorial master of the South Kensington estate. It is probable that Cole did appreciate the discipline of these officers, but his appreciation was even greater for their technical skills.

Cole recorded (Cole, 1884; Volume 2, 323) that it was Labouchere (later Lord Taunton) who had recommended the use of Royal Engineers to Prince Albert for the Great Exhibition and had suggested Colonel Reid for the Executive. In the same memorandum, reprinted in the Cole biography but unfortunately undated, Cole lists the many civil offices to which Royal Engineers were appointed:

In what is called the purely civil service of the country, as distinguished from the semi-military service, an officer of the Royal Engineers is employed as the Governor of a royal prince; as an inspector of railways under the Board of Trade; as a Director of
convict prisons and a Commissioner of Police under the Home Secretary; as a Commissioner of Public Works in Ireland under the Treasury; as an Inspector for Science, as an Engineer and as an Architect under the Committee of Council on Education; as a Colonial Governor or Colonial Surveyor General under the Colonial Secretary; as a foreign Consul-General under the Foreign secretary; as a Director of Works under the Admiralty. Almost every Minister of a Government finds it advisable to employ them.

Cole was arguing that this was a state of affairs that should be recognised. The government needed "professionals" as well as administrators. The corps of Royal Engineers was a source of well qualified men, trained by the army in a number of disciplines, and Cole was happy that they were available to be seconded to civil duties as the need arose. Cole believed that the government should formally recognise that the Royal Engineers undertook this function. Cole also felt that it was unreasonable that the War Office should insist that an officer could be seconded, under normal circumstances, for only eighteen months at a time. He had experienced difficulties himself in retaining useful men. For example Fowke wrote to Cole in 1859 (after four years service with the Department of Science and Art) complaining that the War Office were again questioning his continued absence from the corps. Fowke complains "the War office have never hesitated to employ me when they thought desirable - all of which service I have performed voluntarily and without payment" (Fowke Correspondence; 24th August 1859). Royal Engineers continued to work for Cole, and for much longer periods than eighteen months. When he valued a man highly he found ways of retaining his service. Donnelly remained at South Kensington for the greater part of his career. Elizabeth Bonython has speculated that he was the "very model of a modern major general" of the Gilbert and Sullivan song; this is almost certainly the case, Sullivan having worked closely with Cole in a number of musical projects at South Kensington (Bonython, 1982; 8).
The Royal Engineers seconded to South Kensington established what Weiler has referred to as a "building research station" (Weiler, 1987; 295). In addition to the design work for Departmental and other building projects, tests were carried out on new building materials, more traditional materials were used to new effect and a museum of construction technology and materials established. Perhaps the greatest legacy to South Kensington arising from the materials research was the use of terracotta for the external decoration of buildings; this material, so beloved of Cole, symbolised much of what South Kensington stood for. In the words of Weiler (1987; 321) the South Kensington engineers "helped to establish the credibility of terracotta as a durable, cost effective and tasteful material, a product born of the linking of art and industry, craftsmanship and factory production".

On the 1st May 1862 the Great International Exhibition was opened. The Queen, being in mourning, did not attend, but selected a group of dignitaries to perform the opening ceremony on her behalf. These were Lord Palmerston, the Earl of Derby, the Lord Chancellor, the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Duke of Cambridge. Although the public mourning for Prince Albert cast a shadow the Times (2nd May 1862) recorded that "The ceremonial... was emphatically the grandest, best managed, and most imposing public pageant which has been seen in this country for years". Speeches were made by Lord Granville for the Commissioners and the Duke of Cambridge on behalf of the Queen. Granville spoke of the articles exhibited as displaying "a progress previously unexampled in science, art and manufactures" and the Duke expressed his hope that it would be "hereafter recorded as an important link in the chain of International Exhibitions, by which the nations of the world may be drawn together in noblest rivalry, and from which they may mutually derive the greatest advantages". The full versions of the speeches, which were shortened for the ceremony, were printed in the daily press and in the Society's
The poet laureate, Tennyson, had produced an ode which was set to music, the Archbishop said prayers, and the ceremony ended with the singing of Handel's "Hallelujah Chorus". Punch magazine found aspects of the ceremony to poke fun at (3rd May 1862; 179). Cole had decreed that "all persons in the procession will be in Official, Academical or Court Dress or Uniform" but Punch found amusement in the failure to state who should wear which. Punch also published a delightful "Chorale" which had been "unaccountably declined by the Commissioners in favour of the poet laureate's very much inferior ode". Punch had no doubt about Cole's influence on the exhibition, for the chorale describes him thus:

Lo, the Commissioners of Sixty-two
Advance the shapely leg, and bend the blushing brow!
And hark! above the shattering trumpets blare,
Above the drum's sonorous roll,
A shout that stills the reverential air -
The mighty name of Cole!
The COLE that light on all things throws -
The COLE whom poking cannot break or bend,
The COLE, whose undeveloped measures,
Subserve alike our business and our pleasures,
The COLE, that on and on still goes,
And never seems to come to his Wall's end!

The dignified national newspaper, the Times, was strong in its support for national effort and national pageant. Punch also had a policy to pursue, that of poking fun at those in power.

The ceremonial over, the exhibition was opened to the public, although parts of it were still "in a gloriously incomplete state" (Builder, 3rd May 1862; 313). As in 1851, the fees charged for admission to the exhibition were varied so that the better off could attend at times when
the buildings would be less crowded (and they would not have to rub shoulders with the lower orders). The less rich would be able to attend only on those days when the fees were reduced to a level they could afford. For three or five guineas, season tickets allowed entrance to the exhibition, the adjacent Horticultural Society gardens and to the various Fetes which were arranged throughout the summer. Day tickets were priced at 5/-, 2/6 or 1/-. Details of the various groups visiting the exhibition were published in the Society's journal and included workers sent by their employers, villagers sent by their landlords, school children by their teachers or by local dignitaries, "insane females" and "mousetrap makers". On less busy days visitors included the very rich and the royal. Cole was almost certainly pleased with the lists which were published, demonstrating as they did the wide range of individuals benefitting from the intellectual, artistic and educational stimulation which the exhibition provided.

There were a number of differences between the exhibits of 1862 and those of 1851. Most remarked upon was the inclusion of paintings. Fourteen hundred English oil paintings, a thousand foreign oil paintings and six hundred watercolours were on display in the specially designed (by Fowke) galleries. The inclusion of works of art was widely applauded, perhaps indicating that polite society found art more interesting than industry. Cole had intended the inclusion of paintings since 1858 when he had discussed their inclusion with Dilke (Cole Diary; 18th February 1858). Cole's motivation in including paintings was his crusade for the education of public taste; the paintings could be appreciated by persons of all classes. A report of the opening ceremony printed in Blackwoods Edinburgh Magazine (1862, DLX) noted that "the Royal party did what every other person of sense will do on entering the exhibition. They proceeded to the Picture Gallery". The earlier arguments had been about whether the exhibition should be scientific,
educational or commercial. In the event it was the art exhibition which caught the public imagination.

Another new class for 1862 which related to Cole and his interests was "Photographic apparatus and photography". Not only was the equipment displayed, but the new medium was used by Cole as a marketing tool and for record purposes. Messrs Berns were given a contract to produce photographs of the exhibition for sale to the general public (Commissioners for the Exhibition of 1862, Correspondence; 29th June 1861). Cole used one of the Royal Engineers assisting with the exhibition to take a series of photographs providing a record of the erection of the buildings (ibid; 16th July 1861) – highlighting the fact that this infant technology could be used both as an art and as a permanent record of transient events. Cole also used photography in support of a Special Exhibition of Works of Art on Loan, which he had arranged to take place in the South Kensington Museum in parallel with the "Great Exhibition". A Departmental memorandum records that "Photographs of all the more important specimens contributed will be taken and ultimately issued to the public, should no stipulations to the contrary be made by their proprietors" (PRO ED84 41).

Punch magazine noted the prominent position given in the exhibition to the huge cannon, and produced a "design for a colossal statue, which ought to have been placed in the International Exhibition" (3rd May 1862; 179). The statue consisted of an angel, representing peace, seated upon a cannon. In 1851 the spirit had been of peaceful competition between friendly nations. In 1862 the climate was quite different. As well as the huge cannons made by Whitworth and Armstrong, the Whitworth and Enfield rifles, and models of iron plated ships were on display. Time had shown that war was still a fact of life, and that being so the machinery of war which was manufactured in Britain was a product to be
promoted. Blackwoods Edinburgh Magazine (1862, DLX) again provides a contemporary view of the increased militarism:

In 1851 we were all safe, and safety was divine. In 1862 we cannot tell what new horror, what new danger, may arise at any moment. Then a soldier was a necessary evil, gradually to be done away with and superceded as the world grew wiser. Now, nothing stirs the popular heart with warmer delight than to reckon in the thousands of our boys who know how to handle their weapons.

Cole's was one such heart. The son of an army officer, Cole was one of those who became involved, in the late 1860s and 1870s (through the Society of Arts), in the campaign to make "drill a part of national education in every boys' school in the country" (Cole, 1884; Volume 1, 386-387). This will be discussed further in Chapter 11.

The Department of Science and Art had been Cole's creation and his chief occupation over the preceding decade. In the 1862 exhibition Cole introduced a new class "Educational works and appliances". This class was, in the words of the jurors, "altogether a new one, it did not exist in the former Universal Exhibition of 1851, nor in that of 1855, and it has an entirely special character". The "civilised nations" now all agreed that "the instruction of the rising generation is a social duty of the highest Importance" (Reports by the Juries, International Exhibition of 1862, 1862; 2). In creating the class and entering exhibits illustrating the methods and materials used by his Department Cole was promoting his educational system to an international audience. The jurors at least were appreciative; both Cole as an individual and the Department of Science and Art were medal winners, Cole for his "exertions to promote science and art education" and the Department for the merit of their productions illustrating the course of instruction in schools of art, and for the assistance rendered by them to the
progress of art instruction by means of the Normal School of Art at South Kensington" (Reports by the Juries, International Exhibition of 1862, 1862; 24).

The details of the ninety schools of art which the Department supported and of the South Kensington Museum were on display, together with a set of drawings illustrating the "stages of instruction" which were given at the schools of art. A full statement of those stages, which ranged from Stage 1, linear drawing by aid of instruments, through various copying exercises to painting from nature and finally to stages 22 and 23, elementary design and applied designs, was on display. This was the style of art education heavily criticised at the time by Ruskin and Morris. Ruskin believed that Cole's Department had "corrupted the system of art teaching all over England into a state of abortion and falsehood from which it will take twenty years to recover" (quoted by Hewison, 1976; 170). Cole's system not only stultified through its rigidity, believed Ruskin, it also isolated the designer both from art and from a general education which might provide a proper social and moral context for design. Ironically, when in 1871 Ruskin set up a drawing school at Oxford which was intended to avoid the faults both of the Department of Science and Art and of the Royal Academy, he too relied upon simple copying exercises and a collection of examples (Hewison, 1976; 171-176).

At the conclusion of the Great Exhibition of 1862 the Commissioners announced that "it was such as to prove, not only the striking progress which has been made in the industry of the world since the first exhibition, but also the extent to which that progress is promoted by the means of these great International gatherings" (Commissioners for the Exhibition of 1862, 1863; lxii). They looked forward and hoped that the organisers of the next Great Exhibition would be able to "point to
the beneficial results of the display of the past year, with as much confidence as we can do to the evidence afforded by the display of the advantages which have resulted from the labours of our predecessors in 1851-. The Commissioners, of course, presented a very positive view of the event for which they had been responsible. Whether, in the broader historical context, the exhibition can be viewed as a success or as a failure depends very much on the criteria which are used to make that judgement.

It can be judged in financial terms, in terms of the number of visitors attending, in terms of its effect on international trade or industrial development. It can be judged in terms of its impact at the time, or by the long term influence it had upon industry, science, trade and society. Certainly it must be seen, not in isolation, but as one of a series of events. It was affected by those which had gone before, particularly those of 1851 and 1855, and it was in turn to influence later exhibitions, which in Britain were not attempted again on this scale until the Empire Exhibition of 1926. In terms of the development of the South Kensington estate and Cole’s agenda for establishing permanent buildings there it must be judged a failure.

Cole failed to secure the use of these buildings after the exhibition for the purposes he had had in mind. The buildings had attracted a great deal of criticism, and it became clear that the cost of "improving" the "utilitarian" buildings to meet the requirement for "beauty" was prohibitive. According to General Grey, the antipathy of Gladstone was "much injurious" (Cole Correspondence; Box II, Grey to Cole, 4th July 1863). After much public discussion the majority of the buildings were demolished and the materials recycled in the creation of another people’s palace, the Alexandra Palace in north London. The 1862 exhibition site was eventually redeveloped; this is discussed in the
The exhibition was successful in terms of the visitors it attracted. In 1851 there had been no Crystal Palace at Sydenham, and no South Kensington Museum. In 1862 Great Exhibitions were no longer new, and rival attractions might be preferred. Cole had himself taken the opportunity to mount a special display of paintings at the South Kensington Museum to coincide with the 1862 Exhibition. Both the Royal Horticultural Society, which was on the same site as the exhibition, and the South Kensington Museum, advertised their opening hours and special events in the 1862 exhibition catalogues. Despite the national mourning for the Prince Consort and the availability of alternative attractions, attendance at the Great Exhibition of 1862 was actually slightly greater than in 1851, numbering 6,211,000 (Luckhurst, 1951; 220). Paxton had been right to be concerned about its financial viability. Despite the fact that over six million visitors were attracted, the exhibition ended with a loss of over £11,000. Were it not for Kelk's desire to square the accounts, probably because he had an eye to the honours which he expected to be awarded, the Commissioners would have been embarrassed by having to call upon the guarantors.

The 1862 exhibition provides a compelling demonstration of Cole's ability to control what he had no right to control. The Exhibition of 1862 was an exhibition which suffered from inadequate direction. The Prince Consort had been the pivot around which the exhibition of 1851 had been centred. The very small group of Commissioners to whom the organisation of this second Great Exhibition was entrusted was too small to control such a mammoth undertaking, and differences of opinion among them, the contractors and the supporting committees resulted in changes

8. On 18th March 1862 Cole recorded in his diary "K [Kelk] looked for a B [baronetcy] & thought I cd get it for him".
in plans and muddles in organisation which were all too obvious to the
visitors (Cole Diary; 17th February 1862). Cole was not, as he had been
in 1851, on the official management team for the exhibition, he was
merely an "advisor". Nevertheless, Cole was unable to resist the
temptation to put things right. Very often he stepped in and took
control of situations because he could see problems which needed to be
dealt with, but which had not been attended to by others. For example
in his diary on 25th March 1862 he recorded "Confusion in machinery.
Upbraided R Thompson". Thompson was the Department of Science and Art
employee seconded to supervise the machinery section.

Cole's reputation was as a despot. He recorded in his diary on 24th
February 1862 the comments of two of his close allies; "Kelk came sd he
had told Ld G [Lord Granville] that I must be Dictator, Ld G thought me
a genius & my fault was Battery against people but judgement very
sound." Cole seems to have delighted in comments such as these.
Although he was undoubtedly an abrasive character, he was called upon
more than once during the preparations for the exhibition to smooth over
various quarrels and misunderstandings. Kelk asked him to "smooth down"
Fowke (Cole Diary; 4th March 1862), a Mr Hedgeland had a grievance on
the position of his organ (Cole Diary; 16th April 1862), but more often
it was Cole himself who needed smoothing. The Duke of Buckingham dared
to suggest that Cole might not be the right person to organise the
opening ceremony; Cole stormed out of the room (Cole Diary, 18th March
1862). When he presented his plans for the ceremony to the
Commissioners on the 28th March he "fired up" at their suggested changes
and resorted to rather undiplomatic language (Cole Diary; 28th March
1862). Cole upset Sandford, Secretary to the Commissioners, by offering
advice when it wasn't wanted and by sending a list of complaints to the
Commissioners. Yet when Iselin, assistant to Lyon Playfair as Special
Commissioner for Juries, showed something of Cole's own temperament, Cole told him that unless he could control his temper and manners he would not allow him to marry his daughter! (Cole Diary; 19th May 1862).

Although Cole was, officially, less concerned with the exhibition in 1862 than he had been in 1851, it is clear that in reality he was the man most responsible for the exhibition and what can be judged as its success. He had decided, for his own reasons, that the exhibition should happen. He had promoted it to his influential friends, and he had been on the spot to ensure that the building, the arrangement and the opening were carried out to his satisfaction. In achieving all of this Cole had used what had by now become a reliable group of men who believed in him as an exhibition organiser. He had been supported by those few important men who had the power to give power to Cole. When the exhibition closed and the financial loss was apparent Cole must have been disappointed. When the buildings he had schemed for had to be demolished it marked the beginning of the diminution of Cole's power; he would not again persuade others to follow him so easily.

Cole may have found some consolation in his increasing involvement in the affairs of the Horticultural Society. It was in the Horticultural Society gardens that he would take short recuperative breaks during his hectic working days. The connections between Cole, the Society and the development of the South Kensington estate are discussed in the following chapter.
References Chapter 8


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Chapter 9. The Royal Horticultural Society

One of the features of the exhibition in 1862 was the attractive garden within which it was set. From the very beginning of Cole's promotion of the exhibition for 1862 he included in his plans the construction of gardens to surround the exhibition buildings; these were to be the gardens of the Horticultural Society.

Cole's involvement with the Horticultural Society was entirely due to its connection with the South Kensington estate. He was one of the small group of men, led by the Prince Consort, who made arrangements for the Society to become a tenant of the Commissioners at South Kensington. Cole's connection with this Society can be traced to the acceptance by Prince Albert of the Presidency of the Horticultural Society in March of 1858. This was just two weeks after Cole made his suggestion of a second Great Exhibition to Charles Wentworth Dilke. Cole and Dilke had been friends since the early 1840s when they had worked together in various publishing ventures including the Gardener's Chronicle. Unlike Cole, Dilke had become a member of the Horticultural Society and in 1857 had become a member of its Council. Cole wanted a garden at South Kensington; Dilke and the Prince were in a position to provide him with one.

The connection between the Horticultural Society and South Kensington is described by Fletcher (1969; 186) in the Society's history as "The Kensington adventure and disaster". Initially the association was amicable and advantageous to both parties, but this situation did not continue for very long. To understand the importance of the intervention of the Cole circle in the affairs of the Horticultural Society it is necessary first to understand something of its earlier history. The Horticultural Society was founded in 1804 as a scientific
society, devoted to the improvement of both "useful" and "ornamental" horticulture. It was clear that such a society should have a garden in which to carry out the development, testing and experimental work which would be needed to advance the science of horticulture, and to this end it was proposed in 1815 to take over part of the Chelsea Physic Garden, the garden of the Society of Apothecaries. Despite the fact that the Physic Garden was in financial difficulties (Drewett, 1922; 75) they were not receptive of the idea that their garden, with its long history (it was founded in the seventeenth century) and its emphasis on medicinal plants, should be taken over by the young Horticultural Society with their much wider interest in practical botany. After the failure to take over the garden of the Apothecaries, in 1818 the Horticultural Society took on the lease of a walled market garden in Kensington, where fruit trees and vegetables found a temporary home. In 1823 the Society found a more permanent home when it moved to Chiswick, to thirty three acres of land belonging to the Duke of Devonshire, where ornamental plants as well as fruits and vegetables could be accommodated, and where a meeting room could be built. A property in Regent Street was purchased for offices and meetings, and though never prosperous the Society was successful in meeting its horticultural aims.

Cole visited the Chiswick gardens for the first time on the 19th July 1851, where he was shown around by the Secretary Dr Lindley, Professor of Botany at University College. It is probable that Cole saw the Society as a possible ally in his cause of preserving the 1851 exhibition building as a winter garden. Cole's diary records a visit of Lindley to the Great Exhibition a few weeks later, during which Lindley said that he "thought the Building might realize everything desirable in a Winter Garden but would not be remunerative & that it would be best for [Fox and Henderson] to sell it in portions. The Horticultural Society wd probably buy a part" (Cole Diary; 28th August 1851). On this
occasion the Society were not able to assist Cole; the Crystal Palace was dismantled and rebuilt at Sydenham.

The financial position of the Horticultural Society became critical in the mid 1850s. The membership were not providing sufficient income to run both the (expensive) scientific garden and the (socially desirable) London premises. On 24th December 1855 a printed circular was sent out to members suggesting that as current receipts were only half of current expenditure it would be necessary to take drastic steps - perhaps the garden would have to be given up unless members were willing to give the necessary financial support. Although this appeal did result in an improvement in funds it was not sufficient to redeem the situation, and an attempt was made to sell the Regent Street property in 1856. This was not successful and in 1857 a second attempt was made but the property failed to attract the price required.

In January of 1858 the Duke of Devonshire died. He had been President of the Society for twenty years, but had not been an active President. He had been prepared to let the Society have the use of a small part of his extensive estate, but the only meeting he had ever attended had been one held in the Chiswick garden adjacent to his own property. When the Duke died Dilke, who, as a Commissioner for the Exhibition for 1851 was likely to have good channels of communication with Prince Albert, was asked to approach the Prince to ask whether he would be willing to be formally asked to become the new President. The Prince's agreement was obtained, and on March 2nd 1858 Prince Albert became President of the Horticultural Society (Gardeners' Chronicle, 6th March 1858; 175).

The Society may have hoped that Royal patronage might have been enough by itself to improve the financial situation, but unfortunately the arrival of the Prince did not attract new members or additional
donations. Cole claimed that it was he who suggested to Dilke that the Horticultural Society should move to South Kensington (Cole, 1884; Volume 1, 327), as early as 28th March 1858—four days after the Society of Arts had formally agreed to go ahead with the exhibition. On 16th July 1858 the Prince Consort agreed to head the guarantee fund for the exhibition; on that same day he appointed Cole, Richard Redgrave and Francis Fowke as a committee to prepare a plan for a large formal garden at South Kensington (Cole Diary). Though these were all Department of Science and Art employees it was not an official Departmental Committee. The Prince, almost certainly concerned about the lack of development of the vacant portions of the site belonging to the Commissioners for 1851, seems to have accepted the exhibition and the new garden as a "package deal", proposed by Cole.

