Complex Twists of Becoming: Debates about Elementary Education in English Periodicals, 1833-1880.

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Abstract

Complex Twists of Becoming: Debates about Elementary Education in English Periodicals, 1833-1880.

This thesis investigates the tension between traditional and progressive educational ideas and practices expressed in fictionalised representations and non-fiction discourses in English periodicals from 1833 to 1880. The nature and purpose of elementary education featured prominently and constantly in periodicals throughout the nineteenth-century. However, relatively little scholarly consideration has been given to the important role of periodicals as a medium for exploring educational issues in Victorian England. My thesis aims to contribute to filling that gap.

By drawing on different kinds of periodicals, ranging from the major quarterly reviews to specialist journals aimed at teachers, I show how we can extend our understanding of the social and cultural history of elementary education for working-class and middle-class children. Periodicals, whose reach and influence extended across the spectrum of English society, created a new cultural space for debates about elementary education in the public and private spheres.

My research demonstrates how and why debates about elementary education were shaped and developed into a coherent and meaningful movement by the periodical press from 1833 to 1880. I argue that competing religious preferences progressed the extension of elementary education for working-class children but resisted 'progressive' or 'liberal' models of early education. Exceptionally, Methodism was socially progressive, promoting gender equality in education and an aspirational culture where knowledge acquisition was concerned. I show that periodicals were eminently influential in promoting and facilitating household education and domestic pedagogies as an alternative to formal, institutionalised versions. I hope that this investigation of periodical culture and elementary education will initiate further enquiries on the subject.

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Introduction

This thesis investigates the tension between traditional and progressive educational ideas and practices expressed in fictionalised representations and discourses in periodicals in Victorian England from 1833 to 1880. By analysing texts produced, reproduced, circulated and read by an English reading audience in specific historical conditions, I argue that we can extend our understanding of the social and cultural history of elementary education. The importance of investigating the relationship between the periodical press and education has been highlighted by Janice Schroeder who argues that

> Within Victorian periodical studies, education in its various dimensions has received relatively little focused attention. *The Dictionary of Nineteenth-Century Journalism,* for example, contains no topic entries on education or schooling, and the entry on the professions and journalism contains scant mention of the teachers' press.[1]

The significance of periodical culture is well-documented in an extensive body of scholarship that extends from the Regency period to the late nineteenth-century in Britain.[2] These texts have tended to focus on a variety of topics that featured in the periodical press; specifically, though not exclusively, art, the practice of literary criticism, law, medicine, music, sport, agriculture, theatre, temperance, Victorian occupations and commerce. In Joanne Shattock's most recent edited collection on *Journalism and the Periodical Press in Nineteenth-Century England,* some twenty leading scholars have written on a variety of subjects but not specifically on elementary education.[3] Evidence from secondary sources on the Victorian periodical press tends to confirm Schroeder's position on the "relatively little focused attention" given to the relationship between periodicals and education.[4]

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[1] Janice Schroeder, *Victorian Education and the Periodical Press*, Victorian Periodicals Review, Johns Hopkins University Press, v. 50, no.4 (Winter 2017): 679-685, 10.1353/vpr.2017.0049, 679. http:// www.muse.jhu.edu (accessed April 11, 2019,1.

[2] For example, Richard D. Altick, *The English Common Reader: A Social History of the Mass Reading Public, 1800-1900 (*Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1998). Kevin Gilmartin, *Print Politics-The press and radical opposition in early nineteenth century England (*Cambridge: *Cambridge University Press*, 1996). Jon P. Klancher, *The Making of English Reading Audiences, 1790-1832* (Madison, Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1996). Mark Schoenfield, *British Periodicals and Romantic Identity: The "Literary Lower Empire"* (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009). Joanne Shattock and Michael Wolff, eds. *The Victorian Periodical Press: Samplings and Soundings* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1982). J. Don Vann and Rosemary T.VanArsdel, eds. *Victorian Periodicals and Victorian Society* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995).

[3] Joanne Shattock, ed. *Journalism and the Periodical Press in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Cambridge*:* Cambridge University Press, 2017). The contributors to this important book represent some of the leading scholars on the periodical press. Twenty two chapters cover an eclectic mix of topics including '*Illustration - Graphic Satire, Caricature, Comic Illustration and the Radical Press, 1820-1845*,'*'Periodical Poetry,' 'The Press and the Law' and 'Dickens and the Middle-Class Weekly.'* There is not a specific category in this text that investigates the periodical press and elementary education. Given that this is one of the most recent scholarly works on periodicals, the argument is

Periodicals provide access points through which educational issues can be investigated in order to address the need for the detailed scrutiny and analysis of a subject that has received insufficient scholarly consideration. The importance of periodicals is underscored by Jon Klancher who draws our attention to the diverse reading audiences and reach of some of the leading and most influential publications during the first three decades of the nineteenth-century:

> The most significant journals gathered audiences of five to fifteen thousand readers each: the *Edinburgh Review* (1802), the *Examiner* (1808), the *Quarterly Review (*1809), the *Monthly Magazine* (1814), *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* (1817), the *London Magazine* (1821), the *Westminster Review* (1824), the Athenaeum (1828), *Fraser's Magazine* (1830), the *Metropolitan* (1831). [The reading audiences represented] upper civil servants and clergy, the richer merchants and manufacturers, the gentry and the professionals, all earning more than eight hundred pounds a year. Much more selectively, the journals also reached into the "middling classes" of some two hundred thousand teachers, lesser clergy and civil servants, and shopkeepers, each earning three hundred pounds or less a year.[5]

Shattock supports Klancher's view of the potency of the periodical press which "was a material presence on the streets of villages, towns and cities, its readers numbering in hundreds of thousands." She goes on to emphasise "the representative power of the press; it reflected the views of a far broader cross section of society than Parliament, given the limits of the franchise." [6] However, debates about elementary education in the periodical press were invariably initiated and taken forward by members of the literate middle-class. Periodicals were intended for a very specific reading audience which, with some exceptions, did not include the working-classes. Furthermore, advocates of progressive or

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strengthened for the desirability of research on the relationship between periodicals and debates about elementary education in order to address this gap in our knowledge and understanding.

[4] See note 1

[5] Jon P. Klancher, *The Making of English Reading Audiences,1790-1832 (*Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1987), 50.

[6] See note 3, 2.

unconventional educational ideas and practices were also part of a discourse occurring exclusively among the middle-class in the periodical press.

Given the scholarly consensus on the socio-cultural significance of the periodical press, investigation is needed of the prominence and on-going attention given specifically to elementary education in those publications.[7] So, my research differs from recent studies by focusing on extending our understanding of debates about elementary education in secular, religious and teachers' periodicals in England from 1833 to 1880. In consequence, my thesis aims to

- Investigate how print-mediated sources created a new cultural space for educational reform in England from 1833 to 1880
- Explore the influence of competing religious preferences on the nature and purposes of elementary education for children from working-class and middle-class backgrounds
- Investigate the role of print-mediated sources in promoting and facilitating domestic pedagogies and household education.

My methodology is qualitative, determined by the type of data to be collected, and uses literary case studies and documentary analysis to address the following research questions:

1. How and why did elementary education debates take shape and develop into a coherent and meaningful movement from 1833-1880?
2. i What was the significance of the relationship between religion, specifically Anglicanism, Methodism and Roman Catholicism, and the extension of elementary education?

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[7] See note 1. The scholarly consensus on the importance of the periodical press is confirmed in these secondary sources which constitute some of the most important contributions to the scholarship of the subject from the 1980s to the present day.

2. ii How did religion further, inhibit or redefine ideas about 'progressive' or 'liberal' early education from the mid to late nineteenth-century?

3. How important were domestic pedagogies as an alternative to formal, institutionalised elementary education?

Towards a definition of traditional and progressive education

In nineteenth-century terms, a traditional curriculum specified subject matter legitimised, according to David Halpin, by "historic precedent." Halpin goes on to argue that pedagogies based on custom and practice "privilege teaching instead of learning" and neglect innovative educational theories.[8] Traditional forms of teaching concentrated on an information transmission model of instruction involving the packaging and presentation of facts whereas progressive education was learner-centred, and promoted "less passive and more active" forms of learning that developed pupils' "knowledge and understanding - of themselves and of other people and of things in general."[9] Moreover, I argue that progressive modes of pedagogy rejected rote learning in favour of enquiry, creative imagination, reflection and a version of education derived from lived experience. From the 1840s onwards, the transformation of teaching from a trade or form of 'service' to a learned profession for women and men represents a further progressive educational development in Victorian England.

The word 'progressive' can also be defined in terms of the State's first education grant in 1833 for new elementary school buildings and subsequent legislative milestones, culminating in a compulsory elementary education Act in 1880. Norman Morris has commented on the changing landscape of elementary education in the Victorian period:

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[8] David Halpin, *Romanticism and Education : Love, Heroism and Imagination in Pedagogy (*London and New York: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2017), 1.

[9] Ibid.

> Mass education came to England and Wales in the nineteenth century, later than in some countries, but the reasons for its arrival and the form it took were peculiarly native. Prior to 1800 schooling, particularly for children of the labouring poor, was sporadic and voluntary; by the end of the last decades of the century it was universal and compulsory, with central and local governmental agencies to enforce both provision and attendance.[10]

Morris goes on to argue that elementary education was "of all the social innovations of the nineteenth century [. . .] one of the most necessary for national survival" because it was "an essential instrument of social control."[11] As I show in subsequent chapters, the transformative changes in elementary education were more complex than Morris suggests and cannot be explained solely in terms of 'social control.'

The Victorian period witnessed successive governments becoming increasingly involved in shaping and directing a national elementary education system, instituting an inspectorate of schools and introducing teachers' certification and registration. Those measures created tensions between secular and religious versions of elementary education, while also signalling that denominational charities could not finance the need for more schools in urban and rural areas. Print-mediated sources would play a prominent role in bringing an English reading audience's attention to the rising and persistent tensions between progressive and traditional educational ideas and practices from the mid to late nineteenth-century.

Rationale for selection of periodicals

My choice of periodicals has been informed principally by their status as publications whose sales and circulation figures, political affiliations and reading audiences represented a diverse, though not wholly inclusive, cross-section of British society.[12] The *Edinburgh Review* contributed significantly to the development of modern periodicals and played a pivotal role in raising the standards of literary criticism. The *Edinburgh* was one of the best selling periodicals in Britain, promoting political and educational reforms. Consequently, that publication features prominently in my thesis. As Jon Klancher has argued, the *Edinburgh* in common with

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[10] Norman Morris, Introduction : *Four Periods of Public Education As Reviewed in 1832, 1839, 1846, 1862* by James Kay-Shuttleworth, (Brighton: The Harvester Press Limited, 1973), vii. (First published in London: Longman, Green, Longman and Roberts, 1862).

[11] Ibid., viii.

> Such representative journals as *Blackwood's,* the *Athenaeum*, the *New Monthly . . .* and *Fraser's*, [succeeded in producing] a powerful transauthorial discourse [that] echoes through its protean collection of styles, topics, and voices. The readers gathered by this discourse form not only an empirical audience, but also a collective interpreter mapping out the cultural physiognomy of Britain.[13]

Educational issues, considered from a Whig perspective, appeared with regularity in the *Edinburgh Review*. Importantly, for my thesis, progressive educational ideas and arguments in favour of greater State involvement in elementary education, especially for working-class children, were championed by this periodical. Henry Brougham, Whig politician, liberal leader in the House of Commons, Lord Chancellor from 1830-1834 and the driving force behind the Great Reform Act of 1832, was a prominent figure in the history of the *Edinburgh Review.*[14] Brougham was at the forefront of educational reform in nineteenth-century England. He was progressive, pragmatic and prescient in identifying the need to 'fill up the gaps' in educational provision for working-class children by anticipating the 1870 Education Act. Brougham played a pivotal role in raising the profile and importance of universal, elementary education through his political activities and contributions to the *Edinburgh Review.* Other notable contributors, whose influential writings provided another reason for choosing the latter periodical, included Thomas Arnold, Thomas Carlyle, William

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[12] Sales and circulation figures are notoriously difficult to record with convincing accuracy. Although literacy rates were rising during the nineteenth-century, the working-class would have found the price of a periodical to be prohibitive.

[13] See note 5, 51 -52.

[14] Henry Brougham (1778-1868). From1830 Ist Baron Brougham and Vaux, PC QC, FRS. He formed the *Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge in 1825* and was involved in the foundation of the University of London (later University College London) in 1826. In chapter 1, I discuss the importance of his 1818 speech on education reform and its prominent reviews in the late Regency Press. He was one of the founder members, along with Francis Jeffrey, Sydney Smith and Francis Horner, of the *Edinburgh Review.*

Hazlitt, Felicia Hemans, Francis Jeffrey, Thomas Babington Macaulay, Sir Walter Scott, Sydney Smith, Leigh Hunt and John Stuart Mill. As elementary education became increasingly politicised during the nineteenth-century, so the major political parties ensured they had a prominent role in promoting their views on the subject in the periodical press.

