

## ABSTRACT

The rise of labour and the development of trade unions form a significant part of Jamaica's history. The century between 1838 and 1938 witnessed the growth of trade unions, which like friendly societies were somewhat elitist and did not necessarily capture the imagination of the masses. While there was an increase in the number of registered trade union after 1919, there was no real intensification of activity towards the establishment of labour organizations until the Bustamante era.

Interviews with tradesmen - carpenters and cabinetmakers - who lived and worked during the turbulent days of the late 1930's, indicate an aloofness to the labour movement by the category and tend to the conclusion that trade union and labour union are not synonymous.

The study identifies one area of contradictions referred to by Ken Post in his work on the 1938 'rebellion',