As yet the plans were private and contained within the Cole circle. Dilke was aware of the plans being made but there had been no formal contact between the Commissioners and the Horticultural Society. It was not until six months later, at a council meeting of the Horticultural Society on 25th January 1859, that it was agreed that a letter should be sent to the Commissioners for the Exhibition of 1851, inquiring about the possibility of leasing land on the South Kensington estate. At a council meeting in January of 1859 it was resolved that the Society had no choice but to realise their assets by selling the Regent Street property and the library. The Society retained its gardens at Chiswick, moved its offices into one room in Trafalgar Square, and began to hold its monthly meetings at the Society of Arts. It has not been possible to pinpoint the date on which Cole became a member of the

1. Despite three horticultural exhibitions during 1858, two in London and one at Chiswick, the financial condition of the Society was poor and at the end of 1859 the possibility of winding up the Society in order to re-form under a different charter was considered.
Horticultural Society, but it is difficult to believe that Cole would have remained an outsider once the Society began to make use of the facilities of the Society of Arts.

Cole was in Italy from 28th August 1858 until February of 1859, and therefore not involved in the decision of the Horticultural Society, on 25th January 1859, to make an official approach to the Commissioners. Cole returned to South Kensington on 5th March. On 1st April 1859 Prince Albert visited Cole and "said he had seen Dilke and agreed about the Garden for H: S:" (Cole Diary). There was still no official agreement between the Commissioners and the Horticultural Society. When the Society published the first of its monthly reports "on the Proceedings of the Horticultural Society" in the Gardeners' Chronicle on 11th June 1859, the membership was informed that "Should the arrangements for obtaining this ground be brought to a satisfactory conclusion, there can be no doubt that the place would be by far the best near the metropolis" (Gardeners' Chronicle, 1859; 504). A few days later Dilke came to tell Cole how many acres the Society needed, that they would require greenhouses, and that the Prince "wanted a plan prepared independently of the Commissioners" (Cole Diary, 4th April 1859). Cole was in an excellent position to take advantage of this; his Royal Engineers at South Kensington, and particularly Francis Fowke, were fully capable of carrying out the design work. They were also very conveniently situated to supervise the construction.

Cole began to assess to what degree the plans of the Horticultural Society would be complementary to his own. In his diary Cole recorded the sequence of events which followed. On the 5th April 1859 he worked on a study of the financial position of the Horticultural Society. On the 6th he discussed the requirements for the site with Fowke, and on the 7th attended the first meeting between Prince Albert's committee
(Cole, Redgrave and Fowke) with Dilke and Smirke for the Horticultural Society. At a lengthy meeting they "arranged the plan" (Cole Diary). The proposed garden could not accommodate the scientific activities of the Society; Cole and "his" committee expected that the Chiswick garden would continue to operate as the Society's horticultural research facility.

Together with Edgar Bowring (Secretary to the Commissioners for the Exhibition of 1851) this same group met with the Prince on the 9th April 1859 and the plans were agreed, although no firm ideas about the funding of the project were forthcoming. Easter Sunday morning saw Cole revising the ground plan which had been drawn up for the Society by Smirke and "devising means for its execution" (Cole Diary; 24th April 1859). In the afternoon of the same day he discussed the plans with Dilke who "at last agreed that a rental might be fairly expected from the corridor" (ibid). The "corridor" was the name given to the central portion of the Commissioners' site for which the Horticultural Society was to be responsible. Dilke had apparently been hoping that the Commissioners would be prepared to give them access to the site rent free; Cole had expected there to be some kind of financial transaction.

Cole, Smirke (for the Society), and Bowring (for the Commissioners) met with the Prince at Buckingham Palace on the 4th May 1859 and arranged the formal meeting of the two corporate parties for the 9th June. Sydney Smirke was now formally engaged to draw up the plans for the garden, and on the 8th May the Prince approved the scheme which included three Italianate arcades on the east, south and west boundaries of the gardens. These arcades would be used by the Commissioners for the events which would be held on the land surrounding the Horticultural Society gardens. Of course the first of these was planned to be the Exhibition of 1862.
On the 9th May Cole had breakfast with Dilke where he met Dr Lindley and Mr Vietch, officers of the Horticultural Society. Almost a year after Prince Albert had first asked Cole and his colleagues to give thought to the assimilation of the Horticultural Society into the South Kensington estate this was the first time that a member of the South Kensington team had met with the scientific leaders of the Horticultural Society. The layout of the gardens was discussed (Cole Diary). An indication of Cole's increasing interest in the Society which seemed likely to become a neighbour at South Kensington is given by Cole's attendance, with his wife, on the 12th May at the Horticultural Society show. Cole needed to know what kind of show the Society held, and what their requirements of the site might be.

On 13th May another meeting at Buckingham Palace discussed the form of the agreement which was to be drawn up between the two parties, and on 27th May 1859 it was Cole who sent to the Prince Smirke's plans and designs for buildings. Appendices to the memorandum which accompanied the drawings include a suggestion that there should be a penalty to the Society for arrears of rent, and that there should be an expenses committee which would consist of three members of the Council of the Horticultural Society and three nominees of the Commissioners (Windsor Archives; Minutes, 2nd July 1859, Appendix F). That the Horticultural Society should have approached the Commissioners was almost inevitable. The Commissioners had vacant land in a situation which suited the Society, and with Prince Albert as President of both organisations the association was so much the easier. In effect, however, the negotiations had been with Cole. In due course Cole was nominated by the Commissioners to the Expenses Committee. As on so many other occasions, Cole's formal involvement followed on from many months of hard work in bringing the project to the stage where formal agreements could be made.
Cole again visited the Prince on the 6th June, to settle financial details and to discuss "executive arrangements about Smirke, Fowke, RR [Richard Redgrave] and myself" (Cole Diary). Cole wanted, as was his habit, to be formally appointed to the executive of the scheme.

The meeting on the 9th June was not entirely successful. Cole records that the Commissioners (in the shape of their Finance Committee) "feared the responsibility" (Cole Diary), but on the following day "Prince, Lord Granville, Overstone, Gladstone, Labouchere, Baring, Gibson, Spearman, Cubitt, Coulson, Dilke, Lindley, Fowke, Smirke, RR [Richard Redgrave] & self adjourned to Mr Gladstone's" (ibid). This reconvened meeting, which included most of the Cole circle and few others, made sufficient progress for the Horticultural Society to make an announcement to the membership. An editorial in the Society's publication, the Gardener's Chronicle (11th June 1859; 504) gave the members an indication of the advantages which the garden at South Kensington might bring. "It would be an admirable place for exhibiting everything that is going on in Horticulture, in the most advantageous manner". The President and a few of the officials were convinced, but it was now necessary to enlist the support of the membership. A rather clever manoeuvre was in progress; the gardens which did not yet exist were being used to attract new members and the new members would be used to provide funds for the gardens.

On the 27th June the Council of the Horticultural Society met with the Prince at Buckingham Palace and terms were agreed verbally (Cole Diary). It is not clear in what capacity Cole was present at that meeting, though it was probably as a member of the (Department of Science and Art) committee which the Prince had convened in July of 1858. On 1st July Cole again visited the Prince, and whilst Cole was there Prince Albert dictated a letter to the Horticultural Society (Cole Diary). A
meeting of the Commissioners was held on the following day, with Cole in attendance. The Commissioners accepted the terms of the agreement with the Society (Cole Diary). At that same meeting Dilke was made a member of the Finance Committee of the Commissioners, thus strengthening the links between the two bodies. It was an alliance for which Cole was prepared to work very hard.

By 2nd July the Council of the Horticultural Society was confident enough to inform the membership of the expected agreement (Gardeners' Chronicle, 1859; 559); on 4th July a formal written proposal was received from the Commissioners. A Special General Meeting of the Horticultural Society was held at the Society of Arts on 7th July to discuss the terms of the proposed agreement. Cole was in attendance. The report of the meeting published in the Gardeners' Chronicle (July 9th 1859; 584-586) states that:

A more important meeting of the Society was perhaps never held....The Council have no manner of doubt that...they will be enabled, while keeping steadily in view the scientific objects of the Society at Chiswick, to make this garden, with the periodical exhibitions which they propose to hold in it, one of the most attractive places of popular resort in the neighbourhood of London.

The Council proposed to:

Keep up the experimental part of Chiswick Gardens, and also as much as may be required to furnish decorative plants for the new garden at Kensington Gore.

It is clear that the Horticultural Society saw this new site as being their decorative garden, whilst the science would continue at Chiswick. Under the terms of the agreement the Commissioners would lease 20 acres of land to the Society, the Commissioners would be responsible for carrying out the ground works and would surround the garden with
Italianate arcades. The Society would be responsible for laying out the gardens and erecting a winter garden at the north end of the site.

The financial arrangements were complex and involved the division of any profit over and above the first £2000, which would go to the Commissioners as rent, between the two organisations (Gardeners' Chronicle, 1859; 585). This arrangement necessitated a careful management and scrutiny of the accounts of the Gardens, and the Commissioners proposed an Expenses Committee, consisting of three members nominated by the Society and three by the Commissioners. This Expenses Committee is exactly as had been proposed by Cole in his memorandum of May 1859 (Windsor Archives; Minutes, 27th May 1859, Appendix F). The Horticultural Society believed that they could expect a large income from admissions to the gardens, especially with the support of the Royal family; many wealthy people would wish to be connected with the project. In support of this contention Dilke was able to read to a meeting on the 7th July a list of 128 "noblemen and gentlemen" of the district, who would wish to become fellows if the scheme went ahead.

Members who had not been privy to the negotiations of the previous year were less than keen to come to a decision at the meeting. One member moved an amendment that consideration of the proposed scheme be postponed for a fortnight, another thought that details should be sent out to every member before a decision was made. Cole, Dilke and Lindley were forceful in their advocacy of the scheme and determined that the meeting should reach a decision. Cole was influential in getting a lukewarm motion of acceptance superseded by a more positive resolution in favour of proceeding to an agreement.

Once this resolution had been passed Dilke announced that he had a
letter from the Prince, which was to be opened if the meeting resolved to support the planned garden at South Kensington. Lord Ducie, as chairman, read aloud the letter from the Prince's secretary Colonel Grey, which told of the Prince's intention to make a donation, buy debentures, and make each of the royal children life members of the Society. The Queen was also prepared to make a substantial donation to the Society. The letter which Lord Ducie read had been written on the 1st July; it may well have been the letter which the Prince had dictated in the presence of Cole.

Cole involved himself in the problem of how the Horticultural Society might raise their share of the cost of establishing the garden. He spent some time studying the financial situation of the Society, and made some estimates of the likely income from "admissions" to the garden (Cole Diary; 5th April 1859); he expected an income of £15,000 per year and expenses of £10,000 (Cole Diary; 9th April 1859). He suggested that the necessary finance could be obtained by cooperation with a capitalist (Cole Diary; 11th April 1859). This was an arrangement similar to that agreed with the Mundays in 1849 for the erection of the 1851 exhibition building. As we have seen, the contract with the Mundays had to be cancelled. The Prince Consort was not keen on another commercial contract and a guarantee fund was considered. Eventually "Life memberships" were suggested as the major fund raising vehicle (Cole Diary; 23rd June 1859). Cole and Dilke discussed the Prince's suggestion and a scheme was designed which combined life membership and the holding of debentures. The reading of the Prince's letter was effectively the launching of the scheme.

2. Dilke told Cole on 4th April that the Prince wished "to have a company" for the new garden (Cole Diary); apparently he had changed his mind.
The editorial in the Gardeners' Chronicle for July 9th 1859 was enthusiastic and very impressed by the support which the Society was to receive from the highest levels:

There can be no possible doubt that a magnificent garden, such as it is proposed to construct at Kensington Gore, would be thronged daily by crowds of visitors eager to exchange the dirty streets of London for a place where they can cheaply enjoy the pleasures of a garden, without the inconvenient intrusion of that lowest class which infests all places of resort that are absolutely public.

Obviously the intention was not to have the gardens open to all comers. The Royal gardens at Kew had been transferred to the control of the Office of Woods and opened to the public in 1840 (Bean, 1908; 28-31). Membership and admission charges at South Kensington would exclude the poorest and thereby attract a different class of visitor. The editorial writer anticipated a large income which could be applied to the improvement of horticulture, an activity which the Society had been able to undertake in its more affluent days:

That income again possessed, new plants valuable for their hardiness, beauty and utility, whether merely ornamental, or important as additions to our dessert, our kitchens or even our agricultural resources may be rapidly introduced and distributed among the Fellows of the Society. The world contains many a corner rich beyond belief in vegetable treasures that never yet have reached us, and with sufficient means at its disposal, the Horticultural Society will know how to penetrate such regions and carry off whatever deserves to be introduced.

The new gardens, not scientific but decorative, were intended to attract local people of the monied classes. The income which would be derived could be applied to the furtherance of scientific horticulture, the major aim of the Society. The science would be carried out elsewhere.
The Queen and her Consort had begun the fundraising exercise. Within a month it was clear that there would be no problem raising the required sum to fund the Society's part of the scheme. An editorial in the Gardeners' Chronicle on 23rd July 1859 states that "so many have signified their intention to join the Society should the Garden be formed that there can be no doubt about its giving the Society a very great addition of strength, for almost every person of wealth and station in the West of London must necessarily take the deepest interest in a place calculated to add so largely to their personal enjoyment..." After so many years with financial problems the Society can be forgiven for its excitement about the growing membership. With hindsight we can see that the new members were often not in the least interested in horticulture, and the clash of interests between those who wanted a garden for entertainment, and those who wanted one for horticultural purposes was certain to cause problems sooner or later.

At a Special General Meeting of the Society on Wednesday 20th July 1859, reported in the Gardeners' Chronicle on the 23rd July, a further letter from the Commissioners was read which clarified some points about the length of the lease and the conditions under which the Commissioners would repossess the land, "In the event of the Society being unable for any period of five successive years...to pay the interest on the £50,000 proposed to be borrowed by the Commissioners...the Commissioners to have the right of re-entry without payment of compensation to the Society". When one of the members present at the meeting expressed a worry about the terms Cole was there to reassure that all would be well, one bad year would not bring disaster, but only five consecutive years with insufficient income. Yet again this civil servant, who had no horticultural credentials and only a brief acquaintance with the Society, was defending decisions which had been (officially) made by others. The bargain was between the Commissioners for 1851 and the
Council of the Horticultural Society; Cole was a member of neither, but among the members of both of these bodies were men who were by now very used to using Cole to get things done.

Considerable discussion on the terms of the lease followed, Paxton (who bought £500 of debentures in support of the scheme) putting forward an amendment postponing acceptance of the terms of the lease to allow further discussion. Cole again expressed his confidence and desire for acceptance, and Paxton withdrew his amendment. However he then moved "that the Council be instructed not to accept the clause about re-entry in case of failing to pay interest for five years, and that in the event of the Commissioners cancelling the lease an equitable adjustment of mutual interests be made". This was carried with only one opposer, not named in the report of the meeting. Cole's diary records "settled the lease to Cmnrs in spite of Paxton's opposition".

Cole used his many contacts in his campaign to raise funds to build the garden. His diary records those he convinced, and some whom he did not. Colonel Owen (Philip Cunliffe Owen who was Deputy General Superintendent at the Department of Science and Art) "could not see that the Horticultural Garden would promote science and art" (Cole Diary; 7th August 1859). In this case at least, Cole was apparently attempting to convince his colleague that the garden would be of benefit to the South Kensington estate as a whole. Cole was not easily deterred. A few days later Owen was "lectured...for not aiding Exhib: of 6l or Hort: Gardens with subscriptions" (Cole Diary; 12th August 1859). A compromise was reached. The published list of members of the Horticultural Society for the year 1860-61 includes the name of "Owen, Mrs Philip Cunliffe, South Kensington Museum".

The autumn of 1859 saw a steady increase in memberships of the Society

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and this "success" was attributed to the new garden. In Cole's papers at the National Art Library is a draft copy, dated August 1859, of a list of members and debenture holders and of donations received (Cole Miscellanies; IX, bound between 359 and 360)). On the list is Cole's strong supporter Lord Granville. He is listed as a life member and as having £100 of debentures. Granville was probably easily persuaded into membership. As a Commissioner for 1851 he would have been aware of the plans for the Horticultural Society and their progression. As a member of the Society of Arts he would almost certainly have been among those with whom Cole was discussing the proposed exhibition for 1861. As Lord President of the Council he would wish to be kept aware of the activities of the government employees at the Department of Science and Art. Granville was not formally elected a member of the Horticultural Society until 4th February 1860.

Friday 20th January 1860 saw the "balloting" of the first batch of 335 new Fellows, the members of the Royal Family who were to become members were to be formally declared fellows at a meeting to be held on February 4th and a further 120 fellows were to be elected at that same meeting. A third ballot was to take place a fortnight later. The entry for Henry Cole in the Horticultural Society's list of Council, Officers and Committees 1860-61 is amended to read "Mrs Henry Cole, in place of Henry Cole previously elected". Perhaps now that the connection between the Society and South Kensington had been achieved it was preferable that Cole's involvement became less obvious. It is not surprising, given Cole's methods of working, that the list of members for 1860-61 includes many members of Cole's circle (Appendix 3).

On 13th February 1860 Lindley wrote to Cole asking for his assistance on the works committee of the new gardens. This gave Cole an official responsibility under the Horticultural Society. He had been working on
the gardens for almost eighteen months on behalf of the Prince; "his" architect Fowke was responsible for the ground works, and for the design of the meeting room and the conservatory, and John Kelk had been awarded the contract as builder. Not only was Cole responsible for the arcades surrounding the gardens in his position on the Prince's committee, now the physical form of the Society's presence in Cole's garden was officially under his influence.

The £50,000 needed to set the project in motion was quickly raised. By the time of the Horticultural Society Anniversary (annual) meeting of 1st May 1860, which was held in Cole's Board Room at the South Kensington Museum, detailed drawings of the garden design were available on display and Fellows had the chance to see the progress of the ground works on the site opposite the museum (Fletcher, 1969; 188). A model of the garden had been made available for inspection at the South Kensington Museum in September of 1859 (Gardeners' Chronicle, 17th September 1859), almost certainly constructed by the students at South Kensington.

On 8th May 1861 the Horticultural Society received a new Royal Charter, incorporating the new arrangements at South Kensington, and renaming the Society as the Royal Horticultural Society. On 5th June 1861 the garden at Kensington was opened, and a speech by Prince Albert made clear that to him, and to those who followed him, horticulture, or gardening, was an art form much more than a scientific discipline. To the Prince Consort the gardens were "a valuable attempt.....to reunite the science and art of gardening to the sister arts of architecture, sculpture and painting" (quoted by Fletcher, 1969; 191). To Cole they were a pleasant setting for exhibitions, soirees, and musical performances.

It became fashionable to be a member of the Society, and many ladies
joined. We have already seen that Mrs Cole and Mrs Cunliffe Owen were members. So also were Mrs Kelk and Mrs Milner Gibson (wife of the man who had chaired the Select Committee on the Schools of Design). Prince Albert, his mind clearly not on horticulture, suggested the appointment of a "Fine Arts Committee" to select works of art for the garden, the cost of which would be shared by the Society and the Commissioners. Bronzes from the 1862 exhibition were among the purchases made. A committee was also formed to arrange for suitable musical entertainment for the "Promenades" which it was fashionable to attend. The Horticultural Gardens had become a place of entertainment and an adornment to the kingdom of Cole. Cole walked in the gardens almost every day, though his diary never mentions any interest in the plants which were grown there. For the first few years the gardens were attractive and popular, though they were a source of what might be called "polite, rational amusement" much more than they were a vehicle for the dissemination of horticultural knowledge.

On the death of Prince Albert in December of 1861 new leadership was required, and Lord Buccleuch, the owner of two fine gardens in Scotland, became President. As the excitement of the new garden and the Royal connection faded the more horticulturally minded members began to resign because of the lack of commitment to horticultural science. One of the few successful horticultural events was the International Congress held in May 1866, which had been organised by an ad hoc committee chaired by Wentworth Dilke. The congress produced a profit of £1850 which was used to contribute to the Gardeners Royal Benevolent Fund and to reestablish a Royal Horticultural Society library by purchasing Lindley's collection of books which was available following Lindley's death the previous November. A trust was established to ensure that this second horticultural library would be secure should the Society again encounter financial difficulty. The seven members of the trust included Dilke and
Lieutenant Colonel Scott, recently seconded to the South Kensington Museum as the replacement for the late Captain Fowke.

Scott was genuinely interested in horticulture, and in February of 1868 took over the Secretaryship of the Society. As well as working for Cole at the Department of Science and Art, he was to become Secretary to the General Purposes Committee of the Royal Commissioners for 1851 (from 1871) and a member of the Commissioners' Management Committee (from 1872). A scientific committee of the Royal Horticultural Society was set up in 1868, with Buccleuch as chairman, but the gardens at South Kensington were already beginning to show signs of neglect. The Society was not doing what the "Kensington mafia" wanted. Cole complained, in 1874, that "Instead of being gardens for the Society and the general public, they are now monopolized by the nursery maids and children of the neighbourhood" (Cole, 1884; Volume 1, 328). The gardens had been intended to be the rather elegant surroundings within which the educational institutions of South Kensington were set; they had become merely a noisy local park.

Cole's interest in the Horticultural Society was in its usefulness to South Kensington. In 1858 Cole saw advantage in bringing to South Kensington a Society of the kind which he and the Prince Consort had hoped to attract, i.e. one with an educational function. More importantly for his purposes at the time the Society would make the as yet rather unattractive site very attractive indeed. During the whole of the period in which Cole was manoeuvring to achieve permanent exhibition buildings through the promotion of his second Great Exhibition he was conspiring to fund the gardens surrounding these buildings via the Horticultural Society. To Cole, Fowke, the Prince and 1862 Commissioner Charles Wentworth Dilke these were two aspects of a single project - to complete the development of the South Kensington
estate. In the short term they were successful; the gardens did indeed contribute to the popularity of the 1862 exhibition and the Society earned sufficient income to pay the rent on what Cole termed "the corridor". As we have seen in the previous chapter, the hope that the exhibition buildings would be permanent was disappointed.

Once the novelty of the new gardens had worn thin and their "upmarket" image spoiled by the "nursery maids and children" described by Cole, the finances of the Royal Horticultural Society again became unsatisfactory. After the initial burst of enthusiasm the gardens failed to attract horticulturally minded members, without whom these gardens would become mere pleasure gardens, rather than a showcase for the latest horticultural innovations. The exhibitions which the Commissioners for 1851 organised from 1871-4, which will be discussed in Chapter 11, might have redeemed the situation. A shared income from these events might have provided the necessary monies to improve the gardens and the Society's finances. Instead the use of the gardens by visitors to the exhibitions became a bone of contention between the Society and the Commissioners. The Gardeners' Chronicle published its summary of the situation in 1873 (quoted by Fletcher (1969; 207):

The Commissioners and the Royal Horticultural Society go hand in hand, much as the giant and the dwarf did in the fable......This is hardly a dignified or proper position for the Royal Horticultural Society to accept.