The *Quarterly Review* came into existence as "an organ of the Tories" in response to the *Edinburgh's* Whig values.*[15]* As Mark Schoenfield argues, founding the *Quarterly Review* "solidified John Murray's position as a publisher and consolidated the notion of publisher as public figure."[16] The *Quarterly Review* was closely associated with specific, dominant cultural values: a classical education, the primacy of the Established Church in controlling elementary education, especially in respect of working-class children, and the continuation of well-defined hierarchical and sharply calibrated conservative social distinctions. Editorial policies may have been influenced by the importance of educational institutions which were, according to Raymond Williams,

> The main agencies of the transmission of an effective dominant culture, and this is now a major economic as well as a cultural activity; indeed it is both in the same moment. Moreover, at a philosophical level, at the true level of theory and at the level of history of various practices, there is a process which I call the *selective tradition*: that which, within the terms of an effective dominant culture, is always passed off as '*the* tradition', '*the* significant past'.[17]

Williams's argument helps to explain the cultural significance and politicisation of education as an agency of transmission of 'an effective dominant culture' and how the battle for 'control' of education becomes [and remains] a battle to uphold or challenge dominant culture in the nineteenth-century. Significantly, the *Quarterly Review* provides an entry point for examining anti-radical, traditional educational values, meanings and practices that were among the core values of its editorial policy. Any attempt to understand the tensions between progressive and traditional educational theories and practices needs to explore such conflicts as expressed by opposing political ideologies in these influential publications.[18] Importantly, the *Quarterly Review* was established and supported by a number of highly influential and powerful literary and political figures: Walter Scott, Robert Southey, John Wilson Croker, and George Canning. Opposed to political reform, its readership was predominantly middle-class.

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[15] Matthew Arnold, *Essays in Criticism, 22-3, or Arnold PW, 111, 270- cited in* Joanna Shattock and Michael Wolff, (eds.), *The Victorian Periodical Press: Samplings and Soundings* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1982), 10. The *Quarterly Review* was published by John Murray and, initially, established to counter the influence on public opinion of the *Edinburgh Review.* William Gifford was its first editor; appointed by George Canning when Foreign Secretary and later Prime Minister. The political origins of the *Quarterly Review* were well-known at the time that it began. The founding of the *Quarterly Review* can be found in Susan Oliver, *Scott, Byron and the Poetics of Cultural Encounter* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), Ch. 1, 28. Also, in Susan Oliver, *Transatlantic influences in periodical editing: from Francis Jeffrey's Edinburgh Review to Horace Greeley's New York Tribune,* Symbiosis: *a Journal of Anglo-American Literary Relations* v.9, no.1 http://www.humanities-ebooks.co.uk/2005> (accessed September 12, 2019): 45-62.

[16] Mark Schoenfield, *British Periodicals and Romantic Identity: The "Literary Lower Empire"* (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan,2009), 7.

[17] Raymond Williams, *From Base and Superstructure in* Marxist Cultural Theory, in New Historicism and Cultural Materialism: A Reader, ed. Kiernan Ryan (London: Arnold, 1996), 22-28.

George Eliot expressed her support for *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* later in the nineteenth–century by publishing all but one of her novels in that periodical. By the 1850s, novels were typically published and serialised in the first instance in periodicals rather than as stand-alone versions. The print volumes came afterwards. Surprisingly, given the criticism of his poetry in the early numbers of *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, Samuel Taylor Coleridge regarded it as "an unprecedented Phenomenon [sic] in the world of letters,"[19] while Ann Matheson suggests that

> The magazines in this genre were of a different intellectual stature from their early nineteenth century counterparts, and they dominated Scottish periodical publishing in the early Victorian period, attracting a readership that spanned not only Scotland but also England. They appealed to the professional reading market that was building up in Scotland and provided the educational sections of Scottish society with the kind of intellectual stimulus they sought.[20]

Blackwood's, the popularity of which is reflected in its acquisition of the familiar name, *Maga*, published major nineteenth-century fiction and non-fiction by, among others, Anthony Trollope, Thomas Hardy and Oscar Wilde. Well known for its personal attacks on contemporary personalities, the periodical's Tory political loyalties significantly influenced its position on elementary education. As Mark Schoenfield argues, "if economics was the bedrock of the *Edinburgh's* organization of knowledge, history was *Maga's* foundational discourse."[21] Recourse to a highly selective view of the past permeated the *Maga's* opinions on education for the working-class and confirms a contemporary view of an important reciprocal relationship between historical conditions and text creation: "we cannot be ignorant that hitherto, whenever the lower orders of any great state have obtained a smattering of knowledge, they have generally used it to produce national ruin."[22] Significantly, for my thesis, the periodical's opposition to government interference in education, which according to one review ought to be "exclusively in the hands of men who stand aloof from party," reflected a traditional cultural feature that privileged the voluntary principle instead of a State financed and controlled system of universal, elementary education.[23]

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[18] The broad contours of these tensions are set out in the section on traditional and progressive educational ideas and practices in my introduction.

[19] Ann Matheson, *Scottish Periodicals* , in *Victorian Periodicals: A Guide to* Research vol. 2, eds. J. Don Vann and Rosemary T. VanArsdel (New York: MLA, 1989),100.

[20] Ibid.

As Kevin Gilmartin argues, the increasing politicisation of elementary education by periodicals affiliated to the two dominant political parties

> Was challenged by a radical reform movement that belittled the difference between the two parties, and cultivated an ominous new class of political readers [and] effective distribution networks extended this periodical saturation through space as well as time. [. . .] In the manufacturing districts they had been circulated by every contrivance; every town was overflowed by them; in every village they were almost innumerable.[24]

Leigh and John Hunt's newspaper the *Examiner* was committed to radical reformist principles and attracted contributions from some of the outstanding literary figures of the nineteenth century: Lord Byron, John Keats, William Hazlitt, Percy Bysshe Shelley, John

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[21] Note 16,10.

[22] *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, May 1825,534.

[23] Ibid.

[24] Kevin Gilmartin, *Print Politics: The press and radical opposition in early nineteenth century England* (Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 1996), 81-83.

Stuart Mill, John Forster, William Makepeace Thackeray and Charles Dickens.[25] The *Examiner* took a progressive, politically challenging position on education, arguing that "knowledge is power" but a minority in society have a "legal monopoly" on both.[26] Striking out against features of the middle–class and upper-class establishment, the periodical lambasted the clergy who dominated teaching: the "grave, reverend, erudite person" possessing "unapproachable superiority" and persons who pronounced on the ultimate dangers of educating the working-class.[27] Perpetuating ignorance in order to maintain paternalism was viewed by the *Examiner* as a means of ensuring the persistence of respect for traditional hierarchical distinctions and subservience among the working-class. These issues, investigated in my thesis, would remain an important feature of the elementary education debate covered in periodicals from the mid to late nineteenth-century. As far as the *Examiner* was concerned, the "universal acquirement of education to a limited extent has now become a link in the great chain of consequence."[28] Radical educational ideas represent an integral focus of my thesis and, as such, the *Examiner* is an important source as a counterweight to traditionalism and the cultural status quo that featured in mainstream publications.

In responding to changing historical conditions by offering a quickly and widely circulating medium, periodicals and the literary works they reviewed drew attention to, fuelled and sustained the momentum of the education debates from the mid to late nineteenth-century. As Paul Fry argues, the relationship between literature and the historical contexts to which it responds is a fundamental bond because "the return to the real world is language bound, because it is by means of discourse that power circulates knowledge, and that it is by language that the real world shapes itself."[29] One of the central arguments in my thesis is shaped by Fry's contention that "literature has a discursive agency that affects history every bit as much as history affects literature."[30] Writing by Victorian novelists and contributors to periodicals was not produced in isolation from their awareness of, and thinking about past and current historical events. Such reciprocal relationships between authors, the world they lived in, and the media of the printed word represent a recurring theme in this literary-historical study.

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[25] Founded by Leigh and John Hunt in 1808 as a leading radical, intellectual journal devoted to politics, domestic economy and theatricals.

[26] The *Examiner,* General Education; 681 (Jan. 1821), 33-5.

[27] Ibid., 34

[28] Ibid.

Education featured prominently and regularly in general interest, educational and religious periodicals that informed and formed public opinion and, thereby, created an English reading audience. Since the eighteenth-century, circulating libraries, such as Mudie's Lending Library and Mudie's Subscription Library established in London from 1852, ensured that printed publications reached a much wider and more diverse readership. Among those texts were fictionalised representations of elementary education which were serialised and multiply reviewed in periodicals. Thus a relationship was formed between journalism and literary works which ensured that educational issues received media attention throughout the Victorian period. Moreover, the geographical and demographic reach of print culture meant that education entered into a national debate.

Discourses on formal and informal education in the periodical press covered legislation, policy, pedagogical initiatives, the professionalisation of teaching and opinions concerning the extension of provision for working-class children. Also, fundamental questions were raised about the need for and dangers of a 'national' education system and which organisations should provide and pay for it. Furthermore, what should be taught and why? Ultimately, was elementary education about the democratisation of knowledge, the imparting of skills and discipline? These contentious issues were at the heart of debates about elementary education which featured prominently and continuously in the periodical press throughout the nineteenth-century.

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[29] Paul Fry, Transcript: Lecture 19 - The New Historicism [Yale University, March 31, 2009], 3.

[30] Ibid.

Initially, coverage of elementary education in periodicals was dominated by opposing views on a fundamental question: do "coarse hands," Dickens's satiric metonymy for working people, also need heads?[31] Dickens of course argues that they do, because the alternative is inexorably to become either the kind of victim that Stephen Blackpool becomes in *Hard Times* or to perpetuate the cruelty of his persecutors. Important periodicals such as the *Edinburgh Review,* the *Examiner,* the *London Magazine*, *Household Words* and the *Educational Times* were prominent in the evolution of a coherent and meaningful movement committed to introducing what we might now identify as progressive education. By contrast, among their antagonists were the Tory *Quarterly Review, Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* and the *Analyst* whose highly politicised reviews were dismissive of education reforms proposed by the Whigs. The rapidly increasing power of the English print media associated with such periodicals was mocked by the Fictional Professor Herr Teufelsdröckh in Thomas Carlyle's satire *Sartor Resartus*:

> The Journalists are now the true Kings and Clergy: henceforth Historians, unless they are fools, must write not of Bourbon Dynasties, and Tudors and Hapsburgs; but of stamped Broad-Sheet Dynasties, and quite new successive Names, according as this or the other Able Editor, or Combination of Able Editors gains the world's ear. Of the British Newspaper Press, perhaps the most important of all, and wonderful enough in its secret constitution and procedure, a valuable descriptive history already exists, in that language, under the title of *Satan's Invisible World Displayed*.[32]

Ironically, given the satirical thrust of the above quotation, *Sartor Resartus* was serialised in *Fraser's Magazine* from 1833 to 1834, and Carlyle's career depended significantly upon the growth of the periodical press in nineteenth-century England. An earlier example of the burgeoning importance of print culture is revealed by a relatively obscure historical figure,

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[31] In Charles Dickens's *Great Expectations* which was serialised in *All The Year Round (*1 December , 1860 – to August, 1861), the character Estella remarks on observing Pip, "what coarse hands he has." 'Hands' that symbolised social class, manual labour and, quite possibly, a lack of education.

[32] Thomas Carlyle, *Sartor Resartus: The Life and Opinions of Herr Teufelsdröckh* (London: Chapman and Hall, Limited, 1836), 30. This passage was brought to my attention by my supervisor, Professor Susan Oliver.

Nehemiah Wallington. This artisan was a compulsive and obsessive purchaser and reader of print material. He has recently been described by Joad Raymond as a "Calvinist, autodidact and Woodturner"[33] who wrote that

> I find so many of these little pamflets of weekly news about my house I thought they were so many theeves that had stole away my money before I was aware of them[.] At first they cast me into some sad thought: to thinke that I should be so unwise to cast so much money away in so dead time of traiding and a hard time of getting [.] I must one day give account before the grat God as how I have got my mony: so I must give an account how I have improved and laid out every penny I have: my contience tells me I have been very remisse and unwise in some kind both in gitting and in spending . [34]

A significant gulf of time separated Wallington's confessional account, written in 1642, and Sydney Smith's wholesome praise of the importance of the *Edinburgh Review,* a periodical that features prominently in my thesis, in 1839. Smith reminded readers, in the Preface to his collected works, of the repressive legal climate in which the *Edinburgh* had emerged:

> To appreciate the value of the *Edinburgh Review*, the state of England at the period when that journal began should be had in remembrance. The Catholics were not emancipated — the Corporation and Test Acts were unrepealed — the Game Laws were horribly oppressive — Steel-traps and spring-guns were set all over the country — Prisoners tried for their lives could have no counsel — Lord Eldon and the Court of Chancery pressed heavily on mankind — Libel was punished by the most cruel and vindictive imprisonments — the principles of Political Economy were little understood — The Law of Debt and Conspiracy were on the worst footing — the enormous wickedness of the Slave Trade was tolerated — a thousand evils were in existence which the talents of good and noble men have since lessened or removed: and these efforts have been not a little assisted by the honest boldness of the *Edinburgh Review*.[35]

By situating the periodical in this way, Smith emphasised what the British reading public already knew, given the early notoriety of the *Edinburgh*; that is, the thirty years of high-profile prominence that the *Edinburgh* had enjoyed as one of Britain's most contentious reviews. Some years before Smith wrote about the importance of understanding the *Edinburgh* in its historical context, William Hazlitt subjected the Tory press's *Quarterly Review* to a somewhat different analysis:

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[33] Joad Raymond, ed., *The Oxford History of Popular Print Culture, Volume 1: Cheap Print in Britain and Ireland to 1660* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 1.

