

the more the *Northern Star* denounced it. It was "a new mode of canvassing for support for Mechanics' Institutes, and the Brougham system of making one portion of the working classes disgusted with all below them."¹ Lovett replied to these attacks, but in the nature of things his arguments could have little effect.² Not all those who signed the address were cowardly enough to desert. Vincent and Philp claimed to be at once members of the National Association and of the National Charter Association. They were powerful in the Bath area, and special measures had to be taken by O'Connor and his followers to eliminate them. Vincent boldly defended his position, while Cleave, Hetherington, and Neesom engaged in fierce controversy with O'Connor and Rider.³ It must be confessed, however, that the victory rested with the large battalions. Lovett found no general support amongst the Chartist ranks. He was compelled more and more to seek middle-class support, and outside London he gained few adherents.⁴ His Association became a society of political and educational *virtuosi*. It was among other things an avowed supporter of the enfranchisement of women, a policy which alone sufficed to put it out of the pale of practical politics. So the leaven of idealism was ejected from the Chartist mass.

(2) THE ELIMINATION OF O'BRIEN (1841-1842)

O'Brien was also to be eliminated. For years he had been regarded as the friend and mentor of Feargus O'Connor, who had bestowed upon him the title by which he became honourably remembered, "the Chartist Schoolmaster." His articles in the *Northern Star* during 1838 had done not a little both for Chartist theory and for the reputation of that journal. In the Convention of 1839 O'Brien and O'Connor were generally faithful allies, but it is probable that the seeds of disagreement were already sown. O'Brien seems to have been as devoid of business acumen as O'Connor was rich in it. None of his independent journalistic ventures were successes. His personal habits seem to have been very irregular. He was a somewhat cranky, uncertain-tempered individual, impatient of restraint—in short, a man whose intellectual genius was crippled by un-

¹ *Northern Star*, April 24, 1841.

² *Ibid.* May 1, 1841.

³ *Ibid.* May 1, 1841; May 8, 1841. Neesom lost all his bookselling business on account of his support of Lovett.

⁴ The Christian Chartists were on his side, but they did not count for much. O'Neill and Lowery signed the Address.