The Society, not without cause, felt that its interests were being subsumed under the general requirements of the South Kensington estate.

Fletcher, in his history of the Society, points to the "villain". "The suspicion gained ground that a cunningly conceived design was afoot to absorb the Society completely into the South Kensington system; and Mr
Henry Cole seems to have been suspect" (Fletcher, 1969; 207).

The crisis broke at the Annual General Meeting of the Society in 1873. Proposals of the Council (which by now included Cole as a Vice President) for the future of the gardens were rejected by the membership. A reconvened and better attended meeting on the 18th February confirmed this unhappy situation, and the Council considered resigning en bloc. The bye-laws of the Society did not allow this, and a Special General Meeting was called to amend the rules, whereupon all of the Council resigned, with the exception of one member who was out of the country. Prince Arthur was the only member of the old Council to be elected onto the new at a meeting on 4th April 1873. Scott too resigned from his position as Secretary, which by this time must have become extremely difficult for him as an employee of the Commissioners and the Department of Science and Art.

The new Council attempted to mend the relationship with the Commissioners and to redress the financial situation. They suggested ice skating in the gardens (of which the Commissioners did not approve) and tennis (which they did). The gardens remained popular with the public, but the financial position did not improve. The Commissioners were not receiving income from the gardens, because the rent only became payable out of the Society's profits which were now non-existent. In 1879 the Commissioners, after the five lean years which had been stipulated in the lease, gave notice that they intended to repossess the land. A legal battle followed, the Society winning at Chancery, but the Commissioners won on appeal. The Commissioners were granted possession of the gardens, but the Society was relieved of costs and claims on debentures.

Cole's connection with the Royal Horticultural Society gets a very brief
mention in his biography, despite its undoubted importance in terms of the development of the Commissioners' estate. Cole's son suggests "It is not perhaps necessary to enter into the details of the story of the Society's failure, its litigations, or of the debenture holders losses". Perhaps it was not, in a biography completed by Cole's children and telling of the triumphs of their father. Cole had hoped that the gardens would be the ornament of the Commissioners estate, around which could be collected the kind of organisation which he and the Prince Consort had hoped to attract to South Kensington. In 1882, the year of Cole's death, the connection with the Royal Horticultural Society was ended, and the Commissioners regained control of the land. To Cole, this must have been a great disappointment.
References Chapter 9


[Windsor Archives] (Archives of the Royal Commission for the Exhibition of 1851, held at the Archive Department of Imperial College).
From the very beginning of his involvement with the South Kensington estate Cole wished to include a "Great Hall" within the scheme. Cole's activities in relation to what became the Albert Hall of Arts and Sciences provide ample evidence of his determination, flexibility and power as well as of his all-encompassing interest in the estate owned by the Commissioners for the Exhibition of 1851. In 1853 when the Commissioners took possession of their estate Prince Albert shared Cole's desire for a hall which could accommodate a variety of activities. The Prince's early enthusiasm was never followed through, but Cole was very persistent in his efforts to secure funding for a "Great Hall". Over a period of fifteen years Cole kept this object in view, pursuing a number of schemes which had the potential to provide funding for the hall. In 1857 he formed the Chorus Hall Company, in 1859 he proposed the hall as one of the exhibition buildings for 1862, and finally Cole presented the hall as a fitting tribute to the Prince Consort, the Albert Hall for Arts and Sciences.

In the promotion of the Exhibition of 1862 and in the development of the Royal Horticultural Society gardens at South Kensington, Cole had found among his fellow members of the Society of Arts and the Horticultural Society persons very willing to support his ambitious schemes. Cole found it much more difficult to persuade the organisations of which he was a member to support the building of a large hall for general purposes. Cole needed all of his powers of persuasion, the cooperation of influential members of the Cole circle, and many years of persistent effort before finally achieving his "Great Hall" in 1871.

The Survey of London, in describing the Royal Albert Hall, states that "More, even, than the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Royal Albert Hall
owes its existence to Henry Cole" (Survey, 1975; XXXVIII, 177). Cole's greatest ally in the campaign was General Charles Grey, the secretary to Prince Albert who, after the Prince's death, became secretary to Queen Victoria. Cole's manipulativeness is clear in the use he made of friends and colleagues in promoting the hall. Grey's particular contribution lay in his ability to get the support of the Queen. Many of the people Cole had worked with in other contexts were brought into service, and they were not always happy about it. One example was Lady Salisbury (wife of Cole's political master the Lord President of the Council), who, when the Hall was at last close to being achieved, was persuaded to encourage others to become "subscribers". She wrote to Cole "pray reassure me, for I am dreadfully frightened". What she was afraid of was that the "names" she had recruited to the cause would be asked for money - and that they would blame her for misleading them that it was only moral support that they were being asked to give (quoted by Clark, 1958; 19).

In 1853, at the time when he hoped to bring together learned societies and educational institutions at South Kensington, Prince Albert suggested that the Royal Academy of Music could build a hall on the Commissioners' land. A letter from Phipps to Cole dated 24/9/53 states "I send you by the Prince's command the enclosed confidential memorandum and plan showing his highness's ideas as to the employment of the estate purchased at Kensington Gore" (Cole Correspondence; Box 1, Part 1, 58). The plan is unfortunately no longer with the letter. The Royal Academy of Music was still part of the plan in 1854, when Cole and Redgrave drew up plans for the siting of various organisations within a "public garden" at South Kensington (Cole, 1884; Volume 1, 319).

Cole preserved, in his bound collection of miscellaneous memoranda and printed documents, notes on a meeting with the Prince Consort on 24th
February 1855 at which the Prince made suggestions both for Cole's
Department and for the wider development of the Commissioners' land.
The Prince suggested that a scheme of flats and shops in a quadrangle,
with a concert hall in the centre, could provide both an income for the
Commissioners and the space (on the first floor which was to be
reserved) for temporary galleries for the museums of the Department of
Science and Art (Cole Miscellanies, 1855; XIII, 188-189). "HRH sketched
a ground plan on blotting paper, and desired that Mr Semper should be
requested to make a set of drawings". The piece of blotting paper
referred to in Cole's note is bound together with the note. The sketch
bears definite resemblance to later drawings for the Albert Hall scheme.
Gottfried Semper had been professor of architecture at Dresden, but had
fled that city after his part in the revolution of 1848. Semper is
remembered for the art gallery and the opera house in Dresden and the
Burgtheater as well two museums in Vienna. In 1855 this well-known
architect was an employee of Cole's at the Department of Science and
Art.

This second scheme by the Prince to provide a concert hall as part of a
scheme to build museums and provide an income for the Commissioners was
apparently abandoned when the Prince agreed, a few weeks later and in
Cole's absence, to the much less grand scheme to provide for the museums
of the Department of Science and Art by the erection of the "Boilers".
Prince Albert did not again attempt to include a concert hall in the
plans for the estate, but Cole wanted a concert hall at South Kensington
and sought other ways to achieve it.

Two years later, in 1857, Cole proposed a Great Hall at South Kensington
on his own behalf. Since Cole had become heavily involved in the
Society of Arts in the late 1840s he had habitually done his campaigning
through the corporate bodies with which he was involved; this personal
business venture was uncharacteristic of this period of Cole's career. We have seen that the Prince did not share Cole's conception of the importance of the proposed hall. This, therefore, made a campaign through the Society of Arts difficult unless Cole could find sufficient support from among the members to change the mind of their President. On 5th July 1857, two weeks after the official opening of the South Kensington Museum, Cole recorded in his diary that he was "at details of Music Hall". John Kelk, the man who had been instrumental in the purchase of the estate by the Commissioners and who was now contractor to the Department of Science and Art, must have been doubtful of the scheme's success, because he referred Cole to another contractor for construction of the hall (Cole Diary; 20th July 1857). Handwritten drafts of a prospectus for the "Chorus Hall Company", undated, but probably drawn up in the summer of 1857, proposed a hall whose "permanent use would be for the practice of chorus singing among the people on a scale hitherto only carried on habitually in religious edifices... [and which would be] constructed with due regard to the principles of sound" (Cole Miscellanies, 1857; XIII, 190-192). Cole had retained his interest in the vocal arts since his early days as a critic for the Examiner. He was himself instrumental in introducing weekday musical church services (with drums, trombones and trumpets!) at Holy Trinity Brompton, the church immediately adjacent to the South Kensington Museum (Cole, 1884; Volume 1, 393-394). With his Departmental responsibility for "science and art" he found it expedient to claim that the hall, like his department, would be concerned to apply the most up to date knowledge of science to the benefit of art.

The pencil sketch which accompanies the early proposals for the Chorus Hall Company describes an oval hall surrounded by a rectangle of colonades, and has similarities with the Prince's sketch of 1855. Prince Albert was not willing to be directly involved in the proposed
Chorus Hall Company. In a letter from his secretary Phipps, dated 9th July 1857, Cole was told that "The question of the Music Hall is one which...must be worked out independent of him". Phipps expressed his own doubts: "How are you to build a music hall, larger than a Roman amphitheatre, to hold 30,000 people at no great expense?" (Cole Correspondence; Box 1, 100). Cole's ambition was not merely to have a concert hall at South Kensington, he wished it to be of an enormous size to accommodate the most lavish of productions.

Presumably in order to widen the support for the Company, the proof prospectus of the Chorus Hall Company which was printed in November of 1858\(^1\) (Cole Miscellanies, 1858; IX, 341) stated the object of the hall to be rather wider than just to accommodate choral singing:

> The object of the proposed company is to erect a Public Hall of much larger size than any existing in this country....The proposed Hall would also be employed for concerts which might be enjoyed by thousands at a very cheap rate. It would also be useful for flower and other shows, and as a Hall of Ceremonials at the Great Exhibition of 1861.

As we have seen in the previous two chapters, Cole was, in 1858, involved in the planning of the exhibition which was finally to be held in 1862, and in the Prince Consort's early plans for the removal of the Horticultural Society gardens to South Kensington. It is clear that Cole had decided that, by linking the proposed hall with the other buildings being planned for the site, the chances of success could be improved. This willingness on Cole's part to subsume his scheme under the general plans for the development of the site indicates that the

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\(^1\) Cole was abroad in November of 1858, on the six month tour taken on the advise of his doctor. Though absent from South Kensington, he was still very much concerned to pursue his plans for the hall.
earlier private business venture was merely a means to an end. Cole's intention was not to make a personal fortune, but to get the hall built, by whatever means seemed most likely to succeed. Plans for the hall, based on Cole's sketch, were drawn up by Cole's son, Henry H Cole (Cole Miscellanies, 1860; XIII, 207-209) and were included in the plans being drawn up by Captain Fowke for the exhibition\(^2\). Cole was disappointed when the hall had to be dropped from the exhibition scheme in order to effect cuts in projected costs. However, the idea was not to be allowed to rest for long.

On the death of Prince Albert in 1861 there were many calls for memorials to be built both at national and at a local level. South Kensington had had particularly strong links with the Prince. Cole conveniently forgot that the Prince had lost interest in the concert hall, and used the Prince's earlier ideas of 1853 and 1855 to attract support for the concept of a hall as memorial to the Prince. Cole's first thought, however, was to use the link with the Prince to benefit the Department of Science and Art. Cole wrote to Lord Granville on 31st December 1861, only two weeks after the Prince's death, suggesting the creation of the Albert University, which would award external degrees in mining, chemistry, agriculture, architecture, construction, engineering, painting and sculpture (Cole Correspondence, 1861; XIII, 24)\(^3\). The subjects listed are those taught by the various educational establishments which came under the umbrella of the Department of

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2. Henry Hardy Cole, Cole's eldest son, made a career in the Royal Engineers and spent most of his adult life in India. His son, Cole's grandson, who also made a career in the army, became Director of the Exhibitions Division at the Department of Overseas Trade.

3. A Treasury Committee decided in 1861 that the School of Mines should focus their work more on mining and reduce their commitment to peripheral subjects (Bud and Roberts, 1984; 124); this suggestion by Cole may have been a reaction to this attempt to curtail the Department's activities.
Science and Art; if the idea had been taken up, it would almost certainly have resulted in the development of Cole's Science and Art Schools to university status under the new name.

All over the country committees were discussing the erection of memorials to the Prince Consort, and the Society of Arts was no exception. On the 13th January 1862 the Council of the Society presented their ideas for a national memorial to the Prince to the membership. At this early stage the proposals were vague. The Society was prepared to donate 1000 guineas towards a "national monument". The possibility of erecting a hall was not mentioned, but the Council of the Society, of which Cole was a very influential member, saw the donation which they proposed to make as merely their first step. They regarded the national monument as "only one of others that may be adopted to perpetuate the Prince's memory; it is in their contemplation to aid in founding an industrial university and in establishing travelling scholarships" (JSA, 1862, X (478) 121).

Cole had plainly been influential in informing the "contemplation" of his fellow Council members. The idea of an industrial university had been suggested ten years earlier, and supported by the late Prince, as a suitable project for the Commissioners for 1851. The Commissioners had proved incapable of initiating such projects and had only been persuaded to lend financial support to schemes led by other interests. Cole now believed that the creation of a technical university was one of the schemes which might be assisted by the desire (which would almost certainly be shared by the Commissioners) to create a suitable public memorial to the Prince.

Cole found that he had a staunch ally in General Charles Grey. Grey had worked for Prince Albert for more than ten years, during which time he
had come to admire Cole very much. Grey had served as MP for High Wycombe before entering the Queen's service on her accession in 1837, and, though he served Victoria above party, his politics remained Liberal. After Albert's death Grey, together with his colleague Colonel Sir Henry Ponsonby, took over many of the late Prince's responsibilities, and it was Grey who the Queen entrusted with publication of her own biography of the Prince (Weintraub, 1987; 351-356). Cole and Grey both wanted the national memorial to Prince Albert to be sited at South Kensington, and Cole saw the opportunity to promote the Great Hall which the Prince had himself (at one time) wanted to see built.

Unusually it was not the South Kensington Atelier which began the design process. Perhaps the diplomatic Grey suggested that it was unwise to bypass the architectural profession yet again. The Queen appointed a committee of the Royal Institute of British Architects, working under the Conservative leader Lord Derby, to decide the form of the national memorial. The committee, which included Matthew Digby Wyatt, friend of Cole since their visit to Paris together in 1849, and Sir James Pennethorne who had submitted an early plan for the development of the Commissioners' estate (reproduced in Physick, 1982; 21) and who had designed the first buildings on the Department of Science and Art site, discussed the various possibilities, sought designs and assessed the funds available.

In the text of their report, published in 1862, the committee stated:

What seems to be wanted is some spacious Hall and its necessary adjuncts, as a place for general art meetings; or for such assemblies as are about to take place in London in connection with social science and its kindred pursuits. We have nothing in London for such an object like the great halls of Liverpool, Leeds and
Manchester (reprinted by Cole in a memorandum of 1865 on the setting up of the Albert Hall, Cole Miscellanies; XIII, 156).

The committee went so far as to seek designs for a hall, to stand north of the Royal Horticultural Society conservatory and opposite the personal memorial in Hyde Park. George Gilbert Scott, the Gothic revival architect who had been recently concerned in the design of new offices for the India Office in London, was among the architects who submitted designs for the hall. The committee chose Gilbert Scott's design, much to Cole's dismay. Cole protested that there was "no utility in the Hall" (quoted in Survey, 1975; 179). Cole may not have been entirely displeased when the plan for the hall was abandoned because the funds available were insufficient for both the large and complex personal memorial and a memorial hall; the committee gave priority to the memorial.

Designs for the personal memorial were also submitted by a number of architects and again George Gilbert Scott's design was the one accepted by the committee. Cole didn't like Scott's design for the memorial either and made his views quite plain. He was right to oppose the design on the grounds that the structure would not last in the London climate. In some "Observations" which Cole made available to interested parties he suggested "To place so costly and beautiful a work of art in the open air exposed to extremes...would indeed be a daring novelty in art, casting away all the experience of centuries and defying common sense" (Cole Miscellanies; XII, 123). Some years later, when considering means of rectifying what he believed to be the mistake of the committee, Cole considered the possibility building a conservatory to protect the monument (Cole Diary; 17th May 1874). It is unfortunate that he did not succeed in this because in 1992 the memorial is scaffolded and the public denied access, because the structure has
become unsafe due to the ingress of water.

Cole was still not prepared to abandon his plans for a hall. He continued to discuss his ideas with General Grey. Grey's views are disclosed in a long and frank letter dated 4th November 1863 (Cole Correspondence; Box 2). Grey told Cole: "I had been turning over in my own mind how the land to the north of the Horticultural Society garden might be turned to accounts, so as to give us the Albert Hall". He went on to say that the letter which Cole had recently sent to him had "risen the spirits" and that he was "entirely of [Cole's] opinion as to the objects which should be kept in view". Grey confided in Cole his mistrust of the Commissioners as potential backers of the scheme, calling them "almost as inert a body as the government itself - few of them take the slightest interest in the questions connected with South Kensington, or take the slightest trouble to make themselves acquainted with them". He suggested that the Society of Arts might prove more helpful, but, like Cole, he thought a commercial venture might be the best solution - "my own thoughts have turned towards the formation of a Company, many as the objections may be to such a course, as the only certain mode of effecting our object". But Grey's final suggestion rivals Cole in its deviousness. He put forward the notion that Lord Derby should be made President of the Commission for the Exhibition of 1851. Grey identified Derby as "a great obstruction" but considered that, if he were President of the Commission, then the Queen, who was easily persuaded to join in Grey's enthusiasm for the Hall, could "[put] the screw upon him", and in any case it would "force him to give his attention to the questions about which, at present, he will not".

A draft prospectus for what Cole and Grey now styled the "Albert Hall of Arts and Sciences" was prepared by Cole and sent to Grey in November of 1863 (Cole Miscellanies; XIII, 80, 210). Cole and Grey were in
agreement that this commercial proposal was the best way forward for the hall, and with their joint influence in so many spheres, they were a formidable team. The success of the commercial venture depended upon the continuing willingness of the Commissioners for 1851 to provide the site which had been earmarked for a memorial hall. On 29th January 1864 Grey wrote to Cole (Cole Correspondence; Box 2) that "the Queen has asked Lord Derby to be President of the Royal Commission and he will accept it..". The short letter ends with the offer "Pray give me a line whenever you think there is any thing in which I can be useful". This offer from Grey was not empty. He had proved his willingness to use his influence on behalf of South Kensington.

Grey's influence over the Queen was not to be doubted and was to be recognised six years later in the obituary which appeared in the Times (1st April 1870, 12):

The position of General Grey at Court, it is almost superfluous to observe, was one of great delicacy, and one which gave him great influence, without being at all responsible either to the Ministry for the time being or to Parliament; and it speaks much on his behalf that he should so long have been able to wield that power and sustain that influence without ever having given occasion for hostile criticism.

Grey's influence could be brought to bear in relation to South Kensington because the Queen believed that the estate and its development had been of interest to her late husband. If the Queen's help was sought in promoting schemes which could be said to have had the support of the Prince, then they would have her support, for his sake.

The prospectus agreed between Grey and Cole was circulated privately to influential acquaintances asking for support. From time to time a new prospectus would be printed, each time with a longer list of the names
of supporters, but in August of 1864 Cole was not happy with the progress they had made. He wrote to Grey "I have come to the conclusion that the only way to get the Memorial Hall done is to do it!.... I don't intend to be beaten in this matter and I intend to have the thing so advanced that please God and the Queen, the first stone may be laid with that of the personal memorial" (Windsor Archives; XX, 34). Grey was able to offer very powerful support to Cole's determination, telling him that he might use the fact of the Queen's interest to encourage others, as long as it wasn't done "ostentatiously or officially". Grey informed Cole that "should any surplus remain after the completion of the personal monument it is her wish that it should be appropriated to the Hall" (Cole Miscellanies, 1864; XIII, 216).

The draft prospectus for the "Albert Hall of Arts and Sciences Applied to Industry" printed on 25th January 1865 lists the Prince of Wales as President, General Grey as one of the three Treasurers, and lists approximately seventy Vice Presidents, including Lord Derby, the man both Cole and Grey had determined to have on their side, and, of course, not a few members of the Cole circle (Cole Miscellanies; XIII; 156). Interested persons were no longer being asked only for their names, but now they were asked for "investment in sittings". The purchase of the seats and boxes for the permanent use of the owners and their heirs was a device whereby a large proportion of the building costs could be obtained from the public. The idea did achieve what Colonel Sir Charles Phipps (Secretary to the Prince of Wales) had thought impossible, the building of an enormous hall "at no great expense" to its promoters.

On 29th of January 1865 a meeting was held at Osborne to discuss the Albert Hall project. The Prince of Wales, with his secretary Phipps and General Grey, met with Cole and Richard Redgrave who "attended by command of His Royal Highness". Cole presented the Prince with the
evidence of his seventy supporters in the form of the 25th January prospectus, and with the building plans, which at this stage consisted of the hall as designed by Francis Fowke, with an "entrance building to the hall" designed by Gilbert Scott. Fowke had prepared a model of the hall, which was also presented to the Prince. The Prince of Wales expressed a wish to see the scheme go ahead, but he asked to have details of the property rights of the sittings and estimates of the building costs, and he announced his intention to consult with a few of the Vice President's before committing himself to summoning a full meeting of the interested persons (Cole Miscellanies; XIII, 247).

A letter from Grey to Cole, dated 29th May 1865, illustrates the optimism which he and Cole now felt:

Everything looks well. Who would have thought when last year I forwarded your first prospectus and suggested to Lord Derby that the Commission should name a committee to consider the subject — and we met with such a cold shoulder — that now the Commission should in its main proposals entirely adopt your proposal and express their readiness not only to use a site, valued at £60,000, but to subscribe £50,000 towards its accomplishment. All now depends upon the Societies (Cole Correspondence; Box I).