[34] David Booy, ed., *The Notebooks of Nehemiah Wallington, 1618 -1654: A Selection*, in *The Oxford History of Popular Print Culture, Volume 1: Cheap Print in Britain and Ireland to 1660*, Ed. Joad Raymond. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 156.

[35] Sydney Smith, *Works* (London: Longmans, Green and Co.,1839), vi.

> The editor and his friends systematically explode every principle of liberty and strike at the root of all free inquiry or discussion by running down every writer as a vile scribbler and a bad member of society, who is not a hireling and a slave. The intention is to poison the sources of public opinion and of individual fame, to pervert literature from being the natural ally of freedom and humanity into an engine of priestcraft and despotism, and to undermine the spirit of the English constitution and the independence of the English character.[36]

Hazlitt's stinging attack can be explained by the fact that the *Quarterly* had pejoratively labelled him as one of the "Cockney" school of writers that also included Leigh and John Hunt and John Keats. Though separated by two centuries and different social, educational and occupational backgrounds, Wallington, Smith and Hazlitt demonstrated the universality that periodicals had achieved: the persistence and pervasiveness of the significance of print culture in English and, subsequently, British society. Hazlitt's reformist Whig ideas were influenced by his dissenting Unitarian family and educational background, and by his friendships with writers including Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Percy Bysshe Shelley, William Wordsworth, Charles Lamb, Henry Brougham, Leigh Hunt and Lord Byron. Moreover, he was well known as an *Edinburgh* reviewer in his own right. Smith, also a prolific contributor, edited the first number of the *Edinburgh Review* in 1802, before handing that role on to fellow founder Francis Jeffrey.[37] Each of these writers' obsessions with a culture of journalism is testimony to the crucial importance of print–mediated sources in literary-historical developments from seventeenth-century Stuart England and Scotland to nineteenth-century Victorian Britain.

Literary representations of elementary education

Among key studies that have addressed literary representations of elementary education in the Victorian period, and have influenced my selection of novels and poetry, are Dinah

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[36] William Hazlitt, *The Spirit of the Age* (London: Henry Colburn, *1825.*), 124.
[37] The founders of the *Edinburgh Review* were Francis Jeffrey, Sydney Smith, Henry Brougham and Francis Horner.

Birch's *Our Victorian Education*,[38] David Halpin's *Romanticism and Education*,[39] Alan Richardson's *Literature, Education and Romanticism,*[40] Laura Morgan Green's *Educating Women: Cult*ural *Conflict and Victorian Literature*[41] and Philip Collins's *Dickens and Education*.[42]

Birch's selection of primary sources include writing by Charles Dickens, William Wordsworth, Matthew Arnold and John Ruskin. Those sources are supplemented by literary case studies on Charlotte Brontë, Ellen Wood, Elizabeth Sewell and George Elliot.[43] Birch is particularly interested in progressive educational ideas which means that her literary choices share some common features. She focuses on novelists and poets who were highly critical of information transmission models of learning, the packaging and presentation of facts, the exclusion of working-class children from educational opportunities and an irrelevant curriculum. They advocated the primacy of creative imagination, an education of feeling, the development of the individual and, in effect, the democratisation of education through universal provision.

Selected novels by Charles Dickens, serialised and reviewed in periodicals, form case studies in my thesis. These include *Nicholas Nickleby* (1838), *Dombey and Son* (1846), *David Copperfield* (1849) and *Hard Times* (1854). Those novels engaged with and significantly contributed to public debates about the education of the poor, critiqued pedagogical theories and practices, criticised and satirised inadequate teacher training provision and drew the public's attention to the importance of education in the home. The serialisation of Dickens's works and other writers, such as George Eliot, first appeared in periodicals and were retroactively gathered up into books for the circulating library. Consequently, this medium afforded access to different audiences who engaged with the educational issues raised by the authors. Dickens argued for the humanizing effects of education and promoted the centrality of creative imagination and an education of feeling. These novels are analysed in my chapter titled, *schools, pedagogy and teachers*.

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[38] Dinah Birch, *Our Victorian Education* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2008).

[39] See note 8.

[40] Alan Richardson, *Literature, Education and Romanticism : Cambridge Studies in Romanticism (*Cambridge*:* Cambridge University Press, 1994).

[41] Laura Morgan Green, *Educating Women: Cultural Conflict and Victorian Literature* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2001). There is al so a recent article by Laura Morgan Green, titled '*Education,' Victorian Literature and Culture*, v. 46 , issue 3-4, (Fall/Winter, 2018), 656-659

[42] Philip Collins, *Dickens and Education* (London: MacMillan and Co. Ltd., 1963).

[43] Examples of titles of novels, writers and poets: *Nicholas Nickleby; A Christmas Carol; Dombey and Son; Hard Times; Our Mutual Friend; A Haunted Man;* Wordsworth; Matthew Arnold; Cardinal Newman; John Ruskin*; Jane Eyre; Villette; East Lynne;* Elizabeth Sewell: *Principles of Education;* George Eliot.

William Wordsworth's inclusion in the thesis is based on his progressive educational ideas, his advocacy of universal State education and, in common with Dickens, his criticisms of rote learning. David Halpin has described Wordsworth "as an early and fierce critic of teaching methods that eschewed imaginative engagement in favour of transmitting facts."[44] Also, looking back to the earlier nineteenth-century, it is significant that Samuel Taylor Coleridge shared Wordsworth's negative experiences of school life and recorded his concerns in poetry and prose that continued to be read into the Victorian period. Both men had been sent away to boarding school following the death of parents. Coleridge's 1798 collaboration with Wordsworth in the compilation of *Lyrical Ballads* resulted in a statement of Romantic principles and ideas that has onward relevance to debates about education. As noted in the original "advertisement" to the 1798 edition and emphasised by Wordsworth in his Preface (1800 and subsequent editions), the poems in *Lyrical Ballads* stressed the significance of ordinary lives, prioritising individuality and a world in which people who often went unnoticed – men, women and children living at the margins of society in conditions of poverty and hardship – could be given a voice through poetry. The poems in the collection highlighted the principle of individuality in learning through attention to people's lives as a necessary alternative to traditional educational practices.

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[44] See note 8, 89.

Dinah Birch's selection of women novelists who contributed significantly to the education debates goes some way to achieving a sense of gender balance and equality in an examination of literary representations of education in Victorian England. I include an analysis of Charlotte Brontë's *Bildungsroman* novel *Jane Eyre* in my thesis. Birch argues that the development of self-awareness through education, reflective of her "intensely inward understanding of Romanticism" was a dominant theme in Brontë's novels.[45] Birch uses literary case studies to explore the "function of teaching and learning in women's lives" through the writing of Brontë, along with each of the other women writers including George Eliot, Ellen Wood and Elizabeth Sewell.[46] Those authors challenged the paternalistic dominance of education in Victorian Britain and their body of fiction represented a rhetoric of opposition to the prevailing cultural norms that relegated women to a subordinate position in the education of the nation.

George Eliot's novel *The Mill on the Floss* features prominently in my thesis as a literary case study. Eliot also addressed educational issues in her novel *Middlemarch* about which Laura Green remarks that

> The topic of education is central to *Middlemarch*. In addition to this centrality of education in the broadest sense, however - as the development of the individual in his or her social reality - *Middlemarch* is clearly a critique of education in a more specifically intellectual and institutional sense. [47]

In *Middlemarch,* serialised in the tory *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* from 1871, Eliot's position on female education was clearly at variance with views expressed two years earlier in the more staid, similarly conservative *Quarterly Review.* According to one review in that publication, as far as education was concerned "men [were] above women" and "the proper sphere of women is to be dependent and domestic."[48] Reinforcing the separation of gender roles in Victorian society, the reviewer in that publication continued that "men earn bread and govern."[49] As this literary-historical study is also concerned with an investigation of informal, non-institutionalised education, Eliot's scepticism, as described by Green, about "the power of institutions – even educational institutions – to [. . .] effect the outer life of man [. . .] into harmony with his inward needs" is particularly relevant. For Eliot, the ultimate aim of education was a moral one.[50]

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[45] See note 38, 89.
[46] Ibid.
[47] See note 41, 71.
[48] The *Quarterly Review,* 1869, 448 -449.

Eliot shares Dickens's critical position on schoolmasters who did not measure up to the virtuous standards expected of their 'profession'. Clerics were often targeted as particularly inept pedagogues through satire and direct criticism. In the *Mill on the Floss*, Mr Tulliver wants his son Tom to be educated in order that he might advance in a ruthlessly competitive Victorian world. Tom is subjected to and struggles with a classical education which cannot be reconciled with his aspirations for a career in trade. By stressing the intellectual aptitudes of his sister, Maggie Tulliver, Eliot was making a striking point about equality and the lack of educational opportunities for girls and women in this novel. Significantly, given Victorian attitudes towards disabilities, Eliot's character Philip Wakem, who has a significant curvature of the spine, is portrayed as intellectually outstanding and musically gifted. This portrayal of disability challenged pervasive stereotypes and prejudicial attitudes about infirmity and difference.

I now go on to describe and justify the inclusion in my thesis of other leading and minor periodicals and fictionalised representations of elementary education that feature in the following chapters. Chapter 1 of my thesis addresses the following main research question: How and why did elementary education debates take shape and develop into a coherent and meaningful movement from 1833 to 1880? This chapter focuses on *schools, pedagogy and teachers*. These topics are analysed within the historical context of a country transitioning into a modern, industrial nation. The difficult lives of disadvantaged, socio-economically poor children were exacerbated by the demand for child labour, which involved long hours, unhealthy and dangerous working conditions in, for example, the rapidly expanding factory system. My thesis demonstrates how those children's educational needs were brought to the forefront of public discourse by the periodical press. I investigate how elementary education debates in England took shape into a coherent and meaningful movement with my argument linking late Regency reviews in ways that show how arguments developed from earlier beginnings. For example, I locate fictionalised accounts of elementary education in selected works by Charles Dickens within the framework of his periodical, *Household Words*, and also as stand-alone case studies. I show how and why *Household Words*, aimed primarily at the middle-classes, influential people in the public sector and aspirational literate members of the working-class, is an important literary resource for comparing fictional and non-fictional representations and interpretations of elementary education. What has been described by John Drew as "crusading social journalism" was at the core of the publication's agenda, with some three hundred and eighty contributors, ninety of whom were women.[51] Dickens authored and co-authored numerous articles, which were usually unsigned. The importance of education was evidenced by the fact that over the lifetime of the magazine, one thousand articles or references were devoted to the subject. Invective, satire, parody, cynicism, scepticism, irony and the comic were all used to express views and correctives to what were regarded by the writers as ineffective or harmful educational theories and practices.

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[49] Ibid., 469.

[50] See Note 41, 73.

I explore the influence on Victorian elementary education of theories and practices associated with Romanticism and Utilitarianism: movements which featured prominently in the periodical press. This chapter also argues that an important contribution was made by specialist educational periodicals to the professionalisation of teaching from the mid to late nineteenth-century England. Among the most important of these periodicals was the College of Preceptor's *Educational Times*, a publication recognised by contemporaries as highly influential and progressive in raising teaching standards through professional examinations, reviewing educational texts and publishing correspondence from educators and articles on a variety of educational topics. The National Union of Elementary Teacher's publication, the *Schoolmaster* played an important role in representing the views and professional interests of school teachers in England and Wales. Among the other leading educational periodicals were the *School Guardian,* the *Edinburgh Educational News* and the *Sunday School Record* and *Teacher's Assistant.*

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[51] John Drew, *Dictionary of Nineteenth-Century Journalism* (Academia Press and the British Library, 2009): extract from University of Buckingham website: *Household Words*, 1.

Chapter 2 investigates the connection made between religion and elementary education in the Victorian periodical press to address two main research questions: (1) what was the significance of the relationship between religion, specifically Anglicanism, Methodism and Roman Catholicism, and the extension of elementary education, and (2) How did religion further, inhibit or redefine ideas about 'progressive' or 'liberal' early education from the mid to late nineteenth-century?

