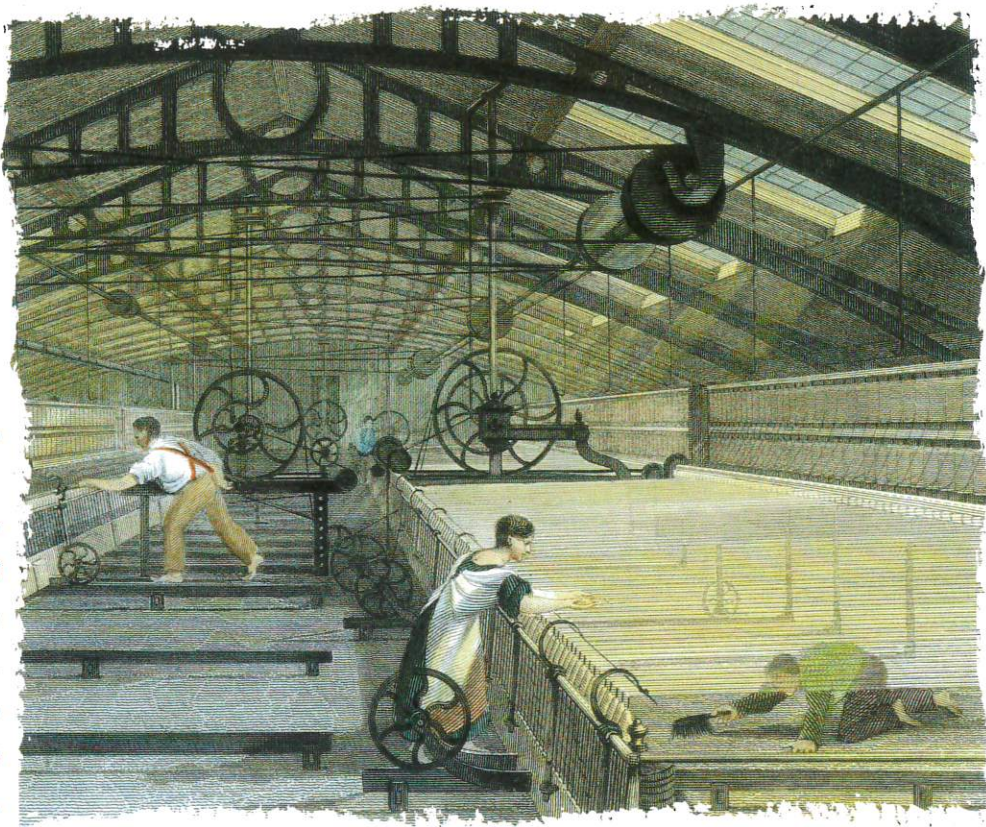


The girl in this picture is a piecer, and the boy scrabbling around under the machine is a scavenger. Do these look like good jobs? I don't think so.



JOB SCORE

Scavenger

FILTH: dusty, filthy floors

DANGER: risky machinery everywhere

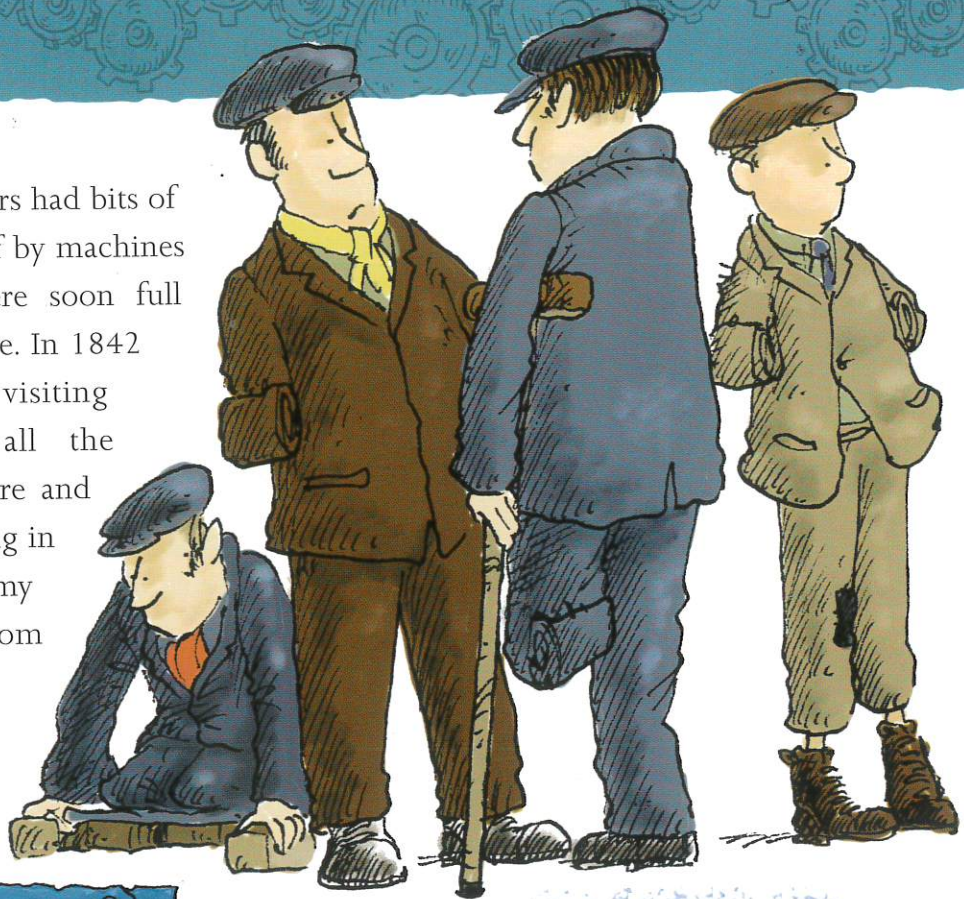
HARD SLOG: follow that machine

CASH: insultingly little

While the mule was spinning and the piecer was piecing, bits of cotton fluff drifted under the machines. They had to be cleaned away because they could cause a fire. The easiest way to get rid of them was for a small child to crawl under the machine with a brush. This had to be done while the machine was working, because if it ever stopped it lost the boss money.

The children who did this, usually the youngest at the mill, were called **scavengers** and they risked getting their heads, arms, legs, hands and toes crushed by the moving machinery. It was especially dangerous when they were hungry or tired. (Remember, they started work at 5.30 in the morning.)

So many mill-workers had bits of their bodies torn off by machines that the towns were soon full of one-armed people. In 1842 a German man visiting Manchester saw all the limbless people there and said it was like 'living in the midst of the army just returned from a campaign'.



TIMETABLE

*for cotton mill-workers
in 1830*

- 5.30 a.m. Start work.
- 8.30 a.m. Ten-minute break to eat your breakfast.
- 1.00 p.m. Thirty-minute break to go home for dinner.
- 5.30 p.m. Eat your tea at your machine.
- 8.00 p.m. Go home, if you're not doing overtime that day.

YUM, YUM ... COTTON WOOL!

The air in a cotton mill was permanently full of white fluff. If you left your lunch lying around, you'd have to dust it off before you ate it or it would be like chewing cotton wool.

The fluff got in your nose, in your eyes and, worst of all, into your lungs. Cotton workers usually had bad asthma. But when factories started putting fans in to clear the air, the workers didn't like it. They said they were so used to swallowing bits of fluffy cotton that they got hungry without it!