However, the young Prince's enthusiasm for the memorial hall was not as strong as that of Cole and Grey. The expected meeting of interested parties was not called and correspondence in the Windsor Archives demonstrates the anxiety among the more eager supporters. Cole wrote to Grey in June 1865, following a meeting with Bruce (Vice President of the Committee in Council on Education), Thring (Commissioner for 1851), Bowring (Secretary to the Commissioners for 1851) and Scott (Royal Engineer seconded to South Kensington) saying that that he feared "a year is to be lost" unless the Prince held the meeting before he left London for the summer (Windsor Archives; XXI, 8). Bowring wrote to Grey
expressing very similar sentiments (Windsor Archives; XXI, 9) and Lord Derby wrote directly to the Prince, expressing the same fears rather more tactfully (Windsor Archives; XXI, 10).

The Prince responded favourably and a meeting was arranged for 6th July 1865. A provisional committee of twelve was nominated at the meeting to put the plans into action. The twelve were: the Prince of Wales, the Duke of Edinburgh, Lord Derby, Lord Granville, General Grey, Robert Lowe, MP, H A Bruce, MP, Thomas Baring, MP, Edgar Bowring, Henry Cole, John Fowler and Henry Thring; Colonel Henry Scott was Secretary. Cole's faction were very present, but did not have the degree of control which Cole might have liked. The Prince of Wales, chairman of the new committee, seems not to have had enormous enthusiasm for the scheme. Grey "with some difficulty got him to consent to summon a meeting" of the provisional committee for 13th July (Windsor Archives; XXI, 17).

Robert Lowe, one of the members of the committee who did not like Cole or his schemes, tried to argue for a smaller hall which the Commissioners could build from their own funds. Lowe wanted a hall which would be less "popular" and more "cultural" and which would therefore be more in keeping with the responsibilities of the Commissioners (Survey, 1975; 181), but Cole won the day. This was partly because in order to raise the building costs for a smaller hall the Commission would have to sell some of its property, whereas for the larger hall the Albert Hall Committee could provide a substantial contribution through the sale of sittings, obviating the need for the Commissioners to realise assets. The Commissioners' President, Lord Derby, was not enthusiastic about Cole's scheme but was persuaded, largely because Grey was able to indicate the Queen's support, that Cole's plans were preferable. Once Derby had succumbed he carried with him the Finance Committee of the Commissioners. They agreed to vote
£50,000 to the hall, conditional on the public providing the balance up to a maximum total cost of £200,000 (Windsor Archives; XX, 105).

Now that Cole's scheme was accepted it was Cole's vision for the hall which was developed. Fowke began to re-work his own plans for the interior, and to consider what the external form should be, but he didn't finish the drawings because he became ill and in December of 1865 he died. The building now being promoted was without the entrance building by Gilbert Scott and the rectangle of surrounding offices which had formed part of the earlier plan. Cole's builder friend, John Kelk, who had been consulted by Cole with reference to this project from its early beginnings in 1857, was opposed to the entrance building though perhaps for different reasons than Cole's (Survey, 1975; 181). Cole dropped Gilbert Scott's name from the prospectus in February of 1865.

Cole was anxious to keep control of the design of the building on Fowke's death and proposed that Colonel Henry Scott (who worked for Cole at South Kensington) should take over and complete Fowke's design. It seems that Gilbert Scott did not have the support of the committee because, although Gilbert Scott had been the professional architect chosen by the Commissioners to erect the memorial hall, it was the Royal Engineer Henry Scott who was appointed to complete the design. Cole discussed the project with Colonel Scott (Cole Diary; 7th December 1865) and in January of 1866 put him in charge of the Department of Science and Art's drawing office, where development of the plans for the hall continued. Others of the committee thought that an eminent architect (but apparently not Gilbert Scott) should be brought in to complete the design, if only to keep the public's confidence. Cole must have recognised the validity of this argument because he then suggested that either a competition be held or that Professor Semper, the man who had been suggested so long ago by the Prince himself and who had worked
briefly for Cole at the Department, be asked to take over the project (Cole Diary; 30th December 1865). Grey supported the Semper option (Windsor Archives; XXI, 45), but Lord Derby was reluctant to employ a foreigner (Windsor Archives; XXI, 49) and eventually the status quo was accepted and Henry Scott and the Department of Science and Art team allowed to continue with their designs.

In the summer of 1866 a committee of advice was appointed to assist Henry Scott (Builder, 1866; 26th July, 550). The committee, which was to provide professional architectural input to the project, consisted of six members, three of whom were well known to Cole. Two of the members were members of the "South Kensington Mafia". Richard Redgrave had been working closely with Cole for twenty five years at the Department of Science and Art. The architect Matthew Digby Wyatt was also a longstanding and strong supporter of Cole and had been one of those architects who had produced designs for the memorial hall for Lord Derby's committee of 1862. It is interesting in this context to note that Wyatt's biographer refers to his work as being in the "South Kensington style"; such a man would surely be in sympathy with the work of the South Kensington atelier (Robinson, 1979; 251). The other members of the committee were the engineers John Hawkshaw and John Fowler, James Fergusson, an architectural writer, and William Tite, the architect who had suggested to Cole in a letter dated 17th April 1866 that a committee of advice would be useful (Cole Correspondence; Box II).

By this time the design for the hall, now once again modelled on the amphitheatres which Cole admired, included the frieze which has become perhaps its most famous design feature. Henry Scott records that it was at Cole's suggestion that the frieze was incorporated in the design (RIBA sessional papers, 1872; 92). Cole had a longstanding interest in
decorative art; he had intended to complete the 1862 buildings by adding external decoration. The new hall raised the possibility that both professional artists and the students at the Department could work together to complete the work. Townroe and Gamble, both employees of the museum, produced early designs for the frieze. Later three ex-employees began a new design, being joined by four other artists, each working on one or more of the sixteen sections of the frieze (Survey, 1975; 189-190). Another museum employee, a Royal Engineer photographer, photographed and projected the original designs, so that they could be traced by students to give full-size drawings. The manufacture of the frieze was entrusted to the now well known company of the late Herbert Minton, another long-standing friend of Cole's, and the ladies of the Department of Science and Art mosaic class worked with them to create the 800 terracotta blocks of which it is composed (Department of Science and Art, 1869; 282).

The employment of the ladies of the Department in this way was not a new venture for Cole. The efforts which he made to train and to provide employment for women reflect both his utilitarian attitudes and the experience of his own family. Cole's wife had been employed as a governess, one of the few "acceptable" occupations open to middle class women. Now the Coles had five daughters, and Cole cared very much that they should have opportunities to make productive use of their talents. Cole was much influenced, as we have seen, by his early contact with the utilitarians and with John Stuart Mill. Cole and Mill both recognised the disadvantages under which women suffered. At the same time that Mill was writing his book on the subject (Mill, 1869), Cole was attempting to put Mill's ideals into practice. He had been doing so, in an uncharacteristically quiet manner, during the whole of his career in the Department of Science and Art. By accepting female students, albeit largely in the acceptable areas of teaching, music and art, and by
employing women to teach in the female schools and as "colourists", Cole contributed to the slowly widening career opportunities for middle class women. In 1869 the Department was also allowing women to enjoy the benefits of scientific lectures, though a diary comment by Cole suggests that these lectures were not well attended (Cole Diary; 9th November 1869).

A royal charter of incorporation for the subscribers to the hall was granted in April of 1867. The charter listed the uses to which the hall was intended to be put, including national and international congresses for science and art, musical performances, and (almost of necessity for this hall which was so much the desire of the nations foremost exhibition organiser) national and international exhibitions of industry agriculture and art. The Queen made one of her rare public appearances on 20th May 1867 when she laid the foundation stone for the hall, which was now to be called the "Royal Albert Hall of Arts and Sciences". On the 7th November 1867 "King Cole's" wife, Marion, laid the first brick (Clark, 1958; 44).

Kelk, as we have seen, was not keen to be the contractor for the hall. The Lucas brothers, who had been in partnership with Kelk in building the 1862 exhibition buildings, were awarded the contract. There were problems in getting the work started, the committee of management having very little cash in hand with which to proceed. Clark (1958; 32) quotes from a letter from Henry Scott to General Grey written in April of 1867 in which Scott asks for Grey's advice as to how to proceed. Scott was apparently considering using another firm, which might have been more accommodating of the cash flow problem. The firm under consideration was Smith and Taylor, which Scott stated to be "Kelk's firm". Smith had told Scott that he intended retiring from business shortly, and Scott thought that "he might consider it [the hall] a nice piece of work to
finish up with". Granville advised Scott to visit Charles Lucas at his home in Horsham and to resolve the matter one way or another. Scott and Lucas reached a satisfactory compromise and on 8th April 1867 General Grey was able to inform the Queen that "the difficulty with Mr Lucas has been settled". It is not clear how or who settled the matter. Scott met Kelk on the station at Horsham, and it is quite probable that it was Kelk, who had almost certainly suggested the Lucas brothers for the job, who facilitated the agreement.

Cole knew his builders well. In addition to the mutual involvement with the 1862 exhibition buildings, the Lucas brothers had, during their time working at South Kensington, been drawn into membership of the Royal Horticultural Society. Cole also knew the specialist engineering company which contracted for the iron structure for the roof, Fairbairns of Manchester, which was at this date controlled by William Fairbairn's elder son Thomas. The Fairbairns were both members of the Society of Arts and Thomas had been a Commissioner for 1851 since 1861. Thomas too had been brought into membership of the Royal Horticultural Society. With Scott and his Departmental staff under Cole's direct control, Cole once again had all of the participating organisations within his sphere of influence. The building of the Albert Hall was kept very much "within the South Kensington family".

Lord Derby had had fears for the success of the hall. He believed that it was "inconveniently large for the meetings of really scientific societies" (Royal Archives F28/74, quoted in the Survey, 1975; 182). Since financial success, according to the prospectus laid down for the hall, was dependent upon the various societies making use of the facilities on offer, Derby was right to be concerned that the facilities being constructed would meet their needs. In 1864 Derby had written to Lord Granville, making his fears quite clear:
It appears to me, I confess, an entirely visionary scheme; and I, at least, have no evidence of any desire on the part of any of the Societies, to avail themselves of any of the facilities as might be offered to them at South Kensington (quoted by Clark, 1958; 17).

By the time the contractors were beginning to work on the structure of the hall there were still no interested societies. This is hardly surprising, since the late Prince Consort had failed to persuade them of the attractions of the site when he had been enthusiastic to attract scientific societies to the Commissioners' estate in the early 1850s. How much less attractive the estate must have seemed in the late 1860s, when the independent societies had reason to fear that they would be swallowed up by Cole and his Department.

The Queen, however, was hoping to see the hall used as her late husband might have wished. At the official opening of the hall on the 29th March 1871 the Queen said that she hoped that by her presence she was:

...promoting the accomplishment of his great designs to whose memory the gratitude and affection of the country is now rearing a noble monument, which I trust may yet look down on such a centre of institutions for the promotion of art and science as it was his fond hope to establish here (quoted by Clark, 1958; 38).

The Queen was overwhelmed with emotion at the opening ceremony, and so was Cole. In her Journal, the Queen recorded "Good Mr. Cole was quite crying with emotion and delight" (quoted in Survey, 1975; 191). He had every right to be delighted. Apart from General Grey, no-one had shared his desire to see a great hall built at South Kensington, yet despite them all Cole had won through and his great amphitheatre had been constructed. Ronald Clark, in his history of the Albert Hall, makes the following statement:

The Victorian virtues of tenacity and enthusiasm had at last
triumphed over the vice of apathy. Albert had at last got his Hall. There now remained the more difficult problem of filling it (Clark, 1958; 58).

Clark was wrong to say that Albert had his Hall; it had been named the Albert Hall, but it was most certainly Henry Cole's. Cole recorded in his diary "R A Hall opened with success. It had been my aim since 1858". Clark was right, however, in identifying the filling of the hall as a major problem. Due to Cole's fund raising scheme of selling "sittings", or permanent rights to seats and boxes within the hall, promoters of functions were able to sell only the remainder of the seats. This continues to be a difficulty for the managers of the Albert Hall.

The executive committee for the Albert Hall had considerable difficulty in attracting other users. The Royal Academy of Music, which the late Prince Albert had hoped to attract to South Kensington, was offered accommodation within the hall, which it rejected. Later, when Cole, through the Society of Arts, founded the National Training School for Music, it resided not in the hall but in a neighbouring building designed by Cole's Royal Engineer son, Harry. Not even "Cole's" Society of Arts had any real interest in making Kensington their home. They assented, as the hall neared completion, to the holding of a short series of concerts to be organised by the Society's musical committee (Cole Diary; 21st November 1870), the first of which was held on the 12th April 1871.

On the 1st May 1871 the first of a series of annual international exhibitions in the Albert Hall was opened, and by means of these exhibitions the problem of finding sufficient hirers of the hall was alleviated. Though the societies had been reluctant to become connected with the hall, the public liked it. On the whole the press comment on
the hall was positive, and during 1872 44,000 people paid sixpence each to visit the hall (Survey, 1975; 194). The financial situation of the Hall, however, remained difficult and in 1876 the Commissioners brought before Parliament a bill which would allow the Corporation of the Albert Hall to charge seat holders an annual fee to cover the cost of maintenance and staffing (Windsor Archives; Minutes, 4th April 1876, Appendix B). Whilst this change was being arranged the manager of the Hall (Wentworth L. Cole, not one of Cole's sons but almost certainly a relative) was compelled to write a desperate letter to the Commissioners requesting help in meeting outstanding debts of £4000 still owing to the builders (Windsor Archives; Minutes, 24th May 1876, 6).

Despite all of its difficulties the Albert Hall has survived to become a well-loved landmark in London, used for a wide variety of purposes and hired by individuals and small societies as well as by promoters of commercial events. It is no longer known by its full name - the Royal Albert Hall for Arts and Sciences; the scientific societies have not found the hall suitable for their purposes. The art of music is regularly practised at the hall, the acoustic difficulties of the structure having been overcome, but the visual arts are rarely seen within its walls. Cole would probably not have been disappointed to see the current range of uses for the hall. His early aim had been for a hall for use by massed choirs; this he achieved.

To Cole the building of the hall was important, but it was important as part of an overall plan. Cole wanted the estate at South Kensington to be a complete cultural experience, and one which was available to people of all classes. With the completion of the Albert Hall there were, on the same site, the schools of art and science and the museums which provided a wealth of source material for the teaching in Cole's Department. The Horticultural Gardens provided an attractive setting.
and very often an exhibition or two would be in progress at the museum or in the arcades around the gardens. The Great Hall for which he had fought long and hard provided a structure within which events on a grand scale could take place. The two main types of event which Cole wanted to facilitate were the Great Exhibitions with which he had become so closely involved and musical events - simply because he loved them.

Having achieved his hall Cole worked with characteristic energy to promote an ambitious series of annual exhibitions of art and manufactures to be held each summer in the hall and in surrounding ancillary buildings. These exhibitions are the subject of the following chapter.

4. Cole also believed in education for music; his creation of the Royal School of Music is briefly described in Chapter 12; see also Young's biography of the first Director of the school, George Grove.
References. Chapter 10


Cole, H. *Correspondence*, National Art Library, Cole Collection, 55.BB.1-


[Windsor Archives] Archives of the Royal Commission for the Exhibition of 1851, currently located with the Imperial College archives.

Chapter 11. The Exhibitions of 1871 to 1874

Cole made use of the exhibition of 1862 as a means of furthering his plans for development of the site belonging to the Commissioners for the Exhibition of 1862. He continued to promote the development of the site, in parallel with his utilitarian programme and his steady building up of the institutions which comprised the Department of Science and Art. When in 1867, he began to promote further exhibitions at South Kensington, it was again as part of his scheme for "completion" of the site. The history of the series of exhibitions which began in 1871 is closely bound up with that of the Albert Hall and of the Horticultural Gardens, since the Hall and the Gardens were to be the setting for the exhibition series, which was intended to be annual and perpetual.

In October of 1867, following the Paris Exhibition of that year, Cole, on behalf of the British Commission to the Paris Exhibition, together with the Commissioners to that exhibition from Austria, Prussia, Italy and the United States, published a memorandum on Future International Exhibitions (Cole Miscellanies; XIV, 342-345). The memorandum was intended to provide guidelines which would facilitate cooperation between the national representatives responsible for exhibition management. The signatories wished to discourage the increasing size of exhibitions (probably for reasons of finance), to bring some order into the scheduling of exhibitions in various countries, and to outline the general rules under which the exhibitions would be run.

The following three Great Exhibitions took place in three different continents, perhaps indicating that the agreement had some small success. The next exhibition in Europe was in Vienna in 1873; South America had its first Great Exhibition in 1875 and the second Great Exhibition in the United States was held twenty years after the first,
in 1876. Cole, however, rather than seeking to include another British exhibition in this sequence of international events, applied the idea of much smaller, specialist exhibitions as the means of furthering his plans for the South Kensington estate. It is testimony to Cole's primacy in these matters that since Cole chose not to promote another Great Exhibition for Britain there was no such exhibition again in Cole's lifetime.

On 12th September 1867, i.e. before the publication of the Paris memorandum, Cole, already turning his mind from international cooperation to the priorities for South Kensington, produced another memorandum referring to "select international exhibitions in London" (Cole Miscellanies; XIV, 304, 305, 307). Cole provides no explanation for this change of tack. Rather than hold another in the decennial series of London Great Exhibitions, Cole proposed smaller, annual exhibitions which over a period of ten years would cover the whole range of exhibition classes by now expected at a Great exhibition. To Cole the only logical site for these exhibitions would be South Kensington. He produced a series of memoranda, developing the idea, but it was not until he was back in London in January of 1868 that he began, in his usual manner, to seek support from those who might have an interest.

On 27th January 1868 Cole confided to Colonel Henry Scott RE, the engineer/architect to the Department of Science and Art, his belief that the Horticultural Gardens could be completed (to Cole's rather than the Horticultural Society's satisfaction) by means of organising further exhibitions on that site (Cole Diary; 27th January 1868). That Cole should mention this scheme to Scott before other influential friends is not surprising. Scott would have to be involved in his capacity as Secretary to the Royal Horticultural Society, and Cole would wish him to be involved as the South Kensington architect who was responsible for
the design of the Royal Albert Hall for Arts and Sciences, which was under construction. The royal charter for the new hall allowed for its use as a venue for national and international exhibitions; Cole could expect the Executive committee for the hall to support his proposals.

Two weeks later, when Cole attended the Annual Meeting of the Royal Horticultural Society, he took the opportunity to sound out his friend General Grey on the subject. Grey, who was being very cooperative in the Albert Hall project, would be able to give not only his own opinion on the viability of the scheme, but also to indicate the likely attitude of the Queen to such an undertaking. Grey was supportive of Cole's plans to use the gardens and the Royal Albert Hall for a series of annual exhibitions which would begin in 1871 (Cole Diary; 11th February 1868). With Grey's support, Cole felt able to proceed with the printing of a new draft memorandum outlining the scheme. First printed on the 20th February 1868, and going into many later versions, the memorandum, headed "Annual Series of Exhibitions of Arts and Sciences in London" proposed the exhibition of objects of "novelty, invention or special excellence" which would be drawn each year from particular industries. The site at South Kensington was proposed, and the cooperation of the Executive Committee of the Royal Albert Hall, the Commissioners for 1851, the Society of Arts, and the Royal Horticultural Society was sought (Cole Miscellanies; XIV, 145). Cole was an "insider" in all of these organisations, and would be able to influence the response to his suggestion, either directly or through his friends and associates.

Cole used this draft memorandum to inform his influential friends and acquaintances of the scheme, and invited them to become signatories of the memorandum. Yet again Cole used the collection of names in order to obtain and demonstrate support. One of the first signatories was the Home Secretary, the Rt Hon H A Bruce, who was both a member of the
Executive Committee of the Royal Albert Hall and a Commissioner for the Exhibition of 1851. Bruce had been Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education from 1864 to 1866, and then a Commissioner for the Paris Exhibition in 1867. Now, as Home Secretary, he was known by Cole to be supportive of South Kensington and of exhibitions. If the Home Secretary could be cited as having given his support this would almost certainly encourage others. Cole called on Bruce on Sunday 23rd February 1868, primarily to discuss with him Joseph Whitworth's endowment for technical education. He told him of the proposed exhibitions, and, on a second approach on 19th March Bruce agreed to the publication of his name in association with the scheme (Cole Diary).

Another possible ally, this time one who might be expected to exhibit, was Michael Hollins, a manufacturer from the Staffordshire potteries and nephew of Cole's friend Herbert Minton. Cole had hoped to see Hollins when he visited the Majolica works at Stoke on the 4th March (almost certainly in connection with work on the frieze for the Albert Hall) but found him absent. The desire for a meeting must have been mutual because on the 5th Hollins came to visit Cole at the Museum (Cole Diary). Hollins too agreed to add his name to the memorandum.

Henry Thring, another member of the Executive Committee for the Albert Hall, was the next to be approached. He was subjected to Cole's sales talk whilst walking in the Horticultural Society Gardens on the 8th March. Cole, who walked in the gardens almost every day and who therefore probably met Thring by accident, records that Thring "seemed to like" the idea, and that he called Cole "the arbiter of the land here" (Cole Diary). Thring assented to the adding of his name to the memorandum.

1. Cole was assisting Whitworth in outlining his scheme for scholarships for presentation to Disraeli (Cole, H., 1884, v1, 351-2).
Sunday 29th March saw Cole's approach to Lord Granville, who had in the past been a powerful ally both in his political role and as one of the most active of the Commissioners for 1851. Granville "wd aid completion of Hort Gardens & International Exhibitions" (Cole Diary). It seems that to Granville Cole was prepared to admit the dual purpose of the proposed exhibitions - they were to replace the decennial "Great" exhibitions with smaller, more manageable and focused exhibitions, but they would also provide income to the Horticultural Society, improving the possibility that they would make their gardens a financial success.

On 30th March 1868 Cole's memorandum was reprinted with the signatures of the scheme's supporters. Granville was now at the head of the list, followed by Bruce, Cole (described as Vice President of the Royal Horticultural Society and of the Society of Arts), Bowring (Secretary to the Commissioners for 1851), Michael D Hollins (Chairman of the Potteries Chamber of Commerce), Charles Lawson (Late Lord Provost of Edinburgh), Henry Thring and Joseph Whitworth (Late President Society of Mechanical Engineers). With the possible exception of Lawson all of these men had been in recent close contact with Cole in relation to one or more of the organisations on the South Kensington site.