As Josef Altholz argues, "it is fair to say that the press in all its forms, newspaper, magazine, review, and annual, is the indispensable primary source for the study of nineteenth-century religion." [52] Religious periodicals were consistently at the forefront of initiatives and sustained debates to extend elementary education for working-class children.[53] In that respect, the majority of these publications sought to progress educational provision under clerical control but, conversely, they shared a common purpose in opposing progressive educational ideas. Pupil-centred and learning-focused education represented a progressive philosophy of schooling which was rejected by Protestant and Roman Catholic periodicals as secular in origin and antithetical to Christian principles. Such conservative views reinforced barriers to the social mobility of disadvantaged and economically poor children in Victorian society. The position of the evangelical wing of the Church of England was represented by the influential *Christian Observer* which, among other causes, opposed the liberal position of the *Edinburgh Review* on elementary education. Other prominent and influential Anglican periodicals included the National Society's *Monthly Paper for Promoting the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church*, the *Christian Remembrancer,* the *British Magazine*, the *Church Quarterly Review,* the *Church Times* and the *Record.* The editorial policies of these publications promoted a broad spectrum of views within the Church of England which Altholz maintains was

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[52] Josef L. Altholz, *The Religious Press in Britain, 1760* – 1900 (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1989), 1.

[53] In chapter 2, I analyse the contribution of each of the religious periodicals cited here to elementary education debates from 1833 to 1880.

> Not merely the established church, with a monopoly of political power, but was the largest single denomination, the nominal religion of the bulk of the population and certainly the faith of the classes that mattered, the social and intellectual elite. Indeed, most dissenting denominations had begun as secessions from the Establishment, and its fissiparous tendencies continued, though in our period they took the form of large-scale movements within the Church, each of which was to develop a press of its own sufficient for a full denomination.[54]

Roman Catholicism's response to the direction, extension and functions of elementary education shared many of the concerns and priorities expressed by the Church of England. Both defended and extended traditional models of education, but Catholicism sought to differentiate its position from that of Protestantism by emphasising the tuition of pupils as guardianship. As I argue in this chapter, both religions regarded the fundamental purpose of elementary education as salvific and, as far as their temporal responsibilities were concerned, the formation of moral citizens participating in a tolerant, multi-denominational civic society. Following an initial ambivalence to the potential importance of print culture in advancing Catholic teachings, the church unequivocally accepted the efficacy of a combination of press, pulpit and schoolroom. As Josef Altholz argues

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[54] See note 52, 16.

> The Roman Catholic press started slowly and tentatively. English Catholicism had been shaped by two centuries of persecution: the chief concern of Catholics had been to remain unnoticed. Even when an active Catholic press had developed, some old Catholics were not sure that it was a good thing.[55]

The most important Roman Catholic periodicals were the *Dublin Review*, the *Rambler a*nd the *Tablet* which continues to be published in the twenty-first century as the leading Catholic periodical*.* My thesis investigates their contribution to elementary education debates because they represent a spectrum of views from liberal and ultramontane perspectives. I analyse the tension between traditional and progressive educational theories and practices in a case study of Monsignor William Petre. Petre's views on a liberal Catholic education were published and debated in Catholic periodicals which reveal the potency and pervasiveness of Roman Catholicism's conservative position on elementary education and unwavering opposition to progressive pedagogical practices.

In the mid nineteenth-century, Methodism, which had gained ground since its foundation in the eighteenth-century by John Wesley, George Whitefield and Charles Wesley, began to provide an alternative to the dominant procrustean system of elementary education associated with Anglicanism and Roman Catholicism. I contrast a version of education that emphasises a pedagogy of uniformity and conformity with one illustrating the green shoots of progressive educational ideas and practices in Methodist schools. I do so by drawing on evidence from Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Schools and the *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, the *Primitive Methodist Magazine* and the *Christian Ambassador*. These sources reveal an evolving educational philosophy which valued individuality, placed the learner at the centre of the educative process, and was socially progressive.

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[55] Ibid.,97.

Unitarianism preceded Methodism as a belief system, and was immensely influential on education because the topic was so important to members of that church. Among the leading Unitarian Dissenting colleges, mentioned by Isabel Rivers and David L. Wykes, were the "Countess of Huntingdon's College at Trevecka [. . .] the Evangelic Academy [. . .] Hackney Theological Academy [. . .] Coward College [and] Manchester College."[56] Unitarian Dissenting colleges were highly important during the late eighteenth-century and Romantic period with major Romantic writers such as Anna Laetitia Barbauld (nee Aiken), William Hazlitt, Charles Lamb and John Keats being educated at them. Charles Rzepka draws attention to Charles Roe's point that Dissenting academies were established to provide an education for the sons of a "rising class of skilled tradesmen, merchants and professionals" who because of their religious beliefs could not attend the major new Anglican independent schools or go to university." [57] There is insufficient space here for an in-depth investigation of Unitarianism's influence on education, and a further enquiry into that area would extend the field of knowledge. However, in chapter 2, I identify a selection of periodicals associated with dissenting religion, their editors, important contributors and, in particular, the contribution of Harriet Martineau to the Victorian Unitarian periodical press.

Religious influence on elementary education was not confined to formal, traditional versions of schooling in the public sphere but extended beyond the classroom into middle–class and working-class households. In Chapter 3, I investigate the following research question: how important were domestic pedagogies as an alternative to formal, institutionalised elementary education? In doing so, I argue that the pedagogic functions of leading and minor general and religious periodicals intended for adults and children can extend our understanding of home education, the educative role of governesses and domestic pedagogies. Among those religious and secular publications for adults but addressing the education of children were the *Quiver*, *Monthly Repository*, the *Athenaeum*, the *Eclectic Review, Household Words*, *Fraser's Magazine,* the *Quarterly Review, Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, the *Edinburgh Review,* the *Dublin Review*, the *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine,* the *Westminster Review* and the *Examiner.* Foremost among periodicals for boys were the *Boys Own Magazine* and *Boys of England* which were part of an increasing number of publications for females and males that included *Aunt Judy's Magazine,* the *Monthly Packet*, the *Girls Own Paper* and the *Children's Companion and Juvenile Instructor.*

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[56] Isabel Rivers and David L. Wykes, *Dissenting Academies,* The Queen Mary Centre for Religion and Literature in English, <http://www.qmulreligionand literature.co.uk>(accessed July 22, 2019). 1.

[57]Charles Rzepka, *Selected Studies in Romantic and American Literature, History, and Culture: Inventions and interventions* (New York: Routledge, 2017), 233. Nicholas Roe, *Keats and History* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP,1995), 27-65 passim.

In chapter 3 case studies are used to analyse different perspectives and personal experiences associated with household education, domestic pedagogies and autodidactism expressed in literary works by Charlotte Brontë, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Edmund Gosse and Harriet Martineau.[58] Their respective positions on the subject were reflective of much broader tensions and issues in Victorian society concerning the advantages and disadvantages of elementary education in the private and public spheres.

In the concluding chapter of his book on *Romanticism and Education*, David Halpin remarks that

> A serious intellectual discussion is never characterized by a definitive ending, but rather by a temporary settlement of, or impermanent retreat from, the issues with which it deals, holding out the prospect of resuming conversation about them when need and opportunity arises, notably as new ideas and evidence become available which call out to be tested dialogically.[59]

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[58] Harriet Martineau was a Unitarian who benefitted greatly from the Unitarian model of education, which was very developed by the middle of the nineteenth-century. In her book *Household Education,* which I investigate in chapter 3, Martineau expressed much of her educational philosophy. She also wrote many articles for *The Monthly Repository* which was a leading Unitarian periodical which I discuss in chapter 2.

[59] Se note 8, 145.

There is clearly nothing ‘definitive’ about this literary-historical study because it represents an ”extremely partial and highly selective account” of the sustained debates on elementary education from 1833 to 1880.[60] According to contemporary opinion, education was the question of the day. My investigations of that persistent and pervasive question include an analysis of leading and minor periodicals that represented opposing political, ideological, religious and cultural positions on the subject. Selecting specific periodicals is a challenging task as it has been estimated that some twenty five thousand periodicals were published by the end of the nineteenth-century.[61] I chose specific publications with a view to exploring as much as possible, during the three years of my research, of the range of divergent and convergent opinions on the elementary education debates that dominated discourses from 1833 to 1880. My choice of literary works has been based on the significance of their representations of formal, institutionalised schooling, domestic pedagogies and autodidactism. All of these texts have made an important contribution to our understanding of the relationship between gender and education. Moreover, they contributed significantly and persistently to the sustained debates about traditional and progressive educational theories and practices in the period under investigation. Evidence from print-mediated interpretations and representations of elementary tend to support Birch’s argument that

> It was the Victorians who first conceived of education as a formal process that would be crucial to the life of the nation and all its citizens, with prescribed courses of study, and outcomes measurable by examination. Our sense of what matters most in teaching and learning is shaped by legacies of nineteenth-century thought.[62]

However, as I show in my analysis of elementary education beyond the schoolroom, the pedagogic functions of the periodical press also actively promoted informal learning within working-class and middle-class households. Formal, institutionalised education as a means to address holistic educational needs was rejected by many of the Victorian thinkers that I investigate during the course of my thesis. According to Birch, Thomas Carlyle "had little time for the classroom" because "winning the freedom to learn and to teach meant removing himself from pedagogic institutions." [63] Carlyle shared Elizabeth Barrett Browning's love of books, as expressed in her poem *Aurora Leigh*, which he "remembered with gratitude" while offering no praise for his teachers. [64] As Birch goes on to argue, John Ruskin recognised that

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[60] Ibid.

[61] Walter E. Houghton, *Periodical literature and the articulate classes.* In *The Victorian Press: Samplings and Soundings,* eds. Joanna Shattock and Michael Wolff (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1982), 3.

[62] See note 36, 2.

> Every human understanding is distinct and different, and its individuality must be recognized before its potential can be developed. This is true for all classes. The creative force of the individual, and the honour that it should earn is confined to no single group in society. In making this point, Ruskin integrates the people he is thinking about with the natural world of which they are part, whose phenomena it is their pleasure and responsibility to observe.[65]

Carlyle and Ruskin were among many leading literary figures whose opinions were reviewed by the periodical press in ways that contributed significantly to the elementary education debates in Victorian England. In the following chapters of my thesis, I argue that periodicals and literary works played a significant role in shaping transformative debates about formal, institutionalised elementary education and informal, domestic pedagogies from 1833 to 1880. Moreover, I show that those print-mediated sources were highly important in creating a new cultural space for educational reform.

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[63] Ibid., 132.
[64] Ibid.,133.
[65] Ibid., 137 -139.

Chapter One: Schools, Pedagogy and Teachers

> 'There is a deep-lying struggle in the whole fabric of society; a boundless grinding collision of the New with the Old.'[1]

Before moving on to elementary education, a brief summary of some key social and artistic contextual matters will be helpful. Joseph Mallord William Turner's *'The Fighting Temerraire tugged to her last birth to be broken up'* was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1839. The demise of sail and the ascendancy of the age of steam were contrasted vividly, deliberately and unashamedly romantically in what became a popular painting. In 1844, Turner's '*Rain, Steam, and Speed -The Great Western Railway'* dramatically captured the rapid acceleration of change in early Victorian England as the country was transitioning into a modern, industrial nation. Turner's paintings of the Industrial Revolution reflected his fascination with the jarring colours and cacophony of this new world. In 1848, Europe was in the throes of complex Revolutions, which shared a common aim of greater democratic freedoms, while England remained relatively untouched by such turmoil. Mercantile capitalism, the expansion of the British Empire and technological, scientific, agrarian and industrial revolutions changed utterly the rural and urban landscapes of Britain. It was within this transformative and revolutionary context that the sustained debates about elementary education appeared in periodicals and fictionalised representations in novels which were multiply reviewed in those publications.

The majority of historical texts on the subject of nineteenth-century education in England, including those by Gillian Sutherland,[2] Brian Simon,[3] Anne Digby and Peter

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[1] G.B. Tennyson, ed., *A Carlyle Reader*, *Signs of the Times (*Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 53. *Signs of the Times* was first published in the *Edinburgh Review*, no. 49, March, 1829.

[2] Gillian Sutherland, *Elementary Education in the Nineteenth Century,* (London: The Historical Association, 1971), 45.

[3] Brian Simon*, The Two Nations and The Educational Structure, 1780-1870* (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1974).

Searby,[4] Neil Smelser[5] and William Stephens,[6] focus on legislative milestones, religious conflicts, political, social, cultural and economic issues and perspectives. These texts have made an important contribution to our understanding of the elementary education of working-class and middle-class children in nineteenth-century England.