It is worthy of note that Cole now puts the Royal Horticultural Society ahead of the Society of Arts in declaring his own interests, and that he fails to mention his Department or the Albert Hall, for which he was also soliciting support. Indeed on the 2nd April 1868, when Scott spoke with the Queen when she paid an official visit to the gardens, he told her that Cole was "asleep and awake always thinking of the completion of the gardens" (Cole Diary). Perhaps this was what the Queen wished to hear; certainly Cole was also thinking about the Albert Hall, the coming series of exhibitions and the planned developments within the Department of Science and Art, the Museum and the art and science schools.
The Society of Arts had been the body through which Cole had initiated the exhibitions of 1851 and 1862. In both cases the success of the exhibition failed to provide any material benefit to the Society; in 1851 no part of the profits reverted to the Society, in 1862 the building, which the Society hoped to use after the exhibition, was demolished. The Society of Arts, despite this experience, maintained an interest in exhibitions as a means of promoting "arts, manufactures and commerce", and were later to become involved in the 1871 exhibition in relation to their role in education and examinations. However, Cole no longer needed the influence of the Society of Arts to achieve his ambitions; his power base had changed. He had considerable influence over the various bodies concerned with the South Kensington estate and had no need to involve the Society of Arts which had no formal connections with the estate.

On that same evening of 30th March Cole began to work on the financial management of the scheme, making his estimates of the costs involved (Cole Diary). Lord Granville had not been keen on the idea of a guarantee fund, perhaps because of the experiences of using that method of finance for the exhibition of 1862, when it very nearly became necessary to call on the guarantors. Further thought on the matter brought Cole to an alternative strategy, which he put to Grey when he escorted the Queen on a visit to the South Kensington Museum. Cole suggested to Grey that the Commissioners for 1851 could raise the required monies "by mortgage". The investment in the land at South Kensington had proved to be a very sound one financially as well as socially and the property which they held would easily raise the necessary funds. Grey was willing to support this plan, and the following evening found Cole studying in detail the financial position of the Royal Commission for the Exhibition of 1851 (Cole Diary; 1st April 1868). Thring was also supportive of the idea of direct financing.
by the Commissioners, but warned Cole that the Secretary to the Commissioners, Bowring, "looked to the price of piss-pots [and] was the impediment to action" (Cole Diary; 6th April 1868).

As had been Cole's practice in the past, he lost no time in discussing the buildings required for the exhibitions with the man who was at this time "his" architect, the Royal Engineer Colonel Henry Scott. Cole's diary records that on 20th April they discussed "glass buildings for exhibitions". Scott, with the support of other staff at the South Kensington Museum, went on to work out detailed plans for the required buildings. In the event it was decided that glass was not suitable, and a series of small buildings were to be erected to supplement the space which would be available in the Albert Hall.

June and July of 1868 saw more formal presentation by Cole of his scheme to the Executive Committee of the Albert Hall and the Commissioners for 1851. The committee for the Albert Hall, at their meeting on 15th July (Cole's 60th birthday), discussed the scheme for two hours, after which Cole "handed a Resolution affirming International Exhibitions to Bruce, who moved it & Ld Granville seconded it" (Cole Diary). The prospectus for the Albert Hall (which had of course also been drawn up by Cole) had included its use for exhibitions. The Executive Committee for the Albert Hall had not had a great deal of success in attracting learned societies to make use of the hall; they could hardly have done other than approve Cole's proposal which would utilise the hall for a good part of each year.

The Committee for the Albert Hall, having agreed in principle to the use of the hall for the exhibition series, wrote to the Commissioners for 1851, formally proposing the scheme to them. The Commissioners, after discussion, expressed the conviction that the scheme for the
establishment of annual international exhibitions would "confer important benefits upon the Manufacturing and Commercial interests of the country" and was therefore in accord with the objects of the Commission (Windsor Archives; XXII, 17, paragraph 13). To use Cole's own words, with the exception of Granville and Bruce who came to the meeting as proposers of the scheme, the Commissioners were "not hearty" (Cole Diary; 18th July 1868). Lord Overstone was totally opposed, despite the fact that Cole and Granville had had a pre-meeting on the previous day to discuss arguments which they could use to persuade him. They had expected his opposition, and he did not disappoint them. However, Cole's friends were sufficiently persuasive and the Commission gave their rather reluctant agreement.

From August to December of 1868 Cole spent his time firstly with his family on holiday at Darley Dale (on the Whitworth estate there), and then on a tour in Italy. He returned to London on Monday 14th December, and the following day General Grey came to see him and "wished to go to work with International Scheme at once" (Cole Diary; 15th December 1868). Grey was evidently keen for Cole to resume his championship of the exhibitions, for it seems that in Cole's absence very little had been done. Colonel Scott and Cole spent time on 29th December preparing estimates (Cole Diary), and on the 31st December they travelled together to Osborne, where, in the evening, they "discussed [with Grey] the plan of finding capital for International Exhibitions by debentures", in anticipation of a meeting the following day with Lord Granville (Cole Diary).

Cole's link with the building contractor John Kelk was still strong in 1869 with Kelk's involvement as an advisor to Cole in the Albert Hall project. General Grey too held Kelk in high esteem, and it was he who suggested to Cole that Kelk should be asked to be the contractor for the
additional buildings which would be needed for the exhibition in 1871 (Cole Diary; 5th March 1869). This discussion of the erection of buildings was in anticipation of what Cole still had not got - a statement of practical, financial support from the Commissioners. This was not an unusual situation in the development of South Kensington. If Cole believed a project was worth pursuing, he would do so and would use whatever means came to hand to finance it.

Henry Scott saw Lord Derby (President of the Commission) on 9th March to seek his approval for the latest plans for the exhibitions (Cole Diary), but at the formal meeting of the Commissioners on 17th March there was strong feeling against the idea of finance by debentures. Thring complained that the Commissioners were "trustees not traders" and Lord Overstone "disapproved of everything done" (Cole Diary). However, Cole and his colleagues had succeeded in convincing Lord Derby that the Commissioners should directly finance the exhibitions, and he gave his support to Granville when he proposed that "if £15,000 could be secured by Spearman" (one of the Commissioners, asked to raise money on security of the Commissioners property), then the Commissioners would give their formal support to the scheme.

All seemed to be progressing well, but it was at this time that General Grey found himself at odds with Cole over another of Cole's reforming schemes. Cole was involving himself in "agitation" in support of army reform. He had written three articles to the Times, under a pseudonym, in 1868 (Cole, 1884; 385) and on the 17th February 1869 he gave a lecture at the Society of Arts entitled "On the efficiency and economy of a national army, in connection with the industry and education of the people" (JSA, 1969; v17, 206-214). The lecture criticised the army for the fact that it employed the least educated citizens "hiring for the most part the outcasts and roughs of the people", and costing the
country a great deal more than Cole thought was necessary. Cole proposed that schoolchildren should be taught "drill", labourers should be encouraged to become "volunteers" (equivalent to the modern Territorial Army) and civil servants should be required to train as soldiers so that they could be called upon when necessary to support a relatively small core of professional soldiers.

This, Cole stated, would release seven million pounds of public money. This money, redistributed, would be sufficient to pay for a national educational system. Yet again Cole's motivation was complex, but still recognisably utilitarian; he wished to see the reform of the army, encouragement of the populace to contribute to the needs of the nation and improvements in educational opportunities:

It would provide [for] scientific and technical instruction, through colleges, schools and museums, throughout the United Kingdom, wherever the wants of the country required them.

It would also allow other reforms which Cole believed to be necessary:

It would establish complete electric telegraphs between the United Kingdom and the whole of our colonies and dependencies. It would enable us to abolish all taxes on locomotion. It would reduce the postage to all colonies and dependencies. It would relieve, if not abolish, many taxes on production, and help to give the people a free breakfast table. It would help in abolishing pauperism.

Cole ended his lecture in a style which indicates that this senior civil servant had lost none of his early reforming zeal:

It may be a fight against narrow, short-sighted prejudices, to last as long as those against Catholic Emancipation, the Test and Corporation Acts, Parliamentary Reform, Municipal Reform, Railways, Corn Laws and Free Trade. But these beneficial changes have become the creed of all men in my time, and I trust to live to see the honour of the country placed in the custody of a national army.
Cole's lecture, which linked the proposed reform of the army into the general pattern of reform which had been envisaged so many years previously by Cole and his philosophical radical friends, met with some spirited counter-attacks and the discussion following the lecture was continued in two subsequent sessions. It was the philosophical radical Edwin Chadwick, friend of Cole's since the 1820s, who was the first to rise to support Cole in the second session of discussion (JSA, 1869; v17, 224-226). Sir Charles Trevelyan, at the end of the discussions, though aware that the Society was being ridiculed as being "King Cole's Parliament", nevertheless was "proud of having taken part" in what he considered to have been an important debate (JSA, 1869; v17, 261).

General Grey, probably offended that Cole should attack the army of which he was part and aware that the proposals would be unpopular in a thoroughly imperialistic and militaristic Britain, warned Cole that he would damage his reputation by becoming involved in the debate over army reform. In a letter dated 21st March 1869 Grey told Cole:

I have reason to know that mischief has already been done by taking up this army question. Many who were inclined to support your proposals begin to doubt the judgement which can lend itself to such agitation [sic]. . . . . . . . . . . . . Stick to the Museum, the Estate and International Exhibitions. Leave the army alone and you will achieve a success that will immortalize your name with the development of science and art in this country (Cole Correspondence, Box II).

Cole, recognising the importance of Grey's support, found it politic to discontinue for the time being public campaigning for army reform and to concentrate his efforts where General Grey suggested, in his work to promote the South Kensington Museum, the Commissioners' estate and exhibitions.
During the succeeding weeks the financing of the first exhibition was discussed among Cole and his close allies. On the 29th April Cole wrote to General Grey suggesting that Prince Christian (husband of Victoria's daughter, the Princess Helena) should personally finance the exhibition to the tune of £75,000 (Cole Diary); not surprisingly, this idea was not taken up. On the 4th of May Grey delivered to Cole a statement of the Commissioners' financial situation (Cole Diary) and on the 13th of May Lord Granville agreed that the Commissioners were in a position to borrow £100,000 (Cole Diary). Thus between the Commissioners' meeting on 17th March and the mid May the sum of money estimated to be necessary to support the exhibitions had risen from £15,000 to £100,000. Lord Granville's support was vital if the Commissioners were to be persuaded to take the risk.

Cole continued to gather opinions and support for the exhibitions. A dinner was arranged at the home of Thomas Fairbairn (another old ally, currently working with Cole as a member of the Executive Committee for the Albert Hall) "to discuss international exhibitions". Fairbairn's guests were Cole, Scott, Richard Redgrave, Matthew Digby Wyatt and the Duke of Buckingham (another probable supporter from among the Commissioners, and one who could provide a connection to the group of railway owners who might be persuaded to offer excursions or cheap travel to the exhibitions) (Cole Diary; 3rd June 1869).

On the 8th July 1869 four new Commissioners for 1851 were appointed, "for the purpose of assisting the scheme" (according to the Special Report published at the end of the exhibition series). They were Bowring (until this time Secretary to the Commissioners), Sandford, Lyon Playfair and General Grey, all of whom were "acquainted with the two former exhibitions" (Commissioners for the Exhibition of 1851, 1876; xiii). These four were, of course, also well acquainted with Cole.
Lyon Playfair, who still retained an interest in South Kensington, was back in London having given up his Edinburgh chair of chemistry in order to become a Liberal MP in 1868.

The 145th meeting of the Finance Committee of the Commissioners for the Exhibition of 1851 met on the 23rd July 1869 and agreed to set up a General Purposes Committee to manage the programme of annual international exhibitions at South Kensington. Cole recorded in his diary "I on it - to do the work and have a bonus if Exhibition succeeded". A list of Commissioners and officers appointed by the commission for the exhibitions for 1871-4 are given in the Special Report drawn up by Cole (Commissioners for the Exhibition of 1851, 1876, Appendix II). Among the sixteen Commissioners were Cole, Granville, Playfair, Bruce, Thring, Forster, Sandford and Ponsonby.

Between the setting up of the new committee and its first meeting Cole began to negotiate with the Royal Horticultural Society to allow visitors to the exhibitions to make use of the gardens. When the General Purposes Committee met for the first time on Friday 4th August 1869 they were told that an agreement had been achieved with the Royal Horticultural Society for access to the gardens and that in return their members would wish to have special terms for admission to the exhibitions (Cole Diary; 31st July and 3rd August 1869).

Those present at the first meeting of the General Purposes Committee were Lord Derby (in the chair), Cole, Thring, Gibson, Bowring and Sir Francis Sandford, with Colonel Henry Scott as Secretary. The committee included the new members of the Commission, and was very much under the influence of Cole. The business of this first meeting was not substantial. A clerk was appointed, drafts of letters to the Indian and Colonial Offices (who would be required to assist with the acquisition
of exhibits from British territory abroad) were approved, and it was agreed that the Postmaster General should be requested to allow exhibition correspondence to be treated as "OHMS", i.e. as though it were official government correspondence and therefore carried free of charge. Some discussion was entered into as to which Princes might be approached to be Presidents of the various classes of the first exhibition. Meanwhile Cole was getting on with the "real work".

Cole's diary records many meetings held and decisions made. On 15th August he "settled that there should be a contract for the building". On 2nd October Scott told Cole that Lucas (Kelk's ex-partner) had "pressed him to give his firm the work for the Int: Ex: without competition because the Hall (the Albert Hall) was indebted to him". The 23rd October saw Cole in Paris, seeking the aid of M. Ozenne, chief of the Ministry of Commerce, in soliciting French exhibits, and by the time of his return on the 27th Scott was able to tell him that Lucas had submitted the lowest tender for the erection of the exhibition buildings.

By the time the General Purposes Committee met for the second time on 4th November a contract for the required buildings had been drawn up. Scott, who was architect to the South Kensington museums and to the Royal Horticultural Society, as well as Secretary to the General Purposes Committee, had been pushing forward the plans for the buildings. Together with Cole he had decided that there was a requirement for a "covered communication over the upper arcades between the gallery floors of the new buildings and the conservatory of the Royal Horticultural Society". Additional buildings were to be erected close to the Albert Hall to accommodate exhibits which were unsuitable for or for which there was no space within the hall. Cole and Scott had amended the outline plans which had been approved by the Finance...
Committee of the Commissioners for 1851. They had sent out tenders. Lucas had submitted the lowest tender, and had been asked to resubmit to the amended plans. The General Purposes Committee was now asked to sanction the alterations and to accept Lucas' tender, which they did. Few Committees would have argued in these circumstances, since to do so would involve them in effort and delay and there were only 16 months left before the planned opening of the first exhibition. Cole had trod this path before and had on two previous occasions manipulated exhibition commissioners in this way.

The General Purposes Committee resolved to pay Henry Scott a commission of 3/4% on £75,000 (ie £562) for his "services in the preparation of the drawings and specification, and for superintending the erection of the buildings" (Windsor Archives; Minutes of the General Purposes Committee, 4th November 1869). Cole had suggested £1000 plus expenses as a suitable fee (Cole Diary; 2nd November 1869), and had firm views about the basis upon which architects should be paid, believing that the payment of commission did nothing to encourage the architect to minimize the cost of his buildings (Cole Miscellanies; XVI, 6). On 11th December 1869 Cole travelled to Windsor "to stay with General Grey and talk over the Kensington plans" (Cole Diary). The third meeting of the General Purposes Committee was held on 13th December, and the minutes of that meeting indicate how far the Commissioners for 1851 and the General Purposes Committee were dependent upon Cole and his staff in the planning and organisation of the 1871 exhibition and the extent to which Cole was required to attend to the details. During that meeting:

Mr Cole ... explained that during the time the Exhibition was open to the public it would be desirable to make use of the whole or part of the Royal Albert Hall for various purposes.....

Cole had intended from his earliest plans for the exhibitions that the
Albert Hall should be the venue, yet it was not until the third meeting of the body which had responsibility that Cole informed them of this fact! Having been formally informed of the need to make use of the Albert Hall, the General Purposes Committee decided to write to the Executive Committee for the Albert Hall to request that it be made available for the purposes of the exhibitions. It was eighteen months since the Executive Committee for the Albert Hall had written to the Commissioners to ask for their support, now it seems the Commissioners felt it necessary to confirm the continuing support of the Hall Executive. The two committees shared a number of members - General Grey, Bowring, Thring and of course Cole. Colonel Henry Scott was Secretary to both committees. The "South Kensington Mafia" would certainly influence the reply.

Cole had wanted his Great Hall to have a musical function. Now he was to be put in charge of communications with a musical impresario who might manage a suitably impressive programme for the formal opening of the exhibition in 1871:

It was resolved that Mr Cole should communicate with Mr Michael Costa in reference to the musical arrangements for the opening of the exhibition on 1st May 1871, and request him to inform the committee of the estimated cost of them, including a composition for the occasion.

A letter from the Society of Arts was read, suggesting that they organise the educational exhibition which was planned as part of the exhibition for 1871. The Society had been setting examinations in a wide range of subjects since 1856, three years before the examination system of the Department of Science and Art came into existence. Their system had been successful, and in recent years had shifted in emphasis to technological subjects, but by 1869 the Society had begun to question
the wisdom of duplicating the efforts of other bodies and in 1870 the subjects which were included in the Department of Science and Art system were removed from the Society's list (Hudson and Luckhurst, 1954; 244-254). With the overlap in membership of the Society with the Commissioners and the Albert Hall committee, the Society of Arts was well informed as to the intentions for the exhibition series. The Society was interested in promoting teaching materials and methods and had held a very successful educational exhibition in 1854. They were now willing and able to repeat the exercise as part of the new series of exhibitions. The General Purposes Committee was happy to allow the Society of Arts to manage this part of the exhibition, and to give them the responsibility for its announcement. No doubt Cole, as a member of the Council of the Society, had encouraged the Society's offer to manage an educational exhibition.

For some reason, Cole seems not to have wished to involve the Department of Science and Art too closely in the educational exhibition; its involvement was only as an exhibitor. A committee of the Society of Arts was set up to organise the exhibition, and at a meeting at the Society of Arts on 4th April 1870, chaired by the Prince of Wales, recent correspondence between the Society and the Commissioners was read. The Council of the Society expressed approval of the purposes of the annual exhibitions, and pledged itself to give "hearty cooperation" (RSA; Minutes of Council; 4th April 1870). Ten days later the committee formed for the purpose of organising the educational exhibition divided itself into subcommittees, Cole suggesting, at their meeting on the 15th June, the persons to be asked to chair the subcommittees. At the third meeting of the General Purposes Committee Cole was authorised to attend any meeting of any of the committees; in other words Cole was to have a say in all matters, even in the committees of which he was not a member.
At the fourth meeting of the General Purposes Committee on 2nd February 1870 Cole introduced yet another scheme which would contribute to the "grand plan" for the Commissioners' estate. In addition to the covered way between the exhibition buildings which had already been agreed, he suggested a "covered way connecting the Metropolitan District Railway with the exhibition buildings, the Royal Horticultural Gardens, the Royal Albert Hall and the South Kensington Museum". This idea was taken up by the Commissioners, but met with obstacles and it was not until 1885 that the tunnel which now connects the South Kensington tube station with the museums and Imperial College was completed. The tunnel, which does not reach quite as far as the Albert Hall, connected the railway to the arcades surrounding the Horticultural Society gardens. These arcades in turn linked with the covered access to the Albert Hall. Cole did not live to see the completion of this component of the "grand plan".

On 26th March 1870 Cole recorded in his diary "heard of General Grey's paralysis". Grey had been, since Prince Albert's death in December of 1861, Cole's most constant and powerful ally in the pursuit of what they both considered to be the Prince's wishes for South Kensington. They had spent much time together, both officially and unofficially, scheming to achieve both a memorial to the Prince and a national centre for the Arts and Sciences. The South Kensington estate was the primary motive for their relationship. Cole seems to have been more concerned to maintain a channel of communication with the Queen than he was for Grey's health. When he attended a General Purposes Committee meeting on 30th March, the day before Grey's death, he confided to his diary that he had identified someone else who seemed "likely to be a useful medium of communication with the Queen now Grey is disabled". There is no mention in Cole's diary that he attended Grey's funeral. There is no letter from Cole in the collection of letters of condolence to Grey's
wife in the Grey archives at Durham University. If it is the case that Cole failed to show any concern for Grey's illness and death, it gives some weight to the contemporary negative opinion of Cole, as it would seem that once Grey had ceased to be of use even the polite conventions were not met.

Cole had made outline plans for the series of ten exhibitions, each covering several of the exhibition classes which were by now commonly included in "Great" international exhibitions. The first exhibition, in addition to the educational exhibition already discussed, was to include pottery, woollen and worsted fabrics, including the raw materials and machinery used in their manufacture, a display of new inventions, which could be from any industrial sector (this class was to be included each year), as well as fine art. The definitions of the two major industries to be highlighted were very broad. Pottery included bricks, tiles, sanitary ware and the finest bone china. The woollen industry display was to include fabrics of all types and machinery as well as live sheep lent by the Zoological Society. The displays were evidently intended to cover industrial interests and not just "art applied to industry".

To ensure a sufficient number of exhibitors, the General Purposes Committee appointed Deputy Commissioners to solicit exhibits from industry. Yet again Cole made use of the talents of the Corps of Engineers. Officers were employed as Deputy Commissioners for the various classes and in the general management of the exhibition, being paid at the rate of one guinea per day (Windsor Archives; Minutes of the General Purposes Committee; 30th March 1870). Cole, in his usual manner, travelled widely and wrote articles to promote the forthcoming exhibition. The "missionary" journeys were sometimes disappointing. On his visit to the Potteries Chamber of Commerce on 4th July 1870 "besides Mintons & Hollins (the Minton factory) only Pinder, Powells & Copelands
representative [were] present" (Cole Diary). Hollins was a member of the Cole circle. The meeting passed a resolution to "assist the exhibition". Harry Cole (at this time also employed by Cole in the Department of Science and Art) stayed on in the district for a few days after his father returned to London, in the hope of recruiting other interested manufacturers, but he did not have much success. Lyon Playfair also attended a meeting with the pottery manufacturers on 12th July, to try and raise the level of interest in the exhibition. Perhaps the proposed exhibition was insufficiently commercial to attract industrial support.

In September Cole visited Broseleys tile works, and various pipe and pottery factories, as well as a very primitive wool cloth factory, again soliciting exhibits. With Joseph Whitworth, with whom he regularly stayed (and who trusted Cole sufficiently to give him control over the Whitworth scholarships for technical education), Cole visited Keighley, Ilkley and Skipton to find exhibits of thread making and weaving (Cole Diary). In November Cole, Scott and young Harry Cole visited Belgium in an attempt to stimulate overseas interest in the London exhibition. The King of the Belgians was persuaded to offer the loan of any of his pictures, saying "you select and I shall obey as you are accustomed to be obeyed" (Cole Diary; 8th November 1870). It must have pleased Cole immensely that this man who had a genuine claim to be called "King" acknowledged Cole's sovereignty in his own sphere.

Belgian industry was less cooperative. Cole had to offer to purchase samples of Belgian fabrics, as the manufacturers declined to exhibit in London. The effort required to drum up sufficient support is in stark contrast to the conditions of 1862, when Cole acted more to stem the flow of eager exhibitors, seeking to allocate space which many exhibitors felt was inadequate.

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On 15th July 1870, his 62nd birthday, Cole met Lord de Grey (President of the Committee of Council on Education) in anticipation of the General Purposes Committee meeting to be held the next day. Cole "suggested that the Comm: of 51 ought to record that I shd be summoned when Hall, Garden, or Exhibitions were discussed" (Cole Diary). This would of course mean that he would be involved in whatever was happening on the estate. Lord de Grey was persuaded that he "entirely agreed & thought I cd not be considered an interloper" (ibid.). Cole was always keen that his involvement with the Commissioners should be formally stated. He wanted his authority to act to be clear, and he wanted that authority to be very wide.

Cole did not go unopposed in the organisation of the 1871 exhibition. At the General Purposes Committee meeting on 10th August 1870 "Thring and Gibson objected to heating, criticised early reception of goods, objected to purchases lest they shd look like prizes, objected to collecting pictures, wd only have artists coming voluntarily forward". These words taken from Cole's diary convey something of his irritation. But, despite the resistance, "all the points were carried". When Thring asked for a key to the exhibition buildings when they were nearing completion in February of 1871 Cole refused him - perhaps he took it as an opportunity to repay Thring for daring to oppose King Cole!

By December of 1870 Cole was ready to plan the ceremonial for the first exhibition. The Queen had indicated her preference for a "quiet" opening (Cole Diary; 3rd December 1870) and Cole began to make detailed plans in consultation with the Queen's new private secretary, Colonel Sir Henry Ponsonby, who was now a member of the General Purposes Committee, replacing General Charles Grey. Cole suggested that the opening of the by now almost completed Albert Hall should be a separate occasion from the opening of the exhibition. This was agreed, Ponsonby
suggesting several dates at the end of March which would be convenient
to the Queen for the opening of the Hall. The exhibition was to be
opened, as was by now customary, on the 1st May.

Inevitably difficulties occurred in the organisation of the exhibition.
Problems included Cole's decision, on Colonel Scott's recommendation, to
move the educational exhibits "from the Hall gallery (where fine art was
also being displayed) to the Theatre Museum" (Cole Diary; 11th April
1871). Understandably, Donnelly (of the Department of Science and Art)
was not pleased with so late and inconvenient a change, and resigned his
(small) connection with that part of the exhibition. At the General
Purposes Committee meeting on the 19th April "they wanted to rearrange
all the programmes", but due to the influence of Prince Christian and
Lord Lansdowne "my proposal was carried" (Cole Diary). The Minutes of
the Committee merely record that there was "lengthened discussion" of
Cole's proposed programme (Windsor Archives; Minutes of the General
Purposes Committee; 19th April 1871).

Cole's diary entry of 20th April is a catalogue of "difficulties".
There was an argument in the musical committee, he had "picture
difficulties with SR" (Samuel Redgrave?), and further difficulties with
Scott. On the following day there were "difficulties with Ld
Chamberlain abt State Opening" (Cole Diary). The Prince of Wales, who
was to open the exhibition on behalf of his mother, called to look over
the exhibition on the 26th and agreed to speak to the Lord Chamberlain
about the ceremony. As we hear no more about difficulties with the
opening ceremony it would appear that the influence of the Prince was
sufficient to ensure that Cole had his way. Cole wanted to have his way
in every department, and had no scruples about using whatever influence
he could to override the decisions taken by those who were ostensibly in
charge of particular aspects of the organisation of any event in South
On the 1st May 1871 the Prince of Wales and Princess Helena opened the first of the series of annual exhibitions. Those officially invited to attend the ceremony were generally those connected with the planning of the exhibition either by membership of one of the many committees or by association with other interested organisations, as well as foreign commissioners, High Sheriffs, Mayors and Provosts of various towns, chairmen of Chambers of Commerce, and Masters of City Companies. The invitations to the Royal Society of Arts included Cole himself, the Earl de Grey and Ripon, Captain Donnelly, Earl Granville, Samuel Redgrave and Francis Sandford. All of these could have been invited in other contexts, and all had been associated with Cole in the schemes to establish the exhibition series. For the Royal Horticultural Society the selected representatives included John Kelk and Colonel Scott. Alan Cole was invited as a member of the musical committee, and Harry Cole as one of the Royal Engineer employees of the General Purposes Committee. Cole seems to have ensured that all of his friends were rewarded with prominent positions at the ceremony.

Immediately after the opening ceremony Knollys, secretary to the Prince of Wales, wrote to Cole to express the Prince's thanks. Ponsonby told Cole that he made a "first rate Master of Ceremonies" and Forster (Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education) told him that he was "the only Despot that cd have made a procession walk a mile" (Cole Diary; 3rd May 1871). Cole often recorded in his diary comments such as these, and seems to have taken some pride in being called a "despot". What mattered was that the object of completing the South Kensington estate as a centre for the Arts and Sciences should be achieved. If it meant behaving as, and being called, a despot, it was a small price to pay.
Although the Queen did not open this the first of the planned series of exhibitions, she did grace it with two visits. In the first week she "examined the animals and fine arts....she was pleased and in good humour" (Cole Diary; 6th May 1871). On the 15th of May a representative of the Prince of Wales called to select purchases from the pottery on display to give to the Queen as a birthday present. The Queen came again on the 18th of May and looked at the pottery and the foreign fine arts. The royal family, it seems, were still interested in international exhibitions, and prepared to give time both in the organisation of the event and in private visits to enjoy the "show", though it is clear they were more interested in the arts than the industrial exhibits.

In 1851 and 1862, often through the efforts of Cole who was acquainted with editors and proprietors, the press had taken a substantial interest in the international exhibitions. They covered the preparations, opening, closing and gave considerable space to the exhibits themselves. The exhibition of 1871 attracted much less attention. Of course the Journal of the Society of Arts still reported on the exhibition in great detail; they had particular reason to do so, since they were managing the education section, and many of their most prominent members were intimately involved in the total scheme. Other periodicals were much less interested. At the meeting of the General Purposes Committee following the opening of the exhibition Cole submitted to the Commissioners the first issue of "The Key". This was a commercially produced publication which was intended to "increase the public interest in the several works promoted by Her Majesty's Commissioners, by giving Programmes of the various arrangements made for the Exhibition, the Royal Albert Hall and the Horticultural Gardens, and also to give notices of the work of the Schools of Art throughout the kingdom and of the Science and Art Department". The firm of printers who were
producing the various publications relating to the exhibition had been persuaded to underwrite this new publication. It is clear from the fact that the events and organisations to be publicised are precisely those with which Cole was involved that this new journal was yet another of Cole's campaigning journals, this time intended to boost public support for all of the attractions at South Kensington.

Punch magazine had had a lot to say about the previous exhibitions, but in 1871 only 3 references to the exhibition were published, on February 18th, May 27th and June 24th. The Illustrated London News also responded to this exhibition series with less enthusiasm than in the past. Although in 1871 there were many mentions, articles and illustrations, including fairly lengthy comment at the beginning and end of the exhibition, at the end of the exhibition the Illustrated London News chose to express an opinion on the future of the series, and voiced doubts on particular points:

Sight seers will begin to realise that the opening of an international exhibition is not a thing of rare occurrence....the [1871] exhibition has been comparatively and consistently neglected by Londoners....a large proportion of the visitors....has consisted of our country cousins....the classes of industry or art-manufacture which have to be represented in rotation cannot every year be as interesting or attractive as those selected for the opening display.

It is perhaps not surprising that it was in 1871 that Vanity Fair published a rather unflattering cartoon of Henry Cole, which presented him as obese and unkempt and shadowed, as he often was, by an equally scruffy terrier. 1871 was the year which ended with Cole's resignation from the Department of Science and Art; though he was always a force to be reckoned with, from 1872 until his death ten years later Cole's power base was reducing.
King Cole.

Caricature published in Vanity Fair, 1871.

(V&A postcard)
In 1872 the Illustrated London News, not surprisingly after the comments quoted above, was much less interested in the exhibitions at South Kensington. The totality of the reporting consisted of a description of the opening reception, a less than flattering report of the fine art section of the exhibition, a brief note of the opening of the Indian display of cotton materials, a brief critical report of the sculpture and a "one liner" in the Metropolitan News column announcing the closure of the exhibition. In 1873 the magazine gave a large proportion of its space to the International Exhibition in Vienna. The exhibition in London was noted only at its opening (a paragraph in the Metropolitan News column), and when the Queen visited the exhibition of cookery. The close of the exhibition went quite unnoticed.

Cole claimed to have been quite satisfied with the press coverage of the 1871-4 series of exhibitions, actually suggesting that "the reports published with promptitude by the daily press were such as to render almost unnecessary the official publication of [reports of the exhibitions]" (Commissioners for the Exhibition of 1851, 1876; xxxi). The Commissioners published two volumes of reports of the exhibition in 1871, but thereafter left publication to the Royal Society of Arts in their Journal.

The arrangement of the exhibits in the 1871-4 exhibitions was, according to the Special Report published by the Commissioners for 1851, on the principle of bringing "all the objects of each class together for easy and instructive comparison, and, secondly, to divide the classes according to nationality. It had been the strong wish of the Prince Consort that these principles should have been carried out for the exhibition of 1851.". In the Special Report, which was written by Cole, the opinion was expressed that "whilst there is no doubt that this course is preferable for utility and technical instruction [Cole's
aga\lla), it is also certain that it is not so picturesque or popular as an arrangement by countries" (Commissioners for the Exhibition of 1851, 1876; Paragraph 36).

Cole seems to have become rather muddled in his thinking. He claimed that arrangement by country would have made the exhibitions more popular, yet he also stated that a more restricted display would have had a similar educational effect at less cost. This lack of clarity about whether the purpose of the exhibitions was primarily educational or merely entertainment must have contributed to the subsequent demise of this exhibition series. What Cole did not admit in his report was that arrangement by country would still have made a less attractive display than the visitors had seen on previous occasions, because relatively few foreign countries exhibited. Other than European countries (France, Belgium, Germany, Russia, Holland, Italy) only the Australian colonies, India and Japan sent exhibits in any numbers. Cole suggests in the Special Report that "limited as was the scope of these industrial exhibitions, it was generally felt that it might have been better to have represented only one class of manufacturers in each year. It would probably have been equally attractive to the students in technical instruction and would have entailed less cost on the Commissioners and less strain upon the executive" (ibid.; Paragraph 50).

In June of 1873 a meeting of the General Purposes Committee was informed that "Mr Cole has now severed his connection with the Government and is prepared at once to undertake the duties of Acting Commissioner" (Windsor Archives; XXII, f28A, item 1, paragraph 17). However, the legal advisors to the Commission pointed out that it was not lawful for a Commissioner to receive a salary from the Commission, so Cole's membership of the Royal Commission for the Exhibition for 1851 was a very brief affair. In November of 1873 the Board of Management of the
Commissioners agreed to a salary of £1500 per annum for Cole (Windsor Archives; XXII, f28A, item 4, paragraph 26). Cole's friends among the Commissioners had come to his rescue. As soon as his civil service salary was lost it was replaced with a similar sum provided by the Commission.

When the Earl of Carnarvon summed up the affairs of the Commissioners at his resignation as chairman of the Board of Management of the Commissioners to take up a political appointment in March of 1874 he expressed his reservations about the financial success of the exhibitions. The capital expenditure which had been made he considered good value for money, but on the revenue account the first year's profit of £17,000 had been cancelled out by the losses of the two following exhibitions. It was probable that the 1873 exhibition had been affected by the genuinely international exhibition going on simultaneously in Vienna, but if the numbers of visitors did not increase again during 1874 then he could not recommend that the series be continued (ibid.; Paragraph 79).

Lyon Playfair also resigned from the Board of Management of the Commission for 1851 at their meeting on 25th March 1874. Playfair was one of four (with Lord Ripon, Lord Spencer and Lord Carnarvon) who formed a committee to "enquire into the financial position and policy of the Commission, and its relations for the future to the Annual International Exhibitions, the Royal Albert Hall and the Royal Horticultural Gardens and also with regard to any future uses which may be made of the buildings and property of the Commission for the advancement of the objects entrusted to it, and to offer suggestions for the future management of the business and property of the Commission". Cole, never slow to identify his most likely ally in any situation, told Playfair his own views, that he thought the exhibition series should be
cancelled and that instead an "Industrial University" should be established (Cole Diary; 31st March 1874). In his usual style Cole was attempting to kill two birds with one stone; the Devonshire Commission had recently been considering the science schools at South Kensington. They had affirmed their existence as "Normal Schools" or teacher training colleges. It seems that Cole still hoped for an institution which would meet the needs of industry in the training of scientific and technical personnel. The exhibitions had never been an end in themselves, rather they had been part of the indirect process of bringing the "right" organisations, subjects and buildings onto the South Kensington site. The building for the Science Schools, completed in 1872, was to Cole a step towards what might eventually become the university of South Kensington. The ultimate plan continued to be the completion of the educational complex envisaged by the Prince Consort in 1851. With the end of the exhibition series in sight, Cole, no longer employed at the Department of Science and Art, was turning his mind to other means to achieve his aims; Lyon Playfair had supported the idea of an industrial university in 1853, Cole must have hoped that Playfair would again be supportive.

The first report of the "Special Enquiry Committee" of the Commissioners for 1851, dated 30th April 1874, recommended that the exhibitions be discontinued. Cole had followed up his discussions with Playfair with a report to the committee making suggestions as to the future use of the exhibition galleries (which would become redundant if the exhibitions ceased), together with more general recommendations including the foundation of a university at South Kensington. The Special Enquiry Committee felt themselves unable to respond to the suggestion that the Commissioners should become involved in the foundation of a university, but his suggestions for the future use of the galleries were well received.
Cole proposed that the redundant exhibition galleries should be used as museum galleries. The Special Enquiry Committee (Windsor Archives; XXII, f28A, item 8) recommended that:

Steps should be immediately taken to devote these galleries to public purposes such as the Patent Museum, Gallery of National Portraits, Indian Museum and Exhibition of Colonial Products.

These had been Cole's recommendations. The report goes on to provide justification in terms which are almost certainly taken directly from Cole's personal report to the committee:

It is understood that for all of these space is urgently required, and that moderate rentals for the accommodation might probably be secured, so as to convert the present deficit on the revenue of the Commission to a surplus. The galleries were constructed in view of this emergency, and are as well adapted for Museums and Picture Galleries as they are for Industrial Exhibitions. By such a destination of the buildings, the Committee believe the original intentions of the Commissioners would be most thoroughly carried out. By the sale of building land to the government much below its value, the Commission has already materially aided in the erection at South Kensington of Museums of Art and National History. By devoting the permanent buildings to other Museums of a similar character, the Commission would give a great impulse to Science and Art, and ultimately, from its surplus, be able to promote still further the technical instruction of the people.

On the copy of the report in the archives of the Commissioners for 1851 this recommendation is marked "agreed". Yet again it seems the usual ploy had worked for Cole. He had asked the Commissioners to build exhibition buildings and now told them that the buildings which had been designed by the Department of Science and Art were actually meant to be museum buildings! The failure of the 1871-4 series of exhibitions was thus the means of transferring the collections which formed the basis of what is now the Science Museum from the government owned Department of
Science and Art site across the road and into buildings owned by the Commissioners for 1851.

At the close of the series of exhibitions Cole resigned from his employment with the Commissioners and declined to accept the £2000 which was offered to him as remuneration for his services to the series of exhibitions. In the spring of 1875 Cole received a reward of a different kind, a knighthood, which Cole accepted as a "personal recognition for any poor services I may have been permitted to render to the Prince Consort in carrying out his ideas for the good of the people of this country" (Windsor Archives; XXII, f28A, item 23).

The concept of small specialist exhibitions was not in itself a bad one, indeed another series held at South Kensington in the 1880s were successful. Cole did not give up the idea of more exhibitions at South Kensington - on 17th May 1874 in his diary he suggests that "the next exhibition shd be the means of erecting a glass house over the monument" (the Albert Memorial). It is a pity that Cole was unable to find a way of funding this proposed "glass house". The protection it would have afforded might have prevented the serious damage which the weathering of one hundred years has caused.

Cole himself made a detailed statement of what he considered to be the reasons for the failure of the exhibition series in the Special Report of the Commissioners for the Exhibition of 1851 (1876). He claimed that, far from being a disappointment, the exhibition of 1871 had surpassed expectations. It benefited from the nine year interval since the 1862 exhibition, the royal ceremonial and royal associations, and the free or cheap access to the Horticultural Gardens. The organisers of the exhibition in 1872 had expected it to be less popular than the
previous one, because of the particular industries on show\textsuperscript{2}, and because it would not have the attraction of being the first such exhibition. However, "in 1873 there was a still further and more serious decline in the receipts, owing to the difficulties raised by the Horticultural Society". As we have already seen, by this date the Horticultural Society and the Commissioners were not on good terms, and Cole was seen by members of the Horticultural Society as the author of their problems. The Horticultural Society asked of the Commissioners what Cole considered to be a high price for allowing access to the gardens. For one path across the gardens for the period of the exhibition the rent asked was £1000.

In 1874 access to and across the gardens was even more restricted. "It cannot be doubted that the restrictive barriers throughout the Exhibition, which prevented the visitor not only from using the gardens at all but increased greatly the distances, fretted the visitors and damaged the receipts" (ibid.; xli).

Cole claimed that:

An exhibition to be remunerative should be attractive and pleasurable to the general public, but the exhibitions since 1871, owing to the causes stated above, had ceased to be pleasurable... The intention of managing the Exhibitions, the Horticultural Gardens, and the Hall as an unity was frustrated. The connexion of the railway with the Exhibition and Hall was not made; even a covered passage from the railway for pedestrians was not made. A communication between the Exhibition and the South Kensington Museum was not made (ibid.; xli).

When, in 1874, the deteriorating financial position of the Commission

\textsuperscript{2} A dubious claim; the industries represented were equally attractive; the classes are listed in a table on the following page.
caused the reappraisal of the exhibition series Cole could not in honesty defend their continuance:

Any further experiment in continuing the late series of annual International Exhibitions entailed risks which the present state of annual income at the disposal of the Commissioners did not appear to justify, and I did not hesitate, when the Commissioners asked my opinion, to advise though I did so with great regret, their discontinuance (ibid.; xlii).

Cole's explanations for the lack of success of the exhibition series are not totally convincing, failing to address the question of whether the concept of an annual series might have been mistaken. The difficulties which he identifies are certainly no greater than those encountered in 1851 or 1862. The reduction in public interest is reflected in the statistics of attendance which were published in the Special Report:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Admissions</th>
<th>Receipts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1871</td>
<td>wool, pottery, education,</td>
<td>1,142,154</td>
<td>£65,380</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1872</td>
<td>cotton, jewellery, paper and printing,</td>
<td>647,160</td>
<td>£32,340</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>musical instruments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1873</td>
<td>silk and velvet, carriages, steel, surgical</td>
<td>499,842</td>
<td>£20,362</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>instruments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1874</td>
<td>lace, civil engineering, heating, leather,</td>
<td>466,745</td>
<td>£14,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>bookbinding, foreign wines</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cole claimed in his report that the manufacturers had found the exhibitions increasingly useful, and that the public had been presented with an educational experience equivalent to that which might have been obtained by a museum visit, but at a much lower cost:

Dividing the whole deficit over the number of visitors, each visitor may be said to have cost the Commissioners twopence. Viewed as a contribution in aid of technical instruction, this is trifling in comparison with the payment per visitor to the British Museum, which amounts to about four shillings per annum, whilst each visitor to
the South Kensington Museum costs under 1s 6d, and each visitor to the Crystal Palace costs the management about one shilling.

In referring to the exhibitions as an example of "technical instruction" Cole is using the opposite argument to the one he had used fifteen years earlier in quelling complaints about the arrangement of the 1862 exhibition. Then he had emphasised the dissimilarities between exhibitions and museums, now he suggested that this series of exhibitions, which had proved a failure in commercial terms, could be claimed to be good value for money when viewed as technical education. This change of tack was expedient; by the time the report of the 1871-4 exhibition series was published the exhibition galleries had become museum galleries for the Department of Science and Art.

In a letter to Lord Granville, dated 31st December 1874 (Windsor Archives, XXII; f28A, item 17), Cole defends the Commissioners against criticism that they had not dealt wisely with the large sum of money entrusted to them and had not "realized the great scheme which the Prince Consort had in view" when the South Kensington estate was purchased. Cole describes the joint purchase of the land with the government and the subsequent erection of the Boilers at the expense of the Commissioners "for the purpose of housing and exhibiting the gifts made to Her Majesty's Commissioners by the exhibitors of 1851". Cole states that the arcades of the Horticultural Gardens and the exhibition galleries, including the French and Belgian annexes [built for the exhibition in 1862], had been built with the assumption that they would be used "for public purposes generally", "for the purpose of exhibitions only, they would have been much better concentrated". These buildings were being rented out to the government, and were producing income for the Commissioners. The series of exhibitions which had recently ended had earned sufficient income to cover "working expenses", but had not
repaid the capital expenditure invested by the Commissioners. Nevertheless, the Commissioners were, in 1874, owners of land valued at £750,000, on which there was a mortgage debt of £165,000. The Commissioners had sold land at the south of the estate to the government in order to provide accommodation for the the Natural History Museum. They had also provided the land for the Albert Hall and had "expended about £9000 on the Kensington Museum". These, Cole suggested, were actions fully in keeping with the Prince Consort's scheme, and despite this generosity the Commissioners were in possession of increasing, rather than decreasing, assets.