Dinah Birch has adopted a different approach to an analysis of education in the Victorian period. Birch integrates historical and literary works, primarily novels and poetry, to provide the lenses through which she explores and critiques the complex, competing and conflicted attitudes and approaches taken by the Victorians towards education. She argues that the Victorian period generated ideas and practices that were 'revolutionary' and 'transformative' which is at variance with Gillian Sutherland's pessimistic position that by the end of the nineteenth-century elementary education was no different for working-class children than in 1800.[7] Pamela Horn draws our attention to rising literacy rates from 1851-1871 which also challenges Sutherland's argument that elementary education stagnated during the nineteenth-century.[8] Disagreements have also persisted among historians about the aims of elementary education for working-class children. Digby and Searby concur with FML Thompson's interpretation of working-class elementary education as fundamentally concerned with 'indoctrination', 'social control' and 'social discipline.'[9] Alternatively, Birch argues for education as a liberating, humanizing and socially progressive force which the Victorians "understood was more than a matter of social or economic advantage, or even of the transmission of knowledge. It could change lives at the deepest level. John Ruskin puts it simply: 'You do not educate a man by telling him what he knew not, but by making him what he was not.'"[10]

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[4] Anne Digby and Peter Searby, *Children, School and Society in Nineteenth-Century England* (London: Macmillan Press, 1981), 23-28, 47,110, 115-6.
[5] Neil Smelser, *Social Paralysis and Social Change: British Working-Class Education in the Nineteenth Century* (Berkley: University of California Press, 1991),7-38.
[6] William. Stephens, *Education in Britain, 1750-1914* (Houndsmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire Macmillan Press Ltd,1998), 77-97.
[7] Dinah Birch, *Our Victorian Education* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2008), vii –ix.
[8] Pamela Horn, *Education in Rural England, 1800-1914 (*Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1978), 150.
[9] FML Thompson, *The Rise of Respectable Society: A Social History of Victorian Britain, 1830-1900* (London: Fontana Press, 1988), 307-361.

Conflicting views on elementary education were articulated by contemporary reviewers, clerics, critics, novelists, professional educators, poets and politicians. I go on to investigate these conflicts that were the substance of a national debate on elementary education which emerged in the late-Regency period. In doing so, I respond to the research question: how and why did elementary education debates take shape and develop into a coherent and meaningful movement from 1833-1880?

Do "coarse hands" need heads? Lord Henry Brougham on the education of working-class children

"Elementary, my dear Watson" is an expression that is sometimes incorrectly associated with Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's *fin–de-siècle* fictional detective, Sherlock Holmes.[11] 'Elementary' suggests an explanation or reasoning process that is uncomplicated, straightforward and unproblematic. These were not the defining characteristics of the education debate in mid to late nineteenth-century England. Ideas about education were complex, conflicted and fractious. There were enduring disagreements about the desirability of extending elementary education for working-class children, what should be taught, who should be teachers and what were effective pedagogies. I argue that general, religious and professional periodicals fuelled and sustained the momentum of debates on elementary education. How and why those debates actually took shape into a coherent and meaningful movement in Victorian England has its origins in late-Regency reviews.

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[10] See note 7, viii.

[11] The phrase originated in P.G. Wodehouse's novel *Psmith, Journalist* which was serialised in the *Captain* Magazine between October 1909 and February 1910. The series was published in book form in 1915 by Adam and Charles Black, London.

In 1818, Henry Brougham's speech in the House of Commons and its prominent reviews in the late-Regency press represent a critical moment in which the education of disadvantaged, socio-economically poor children was brought to the forefront of public discourse.[12] Brougham, who would become Lord Chancellor and the force behind the Great Reform Act of 1832, had chaired the 1816 Parliamentary Select Committee of Inquiry into the Education of the Lower Orders in the Metropolis.[13] His speech was a summation of the Committee's findings and conclusions which, in effect, made the case for a progressive legislative measure requiring State funding of elementary education for working-class children. Not only was Brougham himself an active, pro-reform Whig Member of Parliament and high-profile lawyer whose defence of radicals charged with sedition had made him a household name, but the *Edinburgh* and *Quarterly* reviews were the two best selling periodicals in Britain. That combination of Brougham's parliamentary career and legal activity with the audience outreach of two giant periodicals whose political positions addressed virtually the entire spectrum of the literate British public ensured the matter was prominent and sufficiently controversial to generate on-going attention.

On September 1, 1818, the *Edinburgh* praised Brougham's speech, supported his progressive views on the extension of education for all working-class children and endorsed his rejection of the detrimental effects on agriculture and industry of providing "coarse hands" with heads:

> That the prejudice and fancies by which we were assured that if we taught ploughmen and mechanics to read, they would disdain work, have now entirely died away. . . . In all the discussions that have taken place, both in the House, in the Committee,[14] and in the country, I have never heard a single whisper hostile to the universal diffusion of knowledge.[15]

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[12] Mr Henry Brougham's speech in the House of Commons, May 8th. 1818, Hansard.

[13] "Lower orders:" a pejorative term commonly used in that period.

[14] Henry Brougham chaired the 1816 Parliamentary Committee of Inquiry into the state of education among working-class children in the Metropolis. The report showed that education provision was no better in the remainder of the country.

[15] *The Edinburgh Review*, May 8th. 1818, 486-487.

Brougham's criticisms of educational charities, which formed the greater part of the Committee's Report, drew the public's attention to widespread corrupt practices and abuses which meant that there were serious deficiencies in the provision of schools for working-class children. The voluntary principle driving current practices was considered necessary but insufficient to provide for a national, universal system of elementary education. In effect, legislation was needed to compensate for the inability of charitable organisations to erect the required number of schools for working-class children. This was a defining moment in the history of elementary education in nineteenth-century England because the role of the State in educational matters was about to undergo a radical transformation from inaction to active participation and intervention. Moreover, Brougham's reforming agenda laid the foundations for the subsequent tensions between religious and secular authorities for control of elementary education in mid to late nineteenth-century England.

In the rambunctious world that was the Regency Press, *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine's* critical review of Brougham's speech confirms the opposing political positions on the education of working-class children. The reviewer adopted a vituperative and sarcastic approach in his analysis of Brougham's chairmanship of the Committee by accusing him of "wayward ambition" and condemning him for conflating charity and education.[16] As far as this anti-Whig publication was concerned "all the splendid endowments" were beyond reproach.[17] The views expressed in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine's* were echoed in the tory Q*uarterly's* review of Brougham's speech and his chairmanship of the Parliamentary Select Committee, which was accused of being a "committee of secrecy [. . .] tyrannical and odious."[18] Only fourteen pages of the report, which ran to five hundred pages, were concerned with the original remit of the committee and the remainder with the mismanagement of educational charities. Consequently, this was a highly controversial report and the reviewer was scathing about the extension of the jurisdiction of the inquiry, the members of the committee and Brougham's leadership:

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[16] *Blackwood's Edinburgh Review,* August, 1819: 5; 29, 570.
[17] Ibid.
[18] *The Quarterly Review*, Vol. 19. Iss. 38, July 1818, 492-569.

> We repeat, that we wish no abuse or malversation to be screened; but from the spirit and conduct of these investigations we have no hesitation in expressing our earnest hope that the House of Commons will never entrust the management of another such committee to the same hands.[19]

Importantly, given the relationship between religion and elementary education which would feature prominently in debates in Victorian England, the review referred to a specific criticism by Brougham that "the progress of education has been materially checked by an unbending adherence to the system of the National Society."[20] The reviewer responded by questioning the validity and reliability of the evidence on which this assertion and others were based with the intention of undermining the findings of the enquiry, specifically in respect of charitable endowments. Scant attention was given by the Q*uarterly* to Brougham's view that educational charities were incapable of meeting the educational needs of a rapidly expanding, urbanised working-class population.

In 1839, John Orville Taylor, a leading advocate for popular education, praised Lord Brougham's "most valuable opinions . . . on the subject of the People's Education" which included his views on the *Happy Effects of Education* (his italics): [21]

> The tendency of knowledge is, and the tendency of its diffusion undoubtedly is, to improve the habits of the people, to better their principles, and to amend all that which we call their characters; for there are a host of principles and feelings which go together, to make up what we call, in the common acceptation of the words, the human character. How does this diffusion operate? To increase habits of reflection, to enlarge the sphere of the mind, to render it more capable or receiving pleasurable emotions, and of taking an interest in other, and in higher and better matters than mere sensual gratification. It

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[19] Ibid., 542.

[20] See note 12, 9-10.

[21] Paul D. Travers has described John Orville Taylor as "one of the many prominent educators of the eighteen thirties and forties who labored continually to win public support for popular education." Paul D. Travers, *John Orville Taylor: A Forgotten Educator, History of Education Quarterly,* Vol. 9, No. 1 (Spring, 1969) https://.www.jstor.org/stable/367129, 57. Lord Brougham on Education; by Brougham and Vaux, Baron (New York, Taylor and Clement, 1839), John Orville Taylor's Preface,4.

> ends to improve the feelings as well as to increase the reflective habits; and it tends, therefore, to attainment of that which in itself leads directly to improve character and conduct of a nation.[22]

Brougham sees education as the formation of character, the creation of citizens and the raising of moral standards because an

> Uneducated mind is educated vice, for man is made to *know*, he is the subject of education, and if not informed does not fulfil the object of his being, and is necessarily miserable: and the miserable man very easily becomes the criminal. In right education there is divine alchymy which turns all the baser parts of man's nature into gold.[23]

In his continuing involvement in the elementary education debate in Victorian England, Brougham raised other important and contentious issues about the professionalisation of teaching and what should be taught within his preferred educational system that Richard Altick has described as "broadly defined utilitarianism."[24] When we look forward to the continuation of the elementary education debate which I investigate in the *Athenaeum*, *Edinburgh, Quarterly, Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine,* the *Analyst,* the *Educational Times,* the *British Magazine* and *Household Words*, Brougham's speech and subsequent writings on education and the media attention they received can be identified as defining moments.

For example, James Simpson's polemic in *The Analyst* looks back and takes forward Brougham's argument that a pedagogy grounded in moral instruction was essential for a well-ordered civil society.[25] Simpson, a Scottish lawyer and author, was a founding member of the Edinburgh modern infant school which promoted a non-sectarian, progressive approach by permitting parents to choose their preferred religious instructors.

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[22] Ibid., 12.

[23] Ibid.

[24] Richard D. Altick, *The English Common Reader: A Social History of the Mass Reading Public, 1800-1900, (*Columbus, Ohio: Ohio State University Press, 1998), 129 (footnote) and 131: "Useful knowledge was the good, solid, employable facts of mechanics and chemistry, metallurgy and hydraulics – facts that could be applied in the workshop and on the railway line, to produce goods more cheaply and efficiently, to communicate and transport more swiftly. In addition "useful knowledge" was a set of economic and political principles. Possessing an almost religious faith in the supposedly immutable economic and social laws formulated by Adam Smith, Ricardo, Malthus, Bentham, Mill, and the other Jeromes and Augustines of industrial age thought, the utilitarians were convinced that only by safeguarding the free operation of those laws could the nation be spared future anarchy and economic catastrophe [. . .]That was why Brougham's Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge was dedicated as much to justifying the ways of God to economic man as it was to explaining the mysteries of calico-printing and iron-founding. The "scientific" doctrines behind political liberalism were as useful as any body of technological information."

[25] The *Analyst: a quarterly journal of science, literature, natural history and the fine arts. 6 (Feb.1837).*

He lectured on the subject of non-sectarian education in England and Scotland, published educational texts on popular education and an essay on the professionalisation of the teaching which advanced Brougham's views on that subject.

Simpson had progressive and enlightened ideas about the teacher's responsibility to understand and respond appropriately to the individual needs of the learner. This would have been consistent with the centrality of individuality in learning advocated by the Romantics. He favoured the development of "attention, perception, conception and consciousness" – what he terms the "working of our faculties."[26] His position was certainly a radical one to take in 1837. Simpson adopted an holistic view of the individual learner whose "physical, animal, moral and intellectual nature" must be taken into consideration by the teacher. [27] But, he also stressed "the ethics of Christianity" and the threefold division of elementary education: physical, moral and intellectual. [28] Elementary education was not conceived as a secular system because, in his view, Church doctrines were the bedrock on which elementary education rested. He referred to, and is supportive of the educational theory of Johann Pestalozzi with his emphasis on lessons on objects which Charles Dickens parodied in his novel*, Hard Times.*[29] As Philip Collins observes,

> Mr Gradgrind's questions are a parody of the object-lesson . . . Gradgrind has discovered that the father of the new girl, Sissy Jupe, belongs to the horse-riding in Sleary's circus. To give a utilitarian respectability to this disgraceful circus job, he redefines Signor Jupe's occupation as 'a veterinary surgeon, a farrier, and a horsebreaker' and he also gives Sissy a new name – 'Girl number twenty' – to accord with the impersonality of her new school. He then improves the occasion by asking Sissy to define a horse. She is flummoxed by this question which is promptly answered by the inhuman prize-pupil Blitzer. [30]

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[26] Ibid., 4.

[27] Ibid.

[28] Ibid., 6.