Cole then listed the other successes of the Commissioners "in promoting science and art applied to productive industry". To Cole, of course "first in importance [was] the South Kensington Museum". This letter to Granville was written in the light of the termination of the 1871-1874 exhibition series and Cole claims for these exhibitions a place in the overall scheme which is hard to defend. Cole states that "next after the South Kensington Museum the Annual International Exhibitions may be placed in order of public utility". His argument is weak, merely asserting that "the short series of international exhibitions just closed has undoubtably benefited certain of the industrial arts" and that the experience gained would be of benefit in future exhibitions. Cole proceeded to defend the exhibitions further, but in terms of the future use which could now be made of the buildings.

Although no evidence has come to light to "convict" Cole of deception, his defence of the 1871-4 series of exhibitions in terms of the utility of the buildings, the lack of any alternative plan for the museum collections which he suggested could be moved into the exhibition galleries and Cole's claim to the Special Enquiry Committee that the galleries were built with museum use in mind, suggests that Cole's
intention was, from the beginning, that the buildings would, sooner or later, be used by his Department for museum purposes. Cole had succeeded at the second attempt. The more ambitious 1862 exhibition building had not been retained for "public use"; now, with his Department about to occupy the new buildings and the natural history collections of the British Museum about to be moved into the attractive new galleries at the south end of the estate, Cole's vision for the Commissioners' estate was nearly complete.
References Chapter 11


[RSA] Royal Society of Arts Minute Book.

[Windsor Archives] Archives of the Royal Commission for the Exhibition of 1851, currently located with the Imperial College archives.
Chapter 12.

"Good Mr Cole" - the achievements of a civil servant and his circle.

At the end of his long, eventful and fruitful life Cole chose the following text for inclusion on the title page of his autobiography; it is a suitably forceful quotation to define the energetic and persistent Cole:

Whatever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might

Ecclesiastes IX, 10

It was Henry Cole who gave South Kensington its name, its form and its identity. Three factors were vital in making Cole's vision a reality. Firstly, Cole was a first-rate administrator, with the energy and commitment to pursue his goals undeterred by opposition and criticism. Secondly, Cole recognised the importance of gaining support from individuals who could add weight or bring skills to Cole's various campaigns. Sometimes the individuals were powerful, such as Granville and Grey. Fowke, Scott and Redgrave were examples of individuals who brought high levels of professional skill to bear in supporting Cole. When necessary, Cole, who had a natural talent as a journalist, drummed up support from a wider public both through the press and through public meetings. Thirdly, Cole was skilful in broadening his personal power base by his involvement in institutions which provided platforms for reform and access to a wider range of individuals who might be sympathetic to his schemes. Underpinning all of this was Cole's utilitarianism.

Many historians of exhibitions, of museums and of education have considered the role of Cole and his Department. He is often credited
with what is seen in an historical context as a negative influence on art through his strict programme of art education which allowed little creativity. Similarly, historians of education have looked at "payment on results" and seen a system which limited educational development. Historians of exhibitions have looked in detail at the 1851 exhibition, but have paid little attention to the later London exhibitions which owed so much to Cole. It seems that the shadow of suspicion which followed Cole throughout his lifetime lingers on in the historical perspective. When Cole developed his art courses there were few designers in this country with any kind of professional training; what Cole tried to create was a system which would rapidly increase the numbers of designers available to industry. When "payment on results" was instituted there was a crying need for teachers; Cole created a production line for teachers and a national curriculum for art and later science. Through his exhibition programme Cole sought to educate both industry and the public, and by this means to improve trade and thereby increase prosperity.

Cole's reputation is as an authoritarian, blustering and self-seeking administrator. It is not difficult to find evidence of the mistrust and dislike which was felt by some of his contemporaries. At the beginning of his reforming career, during the Record Office campaign, Cole suffered extreme attacks on his honesty and character. Through the following fifty years the shadow of doubt about Cole's motivation was never left behind. We have seen in Chapter 6 how the end of his civil service career was tragically marred, not because Cole was at last admonished for his "creative accounting", but because of his failure adequately to supervise the Department's less-than-honest accountant.

Cole's reputation was badly shaken, and all that Cole had achieved was claimed to have been not for the public good, but for the good of Cole
It was arranged that the profits realized by the first Great Exhibition should be applied to promote the general advancement of science and art; but it appears that the greater part of the fund has been bestowed on such projects as the Horticultural Gardens and the Albert Hall, and no one can pretend that science or art has profited by such an application of the money...Whatever may have been the original intention with which the South Kensington estate was taken up by the Commissioners, there can be no doubt that their management of it has practically taken the form of a mere building speculation. Whether it will prove to be for the public convenience that the natural history collections should be removed from the centre of town to this remote suburb remains to be seen; but it can readily be understood that the scheme of concentrating museums and pleasure-grounds on this spot is highly acceptable to the owners of house property in the neighbourhood, and this is the only class which has profited by the large expenditure which, by a gross abuse of authority, has been diverted from the true objects to which it was dedicated...The National School of Music is another offshoot of the same rank soil as that which has nourished the other fungi...it practically involves an attack on an older institution...an attempt is now being made to supercede [it] in order to provide further accommodation for the omniverous COLE family...There seems to be something in the atmosphere of this district which covers the institutions springing from it with a thick coating of parasitical incrustations. It is the great nursing ground of jobbery and humbug. From the early days of the Brompton Boilers a claptrap parade of enthusiasm for the promotion of science and art has been systematically kept up, with a view to diverting public money and patronage to this quarter for the benefit of an interested clique...

(Windsor Archives; XXII, Item 30).

Further correspondence in the same file indicates that there were members of the Commission who were equally sure that Cole was the man to blame for all that was being criticised at South Kensington. However, the way in which Cole was able to enlist the help of so many and various
participants in the development of the South Kensington site belies this reputation. Cole, though he was certainly authoritarian and did display a fierce loyalty to those few people with whom he shared his "vision" for South Kensington, earned the respect and admiration which he put to such positive use.

It is not surprising that Cole was suspected of having unsavoury motives for his less-than-tactful manoeuvering of himself and his friends and relations into significant roles within the South Kensington estate. However, another interpretation of Cole's actions springs from the detailed scrutiny of his career over "fifty years of public work", namely that Cole, undoubtably a most persistent promoter of causes, was persistently following a utilitarian programme for the education of the British public. As we have seen, in the reform of the Record Commission, the promotion of patents and copyright and (contributary to his reputation for despotism) in his adherence to the principle of single seated responsibility, Cole was following John Stuart Mill.

At the end of Cole's life, when preparing material for his autobiography, he mentions Mill only briefly, as the man who introduced him to the MP Charles Buller, thus paving the way for Cole's first reforming success at the Record Office. This lack of acknowledgement of Mill probably reflects not the fact that Cole no longer thought the influence of the utilitarians important, but rather Cole's character as a man of action. In his diary, as well as in the biography, Cole refers to what he has done, not what he has thought. The one occasion on which Cole spelt out clearly his debt to Mill and his philosophy was in a series of pamphlets published (at 1d each and therefore affordable by all but the very poorest) outlining the functions and facilities of the Department of Science and Art. The first of the Introductory Addresses on the Science and Art Department (1857, No. 1) was written by Cole and
entitled "The functions of the Science and Art Department". In it Cole defends the Department's system which he describes in terms which are identifiably utilitarian. Cole declares that "all classes are enabled to take their proper share...and equal opportunities are afforded to the whole people for developing any talents they may be endowed with" (ibid; p6). He stresses the fact that government is undertaking to provide facilities which "aid and stimulate" the efforts of the individual "by doing only those things which must either be done by some central authority or would otherwise be left undone" (ibid; p8).

In support of the South Kensington programme Cole cites Mill, "the first and most liberal of English writers on Political economy":

It is only necessary to refer to his work, where he proves that education is one of those things which it is admissible in principle that a government should provide for the people, and that help in education is help towards doing without help, and is favourable to a spirit of independence (ibid; p9).

In describing Mill's utilitarian attitude to education Cole is describing his own position. Cole goes on to define the aim of his Department as being "to offer every one in this kingdom the elementary knowledge whereby his labour may have the best chances of fruitful and profitable development" (ibid; pl1). This is the basis of all that Cole sought to achieve at South Kensington, and it is firmly rooted in John Stuart Mill's philosophy.

Among the individuals with whom Cole worked, Lord Granville was his most steadfast political ally. Probably the most active of the Commissioners for the Exhibition of 1851, and also (thanks to Cole who had introduced him) a member of the Society of Arts, he was younger than Cole (only 36 in 1851), a wealthy and well-connected Liberal politician who had a very
successful political career, beginning with his appointment to the Board of Trade in 1848. From the time of his first connection with Cole and particularly through the experience of the Great Exhibition, a relationship developed in which Granville made use of Cole's energy and enthusiasm and Cole made use of Granville's position and influence.

Prince Albert too came to admire Cole's energy and administrative skills through their mutual involvement in the Great Exhibition. It was he who suggested that Marlborough House, a royal residence, could be made available as a short-term home for the Schools of Design, shortly after Cole was appointed as Secretary to the new Department of Practical Art. The Prince also suggested that the Commissioners for the Exhibition of 1851 might find a permanent site for the schools on the land they were about to purchase in Brompton. This interest in the Schools had not been obvious before Cole had taken charge. Cole sought the support of the Prince during his lifetime and after his death used the memory of that support as a means of persuading others to assist the South Kensington cause.

A third member of Cole's circle, introduced to Cole by virtue of his secondment to the Paris exhibition in 1855, was Captain Francis Fowke, RE. In creating the new buildings on the Commissioners' estate Fowke proved to be a Royal Engineer of exceptional ability. He became an important member of Cole's inner circle (Fowke's son Frank married Cole's daughter Isabella). Cole greatly admired Fowke, who was willing and able to turn his hand to anything from the layout of groundworks to the design of substantial public buildings and the development of photographic technology needed by the Department.

1. Fowke developed the camera bellows and a special camera used in the Department to photograph the Raphael cartoons.
Fowke designed the buildings. John Kelk was added to what was beginning to take shape as the "South Kensington Mafia" when he carried out the first small contracts on the Department of Science and Art site. He had been cited by the Commissioners as being instrumental in the successful negotiations for the purchase of the estate (Commissioners for the Exhibition of 1851, 1852; 36). Being on good terms with the Commissioners and with Cole he continued to work on many of the contracts within the estate, becoming, in effect, the South Kensington contractor.

In 1856-7 the group of people influencing the development of the estate were Cole (with Fowke and Kelk as his support team in terms of the buildings and Lyon Playfair as his associate in developing the schools), Lord Granville as the political head of Cole's Department and as a very influential Commissioner for 1851 and Prince Albert as President of the Commissioners. From 1858 this group was extended as the plans for the exhibition in 1861 were made and the Horticultural Society began to investigate their move to South Kensington.

The Prince Consort died in December of 1861. From this time onwards Cole used Colonel (later General) Grey who had been Secretary to the Prince from 1849 and now became Secretary to the Queen, as a route to royal influence for his kingdom - for by now Cole had become known as King Cole of South Kensington. Grey and Cole made a very good team, working together with their inside knowledge of the organisations concerned with South Kensington to achieve aims which at times were common only to themselves and a few other members of the "mafia".

Cole was never in a position to create institutions or carry out reforms without the assistance of his friends. At the Department of Science and Art he was dependent upon his ability to win the cooperation of his
political chiefs at the Board of Trade and later the Committee of Council on Education. To influence the activities of the Royal Commission for the Exhibition of 1851 Cole needed to have good relationships with the Commissioners and their secretariat. Always in reserve were his friends at the Society of Arts.

In the early days of Cole's career his circle consisted largely of intelligent young men in similar occupations to his own, many of them members of the London Debating Society and followers of John Stuart Mill. In the late 1830s and 1840s Cole extended his circle when he became acquainted with many of the eminent artists and writers of the day, through his journalistic contacts and then through his Art Manufactures company. Through the Society of Arts the circle was widened even further, until, in the aftermath of the Great Exhibition, Cole achieved a status which allowed him access to the highest levels of society.

Individuals were always important to Cole, but equally so were the organisations through which he and his allies could work. The Society of Arts was the first formal organisation to benefit from Cole's membership, and it remained a useful platform after his influence in other spheres had waned. Cole quickly recognised in the Society the potential for promoting utilitarian programmes. After the success of the Great Exhibition Cole became perhaps the most influential member of the Society, and from this time onwards he could be confident that within the Society he would find support over a wide range of causes. Once Cole took control of the Department of Practical Art he had a second platform for promoting the educational developments which he believed to be necessary. Through the Department he promoted education for art and design, and (with less enthusiasm, perhaps due to his own lack of knowledge) education for science and technology. He created
museums which he made available both to the wealthy and educated and to the working man through evening and weekend opening.

The three organisations most closely involved in the development of the South Kensington estate were the Commissioners themselves, the Department of Science and Art and the Horticultural Society. Cole could be confident that he would be kept informed of the proceedings of the Commissioners through Lord Granville. His Department was very much under his control and infrequently troubled by interference from the government. Cole's membership of the Horticultural Society probably dates from shortly after Prince Albert's acceptance of the Presidency of the Society in 1858. Once Cole was made a Vice President nothing could happen on the Commissioners' estate or on the government owned part of the South Kensington site without Cole having a right to be involved. In the latter years of Cole's reign at South Kensington the Corporation of the Albert Hall became the fourth body concerned with the management of the South Kensington estate. Again Cole was central to the new body, the man of action without whom little could take place.

All of these organisations were strongly connected with the Cole-Granville-Prince Consort/General Grey team. The South Kensington Mafia was heavily represented within each of the organisations, and Cole had a firm administrative grip in three cases out of four. He had charge of the Department of Science and Art, his colleague Henry Scott was Secretary to the Horticultural Society and Wentworth L Cole (not one of Cole's sons, but almost certainly a close relative) was the Manager of the Albert Hall.

In presenting the history of the development of the South Kensington estate as a series of short histories of particular events or organisations with which Henry Cole was involved, the overall picture of
the estate's development, the chronological sequence of events and the linkages between the people involved are to some degree obscured. Cole was so energetic, so busy, it is difficult to keep track of all of the schemes with which he was involved at any one time. From 1851 to 1874, the period from the decision to purchase the South Kensington estate to the end of Cole's "reign" in 1873/4 (he retired from his civil service employment in 1873 but was involved in the exhibitions on the site until the end of 1874), what happened on the estate at South Kensington was very strongly influenced by Henry Cole and a surprisingly small number of other key personalities.

Nikolaus Pevsner recognised the uniqueness of the area which Cole created at South Kensington:

An accumulation of cultural institutions as compact and as varied as exists in the sixth of a square mile between the Albert Memorial and the Victoria and Albert Museum is probably unparalleled anywhere, and was certainly unparalleled when the buildings were first planned (Pevsner, 1952; London. Volume 2, 252-253).

In 1851 South Kensington did not exist; the area which now bears that name was part of the then outer London suburb of Brompton. The Commissioners for the Exhibition of 1851 purchased land there which was at that time largely laid out to private or nursery gardens and which supported few existing buildings. It was what we would call today a "green field site". Had the land not been bought by the Commissioners, it would probably have been developed for housing as the population of London grew, but the Commissioners for the Exhibition of 1851 were persuaded, firstly by Prince Albert and later by Cole, that the site should be used only for broadly educational purposes. Had they not been so persuaded, or had Cole not been such a determined champion of the various enterprises which became associated with South Kensington, we
would not now have the very compact and well defined centre for the arts and sciences which is today appreciated by a very international public of students and tourists.

Within a year of the purchase of the land, Cole, impatient with the Commissioners, who were slow to act in making use of their property, produced plans of his own to utilise the estate for public purposes. Cole's plans, produced in 1853 bearing in mind the Prince Consort's wishes, included the new Department of Science and Art, the National Gallery, the Patent Museum, the Society of Arts, the University of London, the Royal Academy of Music, an "industrial school for youth" and student accommodation. Cole's influence on the outcome is clear when his plans are compared with the current occupants of the South Kensington estate. Only the Albert Mansions, between the Albert Hall and Imperial College, are contrary to Cole's wishes. When the land for the mansions was leased to a developer for £103,000 in 1876\(^2\), Cole wrote to General Ponsonby, private secretary to the Queen, expressing his dismay:

"it distresses me because it upsets the Prince Consort's idea of preserving the whole of the "main square" for public buildings for science and art" (Windsor Archives; XXII, f28, Item 29).

Had the Commissioners invested in buildings for student accommodation, rather than selling land for housing in order to clear their mortgage debt, Cole's requirements would all have been met in spirit, if not in detail. The Society of Arts did not move to South Kensington. Imperial College, now a part of the University of London and which brought

2. The Commissioners pressed the developer to accept plans drawn up by Norman Shaw. Though they wanted to release cash to pay off existing mortgage debt, they were anxious that any buildings within their boundaries should be in keeping with their surroundings. (Windsor Archives; Minutes, 11th August 1876)
together the Royal School of Mines and the Royal College of Science (1907) with the City and Guilds College (1910)^3, serves the educational function which Cole envisaged at South Kensington. Cole's art schools have become the Royal College of Art. The Royal Academy of Music did not come to South Kensington, but the Royal College of Music, another of Cole's projects, is now on the site. The National Gallery did not come, but the museum which Cole created at South Kensington contains an art collection of international repute.

Neither the Commissioners nor the government ever gave Cole permission to develop the South Kensington site as a whole. Buildings were achieved piecemeal and in an opportunistic manner, using whatever funding Cole could obtain to meet specific needs at specific times. Due to the way in which the building process was funded, the site was developed by incremental additions to and modifications of the few buildings on the site in 1855. As a result the collection of old and new, permanent and temporary buildings remained somewhat untidy, redeemed by the mature trees and gardens which surrounded it.

The first building to be erected on the Commissioners' site was built not at Cole's instigation, but as a result of Prince Albert's desire to find a permanent home for the collection of objects purchased by the Commissioners from among the 1851 exhibits. The building, which became known as the Brompton Boilers, was built in 1855 on the small section of the Commissioners' land which lay outside of the main block bounded by Kensington Road, Cromwell Road, and two new roads, Exhibition Road and what is now Queen's Gate. It was unattractive, located far from any other cultural venue and was not the kind of building the public

3. The City and Guilds College was founded in 1884 and merged with the Royal College of Science and the Royal School of Mines in 1907 to form Imperial College.
expected for a serious museum. Cole did not like it either. It leaked. And he got the blame for its appearance.

As the new building neared completion the government department which had come to Cole as a "gift" from his admirer Lord Granville, prepared to move into Brompton Park House, one of the few existing buildings on the Commissioners' land, adjacent to the new museum building. Once on the site Cole made himself responsible for the development of the part of the Commissioners' estate upon which his Department was sited. During 1856-57 the brick "corridor" linking the Boilers with Brompton Park House and other temporary buildings on the site was erected and work began on the first substantial building on the Commissioners' site to be designed by Francis Fowke, the Sheepshanks Gallery. The development of the site now occupied by the Victoria and Albert Museum has been documented very fully by John Physick (1982). Under Cole's influence and with imaginative use of the funds available, the site was developed to become a complex of museums and art galleries, lecture halls, laboratories, art studios, a library and an architectural atelier.

Cole's primary responsibility was for the schools of art and of science which were under the control of his Department, but, aided by the fact that there was already a museum on the same site, he was able to associate with the art and science schools museums which would provide inspiration and examples for the students. The museums were also made available to the public, with opening hours and a charging structure which made them accessible to people of humble origins. This policy of openness to the less well educated classes can be directly related to Cole's utilitarian motivation; his museums were an educational resource available to all classes of society. In addition to the collections within the museums, Cole made use of the buildings themselves to promote
both technical and artistic techniques. Examples include the use of gas lighting in the new galleries and the use of terracotta for external decoration (Sheepshanks building) and ceramics within the buildings (Cole staircase).

The major portion of the Commissioners' estate was, theoretically at least, outside of Cole's sphere of influence. He was not a member of the Commission for the Exhibition of 1851, nor was he any longer employed by the Commission, nevertheless Cole was the person who initiated much of what occurred on the Commissioners' land at South Kensington. The Commissioners were faced with a number of difficulties in developing the estate. In part they lacked an imaginative executive. They also lacked cash, most of the 1851 proceeds having been expended in purchasing the land. Much time was spent in pursuing the seemingly hopeless cause of attracting professional bodies and societies to South Kensington. When Cole began to consider the possibility of holding a second Great Exhibition at South Kensington the Commissioners had no existing plans which might have blocked his scheme to use the site. Nor was there any objection from the Commissioners to the suggestion that the exhibition buildings might be permanent and might accommodate future exhibitions, museums and possibly the Society of Arts. Cole's offer of the organisation of this second exhibition, which might pay for a permanent building and produce another "surplus" must have been very attractive.

In 1858, the interest shown by the Horticultural Society in removing to South Kensington was very welcome to Cole. Ornamental gardens would set off exhibition and museum buildings beautifully; how much better if the expense of keeping up such gardens could be met by an outside "contractor". Neither the Commissioners nor the Department of Science and Art were in a position to fund the gardens themselves. It was not
Cole who initiated the negotiations with the Horticultural Society. As with the Boilers, the moving force was Prince Albert. The Prince chose to proceed with the idea, not through the official secretariat of the Commission, but through the unofficial secretariat which was Cole and the officers of the Department of Science and Art.

When the building for the exhibition of 1862 was demolished a lesser man than Cole might have terminated his connection with the Commissioners and concentrated on the considerable work still to be done on the Department of Science and Art site. Cole, however, was not so easily discouraged. He continued to be closely involved with the Horticultural Society and the activities which were organised within the gardens; he contributed to the discussions about the removal of the Natural History collections of the British Museum to South Kensington and encouraged Fowke to enter the design competition for the building. He continued to believe in South Kensington as an exhibition centre and he was eager, by one means or another, to have a large hall built which might accommodate both exhibitions and musical events. Prince Albert, by his death, provided Cole with the means to achieve the hall. Though public subscription to a national memorial for Albert failed to provide sufficient funds for both the complex monument by Gilbert Scott and a hall, Cole found an ally in General Grey and together they circumvented the problems.

With the erection of the Albert Hall the Commissioners estate was close to being completely developed, although there was a serious problem for the Horticultural Society, the Albert Hall committee and the Commissioners themselves in the lack of funds to operate the facilities and maintain the fabric of the buildings. The exhibition series which ran from 1871 to 1874 failed to provide the solution to the problem.
The final building of note on the Commissioners estate which owes a debt to Cole is that currently occupied by the Royal College of Organists. This building— a most extraordinary one— was built in 1874-5 to be the home of the National Training School for Music— yet another of Cole's educational schemes. In the 1860s, at a time when the Royal Academy of Music was in difficulties, Cole decided to make efforts to reform musical education and was instrumental in the formation of a Committee on Musical Education at the Society of Arts. Negotiations between the Academy, Cole and Lord Granville ensued, Cole wishing to accommodate the Academy within the Commissioners' estate (as had Prince Albert). The negotiations failed, largely because members of the professional staff at the Academy objected to being put under the infamous Cole's control. Cole's determination is clear from the fact that the Society of Arts' committee was persuaded to start raising funds for a new School of Music. Cole himself began to investigate possible sources of funds for musical scholarships to a new National Training School for Music.

The foundation stone for the National Training School was laid on 18th February 1873. Cole's powerbase had crumbled, his exhibition series was failing and his connection with the Department of Science and Art was coming to an undignified end. Coming full circle, Cole was again dependent upon his connection with the Society of Arts to provide him with the platform to achieve the creation of the music school at South Kensington. Despite these difficulties, Cole could still find individuals from among his circle who would support his plans. Cole's eldest son Harry, a Royal Engineer who had spent some years surveying buildings in India, produced the design for the building as a gift to the school. A friend of Cole's from the Society of Arts, C J Freake (a contractor and resident of South Kensington) donated the cost of building and the Commissioners for 1851 donated the site.
That this school was conceived as a means of furthering the education (and taste) of the public at large is confirmed by a "memorial" [memorandum] from the Committee of Management of the school to the Royal Commissioners for the Exhibition of 1851:

The fundamental object of the school is the cultivation of the highest musical talent in the country, in whatever station of society it may be found; such talent being sought for by public competitions throughout the United Kingdom (Windsor Archives; Minutes, 20th July 1877, 11-15).

Again this educational initiative displays Cole's utilitarian ideals. The school was intended also to become a training school for future teachers of music. A member of the Committee of Management, which consisted of representatives of the Corporation of the Albert Hall, the Commissioners for 1851 and the Society of Arts, Cole had the support of the Duke of Edinburgh as chairman and of Arthur Sullivan as Director.

Cole's career as a civil servant began at a time when entry to that service was largely through patronage and we have seen many examples of Cole, having achieved a position of seniority, providing employment for members of his own family within his department. Cole was, however, one of relatively few senior civil servants who supported reform of the service and made positive contributions to the enquiry carried out by Trevelyan and Northcote (1854). Trevelyan had much in common with Cole. His brother-in-law describes a "mind...full of schemes of moral and political improvement" and "zeal [which] boils over in his talk" (quoted by Cohen, 1965; 84). The system suggested by Trevelyan, based upon the passing of examinations as proof of ability, had much in common with Cole's system of examination for teachers.

The civil servant Cole fits very closely the description of "great civil
servants" provided by Perkin (1972; 268). Perkin identifies these men as Benthamite in their politics, "ruthless [in their] lobbying through official and un-official channels and shameless [in their] empire building". It is clear that the social and political conditions of the time made it possible for intelligent and determined men to wield considerable power in creating and controlling the public bodies which would provide vehicles for the utilitarian programme of reforms. Despite his lowly origins, despite the enemies he made through the Record Commission and later campaigns, despite the fact that in the final analysis Cole was not a man who had very many original ideas, despite, or perhaps because of his autocratic and aggressive management style, and despite the fact that Lord Derby could label him "the most generally unpopular man I know" (Bonython, 1982; 2), Cole became a far-from-neutral administrator of exceptional ability and influence.

It is interesting to review Cole's civil service career in the light of more recent analyses of Victorian society. MacLeod (1988) provides, in his introduction to Government and expertise; specialists, administrators and professionals, 1860-1919, a brief but wide-ranging summary of the historiography of the civil service in the nineteenth century. Cole is interesting in that it is very difficult to place him in any one of the categories which MacLeod identifies.

In his role as investigator of the Schools of Design and later as the principal civil servant at the Department of Science and Art, the generalist Cole was one of those who "acquired powers to 'investigate and report', and authority to act first, and explain later" (MacLeod, 1988; 5). MacLeod summarises MacDonagh (1977) who identified three "assisting forces" of government growth - theoretical Benthamism, political motive and technical capability. Cole encompassed all three, as first demonstrated in the Record Office reforms.
In mentioning the increasing use of professionals and particularly engineers in government service it is to Henry Cole that MacLeod turns for explanation of the particular advantages of the employment of Royal Engineers (MacLeod, 1988; 10). When MacLeod describes the new fully professional administrator of the civil service he might well be describing Cole: "the new model mandarin, the 'professional' civil servant, 'established' with codes of ethics, procedures and behaviours as unshakable as the new Treasury Buildings in Great George Street". Cole had become the creator of innumerable regulations and procedures by which the Department of Science and Art carried out its business. MacLeod cites Cole's department as being "stifled by lack of public and industrial interest, and repressed by limiting administrative constraints" (MacLeod, 1988; 16). This was indeed the case, making the achievements of Cole all the more remarkable.

Martin Wiener (1985) has discussed the nineteenth century trend towards professionalisation. Many of the professional bodies in existence today were established in the middle years of the nineteenth century and grew rapidly. Professionalisation served the dual role of adding a certain social status as well as providing the educational and standardizing functions which we now expect of professional bodies. There is no doubt that the government increasingly recognised the need for specialists to work within its own departments, but the generalist administrators too were becoming a recognisable group with professional aspirations. Wiener claims for the professional class "an influence on English opinion and culture far out of proportion to its size" (Wiener, 1985; 14); Cole provides an example of a man who had, for many years, a very large influence in this country and an almost complete control over his kingdom at South Kensington.

Cole, from humble beginnings, was a professional civil servant par
excellence. However, he came to the highest levels of the civil service by an unusual route. As MacDonagh has pointed out (1977; 200), the majority of those who became powerful and influential senior civil servants in the middle years of the nineteenth century brought to public service particular professional skills. Chadwick had trained in the law, Playfair was a chemist, Kay-Shuttleworth was medically qualified. Cole, by contrast, came up from the "undifferentiated mass of drones and mediocrity" (ibid.), appointed by patronage and for whom promotion was by seniority rather than ability. Cole was not a great thinker; he was a man of action who had accepted the ideals of the utilitarians. He was not a member of the professions; all that he had to offer his employers was his administrative skill, intelligence, hard work, and his utilitarian devotion to what he considered to be the public good. In a civil service which was burdened with many who were ineffective Cole was easily identified as an exceptional young man.

The utilitarian Cole, "hopelessly altruistic and high minded" (Bonython, 1982; 2), fought the establishment at the Record Commission, and, with the aid of his Philosophical Radical friend, Charles Buller, began the process of civil service reform in the particular government department in which he was employed. Having caused a most exceptional rumpus, Cole had made friends as well as enemies. By his hard work and determination he had favourably impressed those individuals who were able to offer him the patronage which enabled him to rise to become the most senior civil servant in the Department of Science and Art. Cole saw this not as patronage, but as the reward for his efforts and abilities. When he employed his own relations within his Department it was in the expectation that they would work as hard and as well as he did himself. When Northcote and Trevelyan proposed a framework for the civil service which would encourage the able and discourage the "drones" Cole was among the first to give them support.
Cole failed to receive the recognition which came to his utilitarian friend, Edwin Chadwick, perhaps because Cole's energies were spread across a very wide range of issues. His achievements suggest that he should be ranked as one of the heroes of the nineteenth century who forced the pace of change and helped to raise the health, wealth and educational standards of the British people. Cole richly deserved the knighthood with which he was honoured in 1875. As the man whose efforts led to the creation of the Public Record Office, a key campaigner for the penny post (Cole believed this was the single most important reform with which he was involved (Cole, 1884; Volume 1, 34)), a vital member of the group who instigated the Great Exhibition, the power behind the rapid growth of government assisted secondary education through the Department of Science and Art and finally as the creator of South Kensington, Cole's life provides ample evidence of the many possibilities which existed in mid-Victorian England for the advancement of the individual and the promotion of causes which were "for the public good". Cole, the man of action, understood and "played the game" within mid-nineteenth century power structures and thereby succeeded in his goal of creating the South Kensington-based institutions of which he was rightly very proud.
References. Chapter 12.


[Trevelyan and Northcote] (1854) Report on the organization of the civil service, PP 1854-5 [1713] XX.


[Windsor Archives] Archives of the Commissioners of the Exhibition of 1851, held at the Archive Department of Imperial College.
Albert, Prince Consort (1819-1861)
President of Society of Arts, 1843-1861, Appointed President of the Commissioners for 1851, 3rd January 1850, President of the Royal Horticultural Society, 2nd March 1858.

Baring, Thomas (1799-1873)
Conservative MP, Financier, Chancellor of the Exchequer, with an interest in art. Commissioner for 1851 from 3rd January 1850, member of the Provisional Committee for the Albert Hall, Commissioner for the Exhibition of 1862. Fellow of the Royal Horticultural Society.

Bowring, Edgar A.
MP 1868-1874. Secretary to the Commissioners for 1851. Commissioner for 1851 from 8th July 1869, Member of the Provisional Committee for the Albert Hall, Member GPC Commissioners for 1851 for the 1871-4 series of exhibitions, Fellow Royal Horticultural Society.

Bruce, Rt Hon Henry Austin (1815-1895) = Aberdare, 1st Baron, 1873
MP 1852-, Liberal. Vice President Committee of Council on Education 1864-66, Commissioner for the Paris Exhibition 1867. Lord President of the Council 1873-3, Home Secretary at opening of 1871 exhibition (1868-73), Member of Provisional Committee for the Albert Hall.

Buller, Charles (1806-1848)
MP. Philosophical Radical. Chairman of the Select Committee on the Record Office 1836. Recommended Cole to the Board of Trade.

Chadwick, Edwin (1801-1890)
Utilitarian reformer. Lived with the Cole family for about a
year in the late 1830s. Worked with Cole on the Examiner and remained in contact with Cole throughout his life. Member of the Society of Arts from 1847, member of Council from 1868.

Chandos, Marquis of (1823-1889)  

Chester, Harry  
Chairman of the Royal Society of Arts, 1853, Assistant Secretary to the Committee of the Privy Council on Education, active in educational reform. Fellow of the Royal Horticultural Society.

Cubitt, Thomas (1788-1855)  
Brother of Sir William (see below). Builder who worked with Prince Albert in the building of Osborne House. Became a friend of the Prince. Involved in the early plans for the exhibition of 1851.

Cubitt, Sir William (1785-1862)  
Civil engineer. Involved in canals, docks, railways. Chief engineer to South Eastern Railway, consulting engineer to Great Northern Railway. President Institution of Civil Engineers 1850 and 1851. Elected Commissioner for 1851 14/1/52. "Erected" the Boilers.

Earl de Grey and Ripon (Marquis of Ripon) (1827-1900)  
Elected Commissioner for 1851 18/7/70, Chairman of General Purposes Committee of Commissioners for 1851 (1872) 4/11/69-6/3/72, Member Provisional Committee for the Albert Hall, Fellow of the Royal Horticultural Society.

Derby, 14th Earl of (Edward George Geoffrey Smith Stanley) (1799-1869)  
Liberal MP 1822-, Appointed Commissioner for 1851 3/1/50, Member of Committee of Management for their British Section at the Paris
Exhibition in 1855. Elected President of the Commissioners for 1851 16/4/64. Member of Albert Hall Committee, 1865

Derby, 15th Earl of (Edward Henry Stanley) (1826-1893)
Elected Commissioner for 1851 18/2/70 - resigned 1875. "Strongly believed in self-help" (DNB). Member of the Queen's committee to decide on the memorial for Prince Albert, 1862.

Dilke, Charles Wentworth (1810-1869)
Liberal MP for Wallingford 1865-1868, Member of the Society of Arts from 1849, Chairman of the Council 1857-1858, Member of the Executive Committee of the Society of Arts for the 1851 Exhibition, Elected Commissioner for 1851 24/4/52, 1853 went to New York as English Commissioner, and 1855 to Paris as Commissioner. Commissioner for the Exhibition of 1862, Vice President of the Royal Horticultural Society. Died in St Petersburg attending Horticultural Exhibition as English Commissioner.

Donnelly, J. F. D. (1834-1902)
Royal Engineer. Succeeded Cole at the South Kensington Museum having worked for him since 1856. Fellow of the Royal Horticultural Society.

Fairbairn, Thomas
Son of the engineer William Fairbairn. Active member of the Royal Society of Arts, Elected Commissioner for 1851 3/5/61, Chairman of the Manchester Art Treasures Exhibition, Commissioner for the Exhibition of 1862, Fellow of the Royal Horticultural Society.

Fowke, Francis (1823-1865)
Captain in the Royal Engineers. Sent to Paris in 1855 to take charge of the British machinery section, later becoming secretary to British Section, remained in Paris until 1857, became Architect to Department of Science and Art, Architect National Gallery in Dublin, Industrial Museum Edinburgh, 1862 Exhibition buildings,
ground plan and conservatory for Royal Horticultural Society at South Kensington, Fellow Royal Horticultural Society.

Gibson, Thomas Milner (1806-1884)
MP (Tory) from 1837-1839. Resigned and became a Liberal. Worked with Cobden in Anti Corn Law League. Vice President of the Board of Trade 1846-48, President of the Board of Trade 1859-1866. Chairman of Committee of Enquiry into the Schools of Design 1849. Member of Committee for Manufactures for 1851, Member of Navigation Committee at Paris Exhibition 1855, Member of General Purposes Committee of the Commissioners of 1851 for the 1871-4 series of exhibitions, Member of Committee of Management of the Royal Commission for the Exhibition of 1851 (1872).

Granville, 2nd Earl (Granville George Leveson-Gower) (1815-1891)
MP., Whig then Liberal, 1836-. Strong free-trader. First speech in the House of Lords in 1846 was on the abolition of the corn laws. Vice-President of the Board of Trade 1848-1851, Lord President of the Council 1852-4, 1855-8, 1859-1866, Appointed Commissioner for 1851 3/1/50, Chairman of the Finance Committee of the Commission for 1851 24/1/50 until its dissolution 13/8/72, Commissioner for the Exhibition of 1862, Member of Provisional Committee for the Albert Hall, Fellow of the Royal Horticultural Society, Member of the Royal Society of Arts.

Grey, Charles 1804-1870
MP 1831-1837, Liberal for High Wycombe, Equerry to the Queen from her accession, secretary to Prince Albert 1849 until his death in 1861, Secretary to the Queen 1862 until his own death. Was made a General in 1865. Member of the Provisional Committee for the Albert Hall, and of liaison committee between them and the organisers of the Exhibition of 1871, Elected Commissioner for 1851 8/7/69, Member of the Royal Society of Arts.

Kelk, John
Contractor to the Department of Science and Art, Builder of 1862
exhibition buildings who gave £11,000 to balance the books at the end of the exhibition, Fellow of the Royal Horticultural Society, Contractor for works in the RHS gardens, Conservative MP for Harwich 1866-1868, visited Paris Exhibition in 1867

Lefevre, Sir John Shaw (1797-1879)
Prominently connected with the founding of the London University, Vice Chancellor from 1842-1862. In 1841 he was joint Assistant Secretary at the Board of Trade, resigning in 1848, shortly after assisting Cole in his negotiations with the Board of Trade. He was a member of the Political Economy Club.

Lindley, John (1799-1865)
1822 appointed garden assistant to the Horticultural Society, 1826 Sole Assistant Secretary, 1829 first Professor of Botany at the University of London. In 1841 became Vice Secretary of the Society and, with Joseph Paxton, started the Gardener's Chronicle. 1858 became member of the Council of the Society and Honorary Secretary, resigned these posts in 1862 when he took charge of the Colonial section of the International Exhibition.

Lowe, Rt Hon Robert, Viscount Sherbrooke, (1811-1892)
MP, 1852-, Vice President of the Board of Trade 1855-1858. Elected Commissioner for 1851 30/6/63, Vice President Committee of Council on Education 1859-1864, Member of Provisional Committee for the Albert Hall, Fellow Royal Horticultural Society.

Mill, J. S. (1806-1873)
Philosophical radical, writer, friend of Cole's in his youth. Cole's life put into practice much of Mill's philosophy.

Minton, Herbert (1793-1858)
Manufacturer of pottery for Felix Summerly, Member Committee of manufactures for 1851. Member of the Society of Arts from 1846.
Owen, Francis Philip Cunliffe (1828-1894)
On Cole's team in Paris 1855. Thereafter at South Kensington and
involved in exhibition work. "To Cole and Owen must be largely
attributed the success which attended the establishment of
international exhibitions; for if the original idea was due to
Cole, its success was largely the work of Owen.... "Cole's
masterful individuality overpowered opposition; Owen's charm of
manner and natural geniality prevented it" (DNB). His wife was a
fellow of the Royal Horticultural Society. Deputy General
Superintendent SKM 1857, Assistant Director 1860. Director of the
Foreign Section of the 1862 exhibition. Assistant Executive
Commissioner for Paris exhibition 1867. Secretary to the British
Commission to the Vienna Exhibition 1873. Succeeded Cole as
Director of South Kensington Museum 1873.

Paxton, Joseph (1801-1865)
1823 appointed to a post in the Arboretum at the Horticultural
Society. 1826 the Duke of Devonshire (President of the Society)
gave him a post at Chatsworth. Travelled with the Duke and had
other business interests. Designed building for Great Exhibition
1851. Became a Liberal MP in 1854.

Peto, Sir Samuel Moreton 1809-1889
MP (Liberal) 1847-, inherited building business jointly with
cousin Thomas Grissell. The business was heavily involved in the
railways. Baptist. Elected Commissioner for 1851 30/6/63,
resigned 15/8/67, Fellow of the Royal Horticultural Society.

Playfair, Lyon (1818-1898)
1845 Chemist to the Geological Survey, then Professor at the
School of Mines in Jemyn Street. Active member of the Society of
Arts. From 1853-1855 Joint Secretary with Cole of the Department
of Science and Art, from 1855-1857 Secretary whilst Cole was
Inspector General. Member of the Committee of organisation for
the Industrial Department of the exhibition of 1862. Liberal MP
1868-1892. Elected Commissioner for 1851 8/7/69, Member of the
Redgrave, Richard (1804-1888)

Russell, John Scott (1808-1882)
Moved to London in 1844. Secretary of the Society of Arts, 1845-1850. Worked closely with Cole in the Society, particularly in exhibition work. Naval architect with strong interests in technical education.

Scott, Henry Young Darracott (1822-1883)
Colonel Royal Engineers, Seconded to South Kensington Museum in 1865 to replace Captain Fowke. Honorary Secretary of the Royal Horticultural Society 1866-1873, Secretary to General Purposes Committee of the Commissioners for 1851 for the 1871-4 series of exhibitions, Secretary to the Committee of Management of the Commissioners of 1851 (1872), Architect for the 1871-4 exhibitions. Lost job at South Kensington in 1882 and died a year later.

Thring, Henry
Elected Commissioner for 1851 3/5/61, Member of General Purposes Committee of the Commissioners of 1851 for the 1871-4 series of exhibitions, Member of the Committee of Management of the Commissioners of 1851 (1872), Member of the Provisional Committee for the Albert Hall. Mrs Thring was a Fellow of the Royal Horticultural Society
Whitworth, Sir Joseph (1803-1887)

Cole often stayed with Whitworth on his trips to the north; the Whitworth Scholarships were discussed with Cole and administered by the Department of Science and Art.

Wyatt, Matthew Digby (1820-1877)

Attended Paris Exhibition of 1849 on behalf of Society of Arts (with Cole), Secretary to the Commissioners for 1851, Jurer for Paris Exhibition 1855, Member of Art Designs Class Committee for the Exhibition of 1862, and member of a team asked to recommend on purchases from the 1871 exhibition by the Commissioners for 1851. Architect of independent means.
## Membership of the Society of Arts

(List of Members of the Society of Arts, 1840-1850)

(Extract of members with relationship to Henry Cole)

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<td>Joseph Whitworth</td>
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<td>17.12.45</td>
<td>Charles Wentworth Dilke</td>
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<td>21.1.46</td>
<td>Henry Cole</td>
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<td>25.3.46</td>
<td>J Cundall</td>
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<td>3.6.46</td>
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<td>Henry Cole (resigned 22.12.48)</td>
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<td>Seymour Haden</td>
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<td>31.3.47</td>
<td>Isambard Kingdom Brunel</td>
<td>Henry Cole</td>
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<td>31.3.47</td>
<td>George Gilbert Scott</td>
<td>Herbert Minton (resigned 1850)</td>
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<td>9.5.47</td>
<td>Owen Jones</td>
<td>Henry Cole</td>
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<td>Rt Hon T M Gibson</td>
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<td>W Newton</td>
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<td>30.1.50</td>
<td>Samuel Moreton Peto</td>
<td>Francis Fuller²</td>
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<tr>
<td>24.4.50</td>
<td>Pugin</td>
<td>Charles Barry</td>
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1. Resigned and joined again 21.11.49
2. Resigned 1845 and joined again 1850
3. Not clear if these two Wm Haws the same person
Appendix 3
Membership of the Royal Horticultural Society, 1860-1861

Date of election:

20th January 1860  E A Bowring (Secretary to the Commissioners)
                  Mr and Mrs J Kelk

4th February 1860  Lord Granville

27th March 1860    T Fairbairn

17th April 1860    Harry Chester and Mrs Chester

The list of Council, Officers and Committees for the year 1860-61 includes:

Vice President: Charles Wentworth Dilke (one of four)

Fellows:

Thomas Baring (Commissioner for 1851)

Charles A Cole (Cole's brother)

Mr and Mrs Harry Chester (he was an active member of the Society of Arts and Assistant Secretary at the Education Department, elected 17th April 1860)

Captain Donnelly (Department of Science and Art)

Thomas Fairbairn (Commissioner for 1851, elected 27th March 1860)

Captain Francis Fowke (Department of Science and Art)

Charles J Freake (Later to assist Cole by building the National Training School for Music free of charge)

Earl Granville (a long-standing political ally of Cole's)

John Kelk (the building contractor for South Kensington who was building the arcades around the new gardens)

John Lucas (Building contractor associated with John Kelk)

Sir Samuel Moreton Peto (Liberal MP and supporter of campaign for 1851 exhibition)

Francis Sandford (Secretary Commissioners for 1862)

John Sheepshanks (who had donated his pictures to the South Kensington Museum)
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