[29] Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi (1746- 1827). "Swiss social reformer and educator [who] was known as the Father of Modern Education. He believed that education should develop the powers of 'Head', 'Heart' and 'Hands'". He was particularly concerned about the education and condition of the poor. Pestalozzi favoured, among other progressive ideas, a child-centred pedagogy, active rather than passive learning, authority founded on love, not fear; teacher training and a relevant, cross-curricular curriculum [note relationship to Romanticism and education which advocated much of Pestalozzi's ground breaking ideas which remain influential]. (jhpestalozzi.org).

[30] Philip Collins, *Dickens and Education,* (London: Macmillan and Company Limited, 1963), 154.

Dickens was critical of object-lessons which represented a "contemporary passion for . . . definitions" which privileged rote learning over "knowledge of the senses and the heart" and conceived education as fact grubbing. [31] Conversely, it is possible that he would have approved of Simpson's view that half the time in school should be spent on play. Children up to the age of six should, according to Simpson, attend "juvenile Schools" and from the ages six to fourteen progress to elementary schools.[32]

Significantly, Simpson's reference to "useful knowledge" which were allied to elements of science, reading, writing, arithmetic, grammar, etymology, composition, geography, geology, botany, meteorology, chemistry, and natural philosophy represented a 'liberal' curriculum.[33] The pursuit of knowledge for its own sake was implicit in his critical position on education. Equally significant were Simpson's views that elementary education must be open to girls and boys within the framework of universal education. Simpson's progressive ideas extended to his conviction that both sexes ought to be educated together.[34] However, in his view and reflective of a gendered curriculum, needlework was an activity for females and he referred to Lancastrian and other large schools where strictly 'female branches' (i.e. subjects) have been successful. Simpson believed that education would contribute to the intellectual and moral development of the working classes. Yet, he was realistic in recognising the difficulties presented by a competing priority: the demand for wages from child labour which were an absolute necessity in working-class households. His argument was that the young should not be engaged in regular labour until the age of fourteen and work no more than four hours per day allowing time for a "degree of moderate and wholesome labour which parents ought to reasonably demand."[35]

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[31] Ibid.

[32] See note 25, 15.

[33] Ibid.

[34] Ibid., 18.

[35] Ibid.

His progressive educational philosophy extended to his views on teacher training. He argued for a "very superior qualification in that field of labour" and that teaching should be elevated "to the rank it ought to hold."[36] Herein were the roots of what would become an increasing demand for the professionalization of teaching by the mid nineteenth-century. Simpson was able to reconcile traditional and progressive educational theories and practices that challenged the narrow binary view that education was either one or the other. While there is an emphasis on moral instruction in this polemical review, he moved beyond strict adherence to a limited number of subjects that reflect a modern perspective on a broad and balanced curriculum. There is a strong sense of the influence of aspects of Romanticism threading their way through his stance on the philosophical, theoretical and practical dimensions of education. His conceptualisation of education embraced the professionalisation of teaching and 'liberal' curriculum within a moral framework with the ultimate aim of improving, in particular, working-class lives. Education as citizenship based on moral standards represented one element of the response to how society should be ordered. Simpson was arguably among the most progressive thinkers about the content of a formal education experience in the early nineteenth-century. As such, he made a significant contribution to the elementary education debate that was gathering increasing momentum, coherency and meaning through discourses in the periodical press which was shifting from questions such as "should working-class children be educated" to "what should they be taught," "who should be the teachers" and "what qualifications did they need to raise their occupation to a profession?"

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[36] Ibid., 15.

Professionalising the education debate: the College of Preceptors and educational periodicals

Brougham's and Simpson's contributions to debates on the professional status of teaching was taken forward by the College of Preceptors and its associated professional periodical, the *Educational Times* which was launched in 1847. As Janet Delve points out, the College, the first professional body for teachers, was "founded in 1846 to standardize the teaching profession . . . The College was closely linked to the *Educational Times . . . a journal of "Education Science and Literature"* launched in 1847." [37] The founding resolution of the College stated

> That in the opinion of this meeting, it is desirable for the protection of the interests of both the scholastic profession and the public, that some proof of qualification, both as to the amount of knowledge and the art of conveying it to others, should be required, from and after a certain time to be hereinafter specified, of all persons who may be desirous of entering the profession; and that the test, in the first instance, should be applied to Assistant Masters only. That in the opinion of this meeting, the test of qualification should be referred to a legally authorised or corporate body, or college, consisting of persons engaged in tuition.[38]

The 1840s witnessed a turning point in the education debate as educational periodicals began to play a transformative role in the professionalisation of teaching. The College of Preceptors played a pivotal role in raising the status of teaching as a profession through examination and certification.

In 1863, the editor of the *English Journal of Education* raised questions about the importance of educational periodicals:

> The history of educational periodicals will probably at some future period be regarded with an interest which, at the present day, it would be no easy matter to evoke. It is questionable whether now, or for some years to come, such a history can be fairly written, even by one best acquaintained with the subject and most interested in it . . .

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[37] Janet Delve, *The College of Preceptors and the Educational Times*: *Changes for British mathematics education in the mid-nineteenth century*. Historia Mathematica, v. 30, Issue 2, (May 2003) 140-172. https://doi.org/10.1016/50315-0860(03)00026-0.

[38] The college was "incorporated by royal charter as the College of Preceptors in 1849 [. . .]It pioneered formal training by examination for teachers [. . .] It was founded by Henry Stein Turrell of Brighton in 1846 . . . [as] an attempt to create and maintain professional standards in a profession which had at the time a poor reputation." UCL Bloomsbury Project: ucl.ac.uk, accessed 6-8-19, 1.

> What practical purpose would it subserve? Would it raise teachers of the last thirty years in public estimation? Would it even present a tolerably fair outline of the rise and progress of what is popularly and properly termed the 'education movement'? Many other such questions relative to educational periodicals might be asked, but it would be an unenviable task to answer them.[39]

I argue that educational periodicals are important as they reveal the complex views associated with the education of the children of middle-class and working-class families in Victorian England. The *Educational Times* published articles and correspondence on a variety of topics that made a significant contribution to the education debate in Victorian England. Although the College focused primarily on secondary school teachers and middle-class education, the *Educational Times* circulated among the profession as a whole and was instrumental in "awakening . . . the public mind to the interests of education."[40] The College of Preceptors stressed that although the "columns [of the *Educational Times*] [were] not devoted to the interests of Primary Education [sic], it must be acknowledged that what touches one grade, affects all." [41]

According to Richard Willis, the College was a democratic policy-making organisation committed to promoting teaching as a profession.[42] What did profession mean in Victorian England? The medical and legal professions provided teaching with an instructive template for some of the defining characteristics of professionalisation which included autonomy, self-regulation, training, examination and certification. Christina de Bellaigue argues that professional or profession suggests "prestige and moral superiority . . . intellectual accomplishments, modernity [and] efficiency" but the terms are historically situated and, therefore, are not a fixed conceptual model.[43] 'Profession' was a contested term in the mid nineteenth-century; it was not until 1861 that census enumerators replaced ‘learned occupation’ with ‘profession.’

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[39] The *English Journal of Education,* 1863, Introductory Address.

[40] The *Educational Times,* Vol. XV11, No.40, July 1864, 84.

[41] The *Educational Times*, Vol. XX111, No. 225, Jan. 1, 1880.

[42] Richard Willis, *Democratic influence and control in educational enterprise: decision-making processes in the College of Preceptors in the mid-nineteenth century. Journal of Educational Administration and History*, v. 33 n.o1, (2001), 17-29. DOI:10.1080/0022062010330102. https://doi.org/10.1080/0022062010330102.

[43] Christina de Bellaigue, *The Development of Teaching as a Profession for Women Before 1870,* The *Historical Journal, v.* 44, n. 4 (2001), 963-988, 964.

Among the campaigners for a progressive approach to teacher training, the professionalisation of teaching and secular education was George Combe, Scottish lawyer, leader of the pseudo-scientific phrenological movement, educationalist and author. His most famous work, *The Constitution of Man*, outsold Darwin’s *Origin of Species*; approximately 350,000 copies of *Constitution* were sold between 1828 and 1900.[44]

Combe has been described by Edgar W. Jenkins as

> One of the most liberal and enlightened educational thinkers [and] as a ‘secular educationist’ he contributed to the debate on the extension and control of education in the first half of the nineteenth century. His ideas on curriculum content and methodology and on the training of teachers were progressive.[45]

In 1840 his *Two Lectures on Education,* which criticised the prevalence of unqualified opinions on educational theory and practice, were published in the *Eclectic Review*

> Education is a thing which concerns everybody, and therefore, by a common fallacy, every body [sic] thinks he understands it, and thinks his own opinion on it as good as any one’s else. Hence multitudes of persons, who have never made this subject their actual *study,* yet consider themselves at liberty to write [that is, to instruct the public] on it . . . Everyone . . . regards himself as competent to teach teachers how to teach, and to instruct instructors in the modes of instruction. But in education, as in religion, practice is as necessary as study; as Cicero says, ‘non satis est *habere* virtutem, quasi artem aliquam, nisi *utare*.’ Act and you will learn. All preachment apart from practice is mere *vox et praeterea nihil,* worth nothing.[46]

The College of Preceptors would eventually take forward Combe’s earlier views on teaching as a profession, elevate the level of discourse on pedagogy in the periodical press and provide women educators with a forum for their views on education. Female educators were admitted to the College from 1849 which was a defining moment in the development of teaching as a profession for women in the Victorian period. [47]

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[44] John van Wyhe, George Combe [1788 -1858] Phrenologist and Natural Philosopher, *The Victorian Web*, victorianweb.org, 2000, 1.

[45] Edgar W. Jenkins, George Combe [1788-1858] and *Early Nineteenth-Century Education*, *The Irish Journal of Education , v.*14, no. 11, (1970), 107-115.

[46] The *Eclectic Review*, March ,1840; 7. Art. 1. *Two Lectures on Education.* By George Comb [sic]. Edinburgh., 241. Combe was well-known as a leading British phrenologist and author of The *Constitution of Man.*

Scholarly articles about the *Educational Times* have focused on the discourse on mathematics education and the role of women in this professional body of teachers, professors and associated professionals. Janet Delve argues that the influence of the College of Preceptors and the *Educational Times* has been underestimated in the mainstream histories of nineteenth-century education.[48] Carl Edwin Lindgren supports that view by drawing attention to the role of the College as a pioneering learning organization.[49] I concur with their positions on the importance of the College as an organization at the forefront of progressive educational ideas and practices from the mid to late nineteenth-century in England. Moreover, I argue that the *Educational Times* played a crucially important role in challenging stereotypical representations of teaching as "merely drudgery for bread."[50] The *Educational Times* provided professional educators with a forum for sharing and circulating ideas and observations on the transformative potential of education.

In September 1847, Isaac Reeve wrote to the editor of the *Educational Times,*

> The grand fundamental principle or object of the College of Preceptors is, to guarantee to the British public a number of masters, possessing not only adequate literary and scientific attainment, but also didactic knowledge, skills, and experience.[51]

Reeve echoed Coombe's earlier concerns about inadequate pedagogies and ill-trained teachers when drawing attention to "persons perfectly ignorant of nearly all they profess to teach, raise large schools, beguile the public, and degrade our profession."[52] This contemptuous view was shared by Thomas Babington Macaulay who described elementary teachers as

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[47] Teaching as a profession for women had significant implications for the role of governesses as home educators which are investigated in chapter 3 of my thesis titled *'Elementary Education Beyond The Schoolroom.'* Letters from female educators to the editor of the *Educational Times* are also cited and discussed in chapter 3.

[48] See note 37.

[49] Carl Edwin Lindgren, *Educationalists Who Assisted the College of Preceptors in Becoming an Early "Learning Organization." Address to The American School of Genealogy, Heraldry and Documentary Sciences.* Faculty of Business Economics and Entrepreneurship International Review, 2012.

[50] See note, 32, Footnote 4. Anne Jemima Clough, *Paper for the North of England Council for the Promotion of Higher Education for Women, 1868,* quoted in Blanche Athena Clough, *A memoir of Anne Jemima Clough* (London, 1897), I38.

[51] *The Educational Times,* 20 September, 1847, 6.

> Discarded servants, or ruined tradesmen; who cannot do a sum of three; who would not be able to write a common letter; who do not know whether the earth is a cube or a sphere and cannot tell whether Jerusalem is in Asia or America: whom no gentleman would trust with the key of his cellar, and no tradesman would send of [sic] a message.[53]

Reeve rejected the traditional view, which was coming under increasing pressure in periodicals and literary works, that the university education of clergymen meant that they were the best teachers. He wrote that "graduates are not necessarily, nor generally efficient masters."[54] Significantly, progressive ideas about teaching as a 'profession' begin to appear with greater frequency in print-mediated sources in mid nineteenth-century England. The *Educational Times* emerges as the leading professional publication that provided momentum, coherency and meaning to the education debate in Victorian England. The periodical's circulation, geographical reach and, ultimately, its contribution to the formation of a professional reading audience meant that educational theories and practices were disseminated and critiqued from multiple perspectives. In March, 1848 a debate commenced in the *Educational Times* on the purposes of education with reference to competing positions expressed by John Stuart Mill and Thomas Carlyle.

Mill's version of Utilitarianism which decreed "happiness as the end of education" in both body and mind was opposed by transcendental philosophers whose leader in England was Carlyle.[55] The review referenced Carlyle's position on education which he had expressed in his book *Sartor Resartus*: "there is in man a Higher than love of happiness; he can do without happiness and, instead, thereof find Blessedness."[56]

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[52] Ibid.
[53] Hansard, 3rd series, XCI, 19 April, 1847, 1016-17.
[54] See note 51.
[55] *The Educational Times*, March 1, 1848, Vol. 1., No. 6, 117.
[56] Ibid.

Richard Altick identifies the importance of Utilitarianism,

> Utilitarianism, the philosophy begotten by the eighteenth-century French rationalism upon eighteenth-century materialism, is associated most immediately with the coterie dominated by Jeremy Bentham and James Mill. But just as the spirit of evangelicalism permeated English society far beyond the denominational boundaries, so utilitarianism spread out from its originating group until it was part of the atmosphere every nineteenth-century Englishman breathed. Like evangelicalism, utilitarianism, became not so much a set of formal tenets as a state of mind.[57]

As a movement defined by ideas, Utilitarianism influenced the 'consciousness' and 'atmosphere' of nineteenth-century England primarily through the medium of the press. John Gardiner has shown that

> In the early Victorian period governments had been swayed by the logic of utilitarianism, Jeremy Bentham's doctrine about promoting the greatest happiness of the greatest number of people. Calibrated against a 'happiness' quotient, reforms and institutions had to be seen to work – there was no place for unnecessary expenditure or sympathy for individual cases, never mind what depth of personal unhappiness they might present.[58]

Periodicals emerged as the most important channel for the circulation of those ideas in a country transitioning into a modern, industrial nation. The *Educational Times* created a cultural space in which well-informed educators generated a sustained discourse on educational subjects. Thomas Wyse, educational pioneer, Member of Parliament, supporter of State control and school inspector, was a leading figure in establishing the teacher training college at Battersea. Wyse's views on Utilitarianism were published in the *Educational Times* in 1848. He asked: "What is utility? The greatest happiness of the greatest number. Happiness, then is the end of education, but what is happiness?" [59] He criticised Utilitarianism as a philosophy of education based on "vague and shifting principles."[60] Wyse conceived education as preparation for eternal life through meeting our responsibilities and duties in this life." [61] His position on the salvific purpose of education was wholly consistent with the mainstream views of the Catholic Church of which he was a member.

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[57] Richard D. Altick, *The English Common Reader: A Social History of the Mass Reading Public, 1800-1900* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1998), 129.

[58] John Gardiner, *The Victorians: An Age in Retrospect* (London and New York: Hambledon and London, 2002) 12.

[59] See Note 55, 44.

[60] Ibid

The reviewer compounded Wyse's criticisms of utility on the grounds that

> It has no internal means of enforcement. [Education was intended] to free man from subjection to the present [. . .] by awakening, strengthening, and exciting to constant action, the reasoning and reflective power, so that they may sense into the depths of their own being rather than in the external world for the sources of real and enduring happiness.[62]

According to these anti-utilitarian views, progressing education beyond utility required educational theories and practices that concentrated on learning as interiority which was an integral feature of Romanticism. Isaiah Berlin has argued that Romanticism brought about a seismic shift in nineteenth-century thought and whether intentionally or otherwise, the *Educational Times* was promoting a progressive vision of education consistent with this movement of ideas.[63] As far as the reviewer was concerned, "the business of education is ill-performed" because educational theory had not kept pace with the progress of philosophy. [64] Consequently, there was an underdeveloped theoretical basis for education. In raising such fundamental issues, the *Educational Times* challenged an "old worn out system" and championed the "professional elevation" of teaching and the importance of teaching qualifications. [65] In a letter to the editor from "the Master of an Ancient Grammar School," the importance of the College was acknowledged as a "movement . . . the most striking that has yet appeared in these days . . . of our English history." [66]

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[61] Ibid.
[62] Ibid, 118.
[63] Isaiah Berlin, *The Roots of Romanticism: The A.W. Mellon Lectures in the Fine Arts,* ed. Henry Hardy. The National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC. (London: Pimlico Random House, 2002), 1.
[64] Note 51.
[65] Ibid., 122.
[66] Ibid.

In July, 1860, the on-going progressive editorial policy of the *Educational Times* was shown by its support for views expressed in an earlier work by Charles Bray on *The Education of the Feelings.*[67] According to Dinah Birch, George Eliot "came to identify authoritative men like Charles Bray [. . .] as sponsors of her intellectual growth."[68] Matthew Lee describes Bray as a

> Freethinker and social reformer [. . .] the son of a wealthy ribbon manufacturer [. . .] Bray was an early supporter of national undenominational education [and] as a committed non-sectarian, Bray encouraged secular models of social organization.[69]

Bray owned the *Coventry Herald* and was closely associated with George Combe. He was a member of the radical Rosehill Circle in Coventry whose members included Harriet Martineau, Robert Owen, Herbert Spencer and Ralph Waldo Emerson. In the preface to the Second Edition of his book, he wrote

> Most of what is valuable in the first edition of this little work, relative to the management of children, I owed to a friend, the greater part of whose life has been devoted to home education.[70]

It would be tempting but misleading to identify Harriet Martineau as the 'friend' who influenced Bray because, as he states in the Preface, "she is now no more." Martineau died in 1876 so could not be the person mentioned who was deceased in 1849. However, given that she was part of the Rosehill Circle, it is possible that Bray was familiar with Martineau's views on home education. In fact, it would be surprising if they had not discussed education as both were passionate about the subject.

Bray's progressive educational philosophy recognised the centrality of the individual in the educative process:

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[67] Charles Bray, *The Education of the Feelings* (London: Longman, Brown, Green and Longmans, 1849).

[68] Dinah Birch, *Our Victorian Education,* (Malden, MA, USA: Blackwell Publishing, 2008),108.

[69] Matthew Lee, *Charles Bray (1811-1884)* 24 May 2007, Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, https://0-doi-org.serlib0.essex.ac.uk/10.1093/ref.odnb/3292, accessed 7-8-19, 1.

[70] See note 67, i. Coincidentally, Martineau's book on *Household Education* (investigated in chapter 3 of my thesis) was also published in 1849.

> The observation of the last ten years has brought me to the conclusion, that no very definite rules can be laid down for the management of the young, - all children requiring different treatment according to the difference of their dispositions.[71]

He wrote of "a second education (that) commences in ourselves" when "children are entrusted to us."[72] Essentially, Bray was arguing for the importance of the reflective educator who, in his view, must become aware of "the nature of the different feelings which direct us" so that "self-knowledge and self-development" inform pedagogical practices. [73] Modern ideas about the reflective practitioner would appear to have their origins in an earlier period as being authentically Victorian. Bray drew attention to the lack of specific knowledge about the "education of the feelings, or the formation of the disposition" which "has been comparatively neglected."[74] Given Bray's important influence on educational theory and practice, it is clear that the modern conception of educating the whole child was very much part of an earlier education debate in mid nineteenth-century England. Bray's advocacy of the continuing development of teachers was also one of the core functions of the College of Preceptors.

In 1864, the Reverend A. Condor wrote to the *Educational Times* on the subject of his professional development:

> [Recognising] the great advantages which assistant masters have derived from the College. When he was an assistant, fourteen years ago, its examinations had stimulated him to work for self-improvement [and he] immediately obtained a better salary. He then went to Cambridge where he had taken his degree, and now he was and ordained minister of the Church of England.[75]

Pupil-teachers were instructed by the College of Preceptors in the art and practical application of teaching which also involved a close relationship between educators and their communities. The *Educational Times* published reviews of educational texts designed to enhance teachers' continuing professional development. However, the College was not without its critics who opposed its preoccupation with testing teachers' knowledge, an obsession with examinations and lack of consideration for alternative assessment methods. One member "expressed regret that the Council had not been able to discover any means of testing skills in the practice of education."[76] Examination processes privileged subject knowledge above pedagogical understanding and effectiveness. The Reverend W. Hodgson, who served in 1849 and 1864 as vice-president of the College, was another dissenting voice who opposed the resolution regarding membership dependent on passing an examination: he opposed it "because there were many good teachers, whom it would be desirable to admit, who had not passed any examination, and would not submit to one. Examined men[77] were not always the most successful teachers."[78]

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[71] See Note 67,ii.
[72] Ibid.
[73] Ibid.
[74] Ibid., 1.
[75] *The Educational Times,* Vol. XV1, No. 35, Feb. 1864.

Hodgson, a leading Scottish educational reformer, headteacher and political economist, was concerned that the Government might institute "a general system of examination of teachers and of schools [so that] our own examinations would be superseded."[79] His apprehensiveness was understandable within the wider national context of the Endowed Schools Bill Number 2 and the proposed establishment of an Educational Council.[80] Consequently, there was a simmering tension between the College as an independent, professional examining body with certificate awarding powers and the perceived threat of State intervention and the increasing politicisation of education. However, the College maintained its position on the importance of teacher training and advocated the study of education as an academic subject. Given that priority, it was unsurprising that in 1877 the *Educational Times*[81] published the inaugural lecture of Professor John Meiklejohn as Chair of Education at St Andrew's University.[82]

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[76] *The Educational Times,* Vol. XX11, No.100, August 1, 1869.

[77] Traditional gender-bias which was being challenged by the more progressive members of the College. The College of Preceptors promoted the professionalisation of women teachers, actively sought their views on education and published their correspondence in the periodical. Hodgson did in fact argue for the education of women.

[78] The *Educational Times,* Vol. XX11, No.100, August 1, 1869.103.

[79] Ibid.

[80] "Of equal importance to the proprietary schools numerically, and complementary geographically to them, were the endowed schools which were created under the Endowed Schools Act of 1869. This legislation had resulted from the Taunton Commission's findings on the meagre amount of educational endowments which were devoted to girls' schooling. An enterprising start in reducing this inequality was made by the Endowed Schools Commissioners with one in four of their schemes concerned with girls' education [. . .]" Anne Digby and Peter Searby, *Children, School and Society in Nineteenth-Century England* (Macmillan Press, London and Basingstoke, 1981), 52.

A subject worthy of academic study: a seminal moment in the history of education debates in mid and late nineteenth-century England

Dr. Andrew Bell's trustees endowed the first Chair of Education at St. Andrew's University. Meiklejohn, a social progressive, academic, journalist and author of school books, was appointed and gave his inaugural lecture in 1876. As mentioned, that lecture was published in full by the *Educational Times.* This was a seminal moment because education was now considered sufficiently important to warrant serious academic study as a specialism signalling a new modernity in the evolution of education in Victorian England.

In his lecture, Meiklejohn expressed this new modernity in his criticisms of the information transmission model of teaching which emphasised the packaging and presentation of facts. He referred to the "tyranny of encyclopaedism" and its sister vice "abridgement" when asserting that

> The pressure of encyclopaedism all over the country, both in primary and in secondary schools, is producing a most remarkable tendency,— tendency which is completely hostile to the true spirit of education. This tendency inspires pupil-teachers and other examinees to ask the question: What [is] absolutely [the] smallest amount of knowledge am I to compel myself to receive in order that I may force my way through the narrow gate of examination? And abridgment is at hand to make the process as dry and useless to him as it can be made.[83]

Raising fundamental and controversial questions about the Victorian obsession with examinations and, in his view, the limitations they placed on knowledge represented a radical departure from traditional ideas. Meiklejohn suggested how "thoughtless and unexamined tradition" that privileged mechanistic and deterministic teaching methods could be remedied.[84] He advocated the initial assessment of pupils' prior knowledge in preparation for individualised learning programmes and, thereby, anticipated current educational ideas on the importance of assessment for learning. He was prescient in recognising the implications for pedagogical practices of the stages in children's cognitive development. A stage theory of child cognitive development would eventually be studied systematically by Jean Piaget.[85] Moreover, Meiklejohn advocated Socratic questioning which was designed to avoid closed questions that invariably elicited monosyllabic responses from pupils. He criticised the absence of enquiry, imagination, a sense of wonder, curiosity and judgement in learning, arguing that the answer to correcting these deficiencies lay in teacher training:

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[81] The *Educational Times*, Vol. XX1X, No. 189, Jan. 1877.

[82] J.E.G. Montmorency, revised by M.C. Curthoy's who point out that Meiklejohn (1836 -1902) "encountered that the chair had no obvious function (the universities did not provide teacher training) and was from the outset under-endowed. He lacked even a lecture room and sometimes had to hold classes in his own drawing-room. Either through financial necessity or through a belief that this was a practical way of raising standards of teaching, Meiklejohn spent much of his time as professor compiling and editing school textbooks on history, geography, and literature [. . .] Meiklejohn was a regular commentator on educational matters, writing for the *Journal of Education*.' Oxford Dictionary of National Biography: https//0-doi-org.serlib0.essex.ac.uk/10.1093/ref.odnb/34977, accessed 7-8-19.

[83] Ibid.

> If we could only train all our teachers to the use and constant practice of the Socratic *elenchus,* we should make them themselves more strong in thought and purpose, more firm and real in their intellectual life, and more capable of firing their pupils with a single and undivided zeal for truth.[86]

The development of teachers' professional knowledge was at the heart of Meiklejohn's educational philosophy. In his view, education was a

> Neglected art and uncultivated science [which must] as a noble profession [be prevented] from hardening into a business or sinking into a craft . . . [so that] the teacher's work [will be] a perpetual blessing and a real success.[87]

Contemporary opinion was generally favourable towards his ambitions for the teaching profession, the College of Preceptor's commitment to raising professional standards and the prominent role of the *Educational Times* in the national education debate. The German educator, Dr Weise, commented that “the most important among such free associations [of teachers] is the College of Preceptors.”[88]

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[84] See note 81, 224.

[85] Paul Mussen, ed. *Handbook of Child Psychology,* vol. 1. 4th. ed. (New York: Wiley, 1983).

[86] See note 81, 227.

[87] Ibid., 228.

Jonathan Parry describes Samuel Morley MP as a “businessman, politician and philanthropist” who

> Was led into politics by his anxiety to secure dissenter’s freedom to preach their ideals, and to release England from the complacency of church establishment and traditional governing class. From the 1840s he was one of the few manufacturers willing to adopt a radical political stance.[89]

Morley expressed his views on education at a College of Preceptor’s prize giving ceremony in 1877. He remarked on

> The great work to which they are committed [and] the great progress . . . among the masses of our population in the education of their children in elementary schools [but] there has been a great neglect of middle-class education . . . We need more culture, we need more mental power . . . [90]

Difficulty arises in identifying precisely what Samuel Morley meant by ‘progress’ in elementary education. Progress might refer to the development of a national system of popular education associated with specific legislative measures, such as Forster’s 1870 Act, the expansion of elementary schools or progressive pedagogical methods. However, in his view, there were serious deficiencies in the education of children of the middle-classes which had been brought into sharp relief by the attention given to the educational needs of children of industrial and rural workers. Subsequent articles in the *Educational Times* echoed Morley’s call for progressive measures to raise educational standards in private and endowed schools. Lord George Hamilton, Conservative MP, First Lord of the Admiralty and Secretary of State for India, presented prizes and certificates at the College of Preceptors in 1880 and an extract from his speech was published in the *Educational Times*:

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[88] The *Educational Times*, Vol. XXX, No. 196.5. August 1, 1877, 118.

[89] Jonathan Parry, *Morley, Samuel* (1809-1886), Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (23 September 2004), <https://0-doi-org.serlib0.essex.ac.uk/10.1093/ref:odnb/19291>, 1.

[90] See note 89, 101.

> We want to preserve the independence of our schools. We have to combat old and conservative methods of teaching, to introduce new subjects, to nourish in boys more earnestly the love of knowledge [and] teaching nothing superfluous.[91]

The College persisted in opposing any proposed legislative measures, such as the 1880 Endowed Schools Bill, which threatened the liberties, freedoms and autonomy of educational institutions that Hamilton had addressed in his speech. The *Educational Times* was a pioneering pedagogical periodical which had a significant influence on the development of educational publications in late nineteenth-century England. Among those periodicals which focused on elementary education were the *Schoolmaster*,[92] The *Edinburgh Educational News*,[93] the *Sunday School Record and Teacher's Assistant*[94] and the *School Guardian.*[95] Matthew Arnold, poet, writer and school inspector, made a distinctive contribution to an evolving evidence-informed approach to standards in education through his inspection reports on elementary schools which were published in both general and educational periodicals.

In December, 1879, Arnold's report on schools for children aged 4-13 years of age in the Metropolitan District of Westminster appeared in the *Schoolmaster* which was the influential weekly journal of the National Union of Elementary Teachers (NUET). He wrote,

> The one word which I feel disposed at present, as an inspector of primary schools, to keep perpetually repeating, for my own benefit and for that of other, is still – *simplicity*

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[91] The *Educational Times*, XXX111, March 1, 1880, 90.

[92] Published initially by John Heywood, Excelsior Buildings, Ridgefield, John Dalton Street, Manchester; and 18, Paternoster Square, London. Subsequent publishers included W. Collins and W.S. Latham. The first issue appeared in 1871 until it ceased publication under the title of The *Schoolmaster* in 1925. From then it was retitled The *Schoolmaster and Women Teacher's Chronicle* until being renamed in 1963 as The *Teacher;* journal of the National Union of Teachers. In 1882, *Hubbard's Newspaper and Bank Directory of the World*, (p.1594) carried an advertisement that lauded the publication as advocating the interests of teachers, "accurate intellegence [sic] of educational proceedings," a means of rapid communication between educators and other interested parties; containing articles by eminent educationists on practical and theoretical matters. The periodical had a large circulation among "school managers, peers, members of parliament (sic), teachers, members of school boards[. . .]"

[93] The *Educational News* was founded on "Jan. 1 1876 by William Ballantyne Hodgson and other enlightened educational leaders as the official organ of Scottish teachers. Alexander MacKay (1833-1902), teacher and promoter of education in Scotland, became a chief contributor, and on 1 July , 1878 undertook its editorship [. . .] Under his control the paper [. . .] did much to increase the efficiency of the statutory system of education and improve the position of the teaching profession. (Dictionary of National Biography, 1912 supplement, Mackay, Alexander by James Edward Geoffrey de Montmorency). See note 92: reference to article by Sir Charles Reed on elementary education in England which offers a justification for including this Scottish publication in my thesis.

[94] The *Sunday School Record and Teacher's Assistant* was the principal educational periodical of the Primitive Methodist Sunday School General Committee.

[95] The *School Guardian* represented the views of the National Society for the Promotion of the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church in England and Wales. The society believed that the "National Religion should be made the foundation of National Education" (Educational purpose as stated at it founding meeting in 1811).

> [Arnold's italics]. To present to our children's minds what they can comprehend, to abstain from pressing upon them what they cannot, is the right way to towards it.[96]

He was echoing Meiklejohn's position on the importance of the individual pupil's readiness to learn, an appropriate age-related curriculum and, by inference, the importance of initial and formative assessment in that process.[97] In Arnold's view, these integral features of an effective educative process depended on developing teachers' pedagogical knowledge and skills through continuing professional development. Just as the *Educational Times* had been at the forefront of raising teaching standards and the status of the profession so too was the *Schoolmaster* committed to that cause for elementary schoolteachers. It did so by reviewing educational texts, publishing school inspection reports, advertising books for pupil-teachers on subjects such as English composition, Geography and History and reporting politician's views on teaching as a profession. In June, 1879, a speech by William Forster, Member of Parliament and the force behind the 1870 Elementary Education Act, was published in *The Schoolmaster.* Forster stated that "there should be an acknowledged educational profession, as there was a legal profession, or a medical profession" and he claimed that this was wanted by public opinion and teachers.[98] Writing in the *Edinburgh Educational News* in 1876, Sir Charles Reed, MP and Chairman of the London School Board, focused his attention on teaching as an apprenticeship in England: "that in order to secure increased efficiency in our elementary schools, it is desirable to obtain a higher standard of attainment in our pupil-teachers."[99]

Educational periodicals were now making the case for the certification and registration of elementary teachers by reporting the views of influential politicians, Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools, teaching associations and academics. As Anne Rigby and

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[96] *The Schoolmaster,* December 1879, 273.

[97] See note 75.

[98] *The National Schoolmaster*, Vol. IX, June 1879. Mr. Foster, M.P., On Education- Opening a new Grammar School in Bristol, May 17, 1879.

[99] The *Edinburgh Educational News,* March, 1876; Sir Charles Reed on Education in England, 159.

Peter Searby have shown, although progress towards certification was a gradual process, by the end of the nineteenth-century

> Certificated teachers outnumbered uncertificated by two to one and could command much better salaries. But even among certificated teachers there was much variation in income and a teacher in a board school might earn half as much again as one in a church school.[100]

The interests of church schools were represented by various educational periodicals whose editorial policies reflected denominational preferences. The *School Guardian* was the principal publication of the National Society for the Promotion of the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church in England and Wales. By the 1870s, the Society's dominant position as provider of elementary education had been steadily eroded by an increase in schools for children of Protestant Dissenters and Roman Catholics. No longer could an individual church legislate for the education of the whole nation. In January, 1876, an editorial in the *School Guardian* acknowledged issues arising from fundamental transformations, competing denominational preferences, shifting balances and transitions in the education landscape,

> [The] extension of education since 1870, the many questions arising out of it, the Machinery [sic] created by it, the interests involved in it, the comparatively uninformed and unsettled state of opinions respecting it, and the clear prospect before us of a contest for freedom of distinctive religious instruction.[101]

The editorial concluded that as a consequence of these changing times, the *School Guardian* was to be "a paper to be issued weekly . . . [adapting to] new wants of the day" with an intended audience of clergy, school managers and teachers. [102]

In the Regency period, the National Society sought to secure the pre-eminent position of the State religion as the provider of elementary education for children of industrial and rural labourers. With that priority at the forefront of the Society's agenda, an article in defence of its position by Herbert Marsh, academic and Bishop of Peterborough, was published in the *Quarterly* Review. Marsh argued for a pedagogy of faith that prioritised the Catechism and Bible within the framework of a traditionally limited curriculum of basic literacy and arithmetic.[103] By 1876, the National Society's position had shifted from its former intransigence and insistence on having a dominant role in the provision and content of elementary education to a radically different view that was articulated in the *School Guardian*: "we shall advocate tolerance and equal privileges for all, special privileges for none."[104]

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[100] Anne Rigby and Peter Searby, *Children, School and Society in Nineteenth-Century England* (London and Basingstoke: The MacMillan Press Ltd. , 1981), 42.

[101] The *School Guardian,* January 1, 1876, 1.

[102] Ibid.

The National Society, criticised by Lord Brougham in 1818 as an impediment to the extension of elementary education, had by the late nineteenth-century come to terms with the pluralistic provision of schools in England. Primitive Methodists contributed to this increasingly diverse choice of denominational education which used educational periodicals to promote, profess and circulate progressive pedagogical ideas. *The Sunday School Record and Teacher's Assistant* was the "organ of the Primitive Methodist Sunday School General Committee" which was conscious of a relationship between press, pulpit, classroom and the family as made clear in its aims:

> Help for teachers and also parents in the religious instruction of children; and that others, more or less engaged in the evangelization of the rising race, may be equipped for their work . . . [105]

By the 1870s, educational periodicals were playing a transformative role in advancing and circulating progressive educational ideas among a specific denominational reading audience of professional educators. The *Sunday School Record and Teacher's Assistant* was acutely alert to changing times as shown in its editorial position on an effective pedagogy of faith stating that “this is an age demanding illustrations. The Great Teachers [sic] used metaphors, pictures, anecdotes in presenting the truth to his hearers and disciples.”[106]

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[103] *The Quarterly Review*, 1812, Vol.7, ART. I. First annual Report of the National Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church. With an Account of the Proceedings for the Formation of the Society, and an Appendix of Documents; together with a List of Subscribers to the Society in London, and to Societies in the Country, in Union with the National Society. Henry Marsh DD, FRS. (1757-1839): Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity in the University of Cambridge, Bishop of Peterborough. Regarded as the foremost man of letters and Divine in Cambridge.

[104] The *School Guardian*, December 30, 1876, 3.

[105] The *Sunday School Record and Teacher's Assistant,* Vol. 1, No. 1, Jan, 1877, 1. Priced at one penny, the periodical was intended to reach an audience of 50,000 workers "in this field" of education and parents who were encouraged to continue instruction within the home.

The *Sunday School Record and Teacher*’s *Assistant* regarded teaching as a noble profession, recognised the challenges facing teachers and proposed curriculum content and pedagogical methods to overcome “teachers’ difficulties.”[107] Those proposals sought to address

> The greatest difficulty, of course, [that] will most frequently occur in conjunction with the *subject of teaching* [their italics]. It is not to be wondered at, for what a depth and extent . . . fall under the heading of theology and Biblical literature. . . Lessons cannot be carefully and consecutively studied without material help being derived. But if teachers would be helped by them they must study them till they become their own mental property.[108]

As far as Primitive Methodism was concerned, assiduous lesson preparation was among the defining characteristics of teaching as a profession; educators were encouraged to

> Select works on theology, Scripture history, geography, natural history, antiquities, &c., &c., [which] should be read – repeatedly read, read until their contents are perfectly familiar. The contents of such works then become a matter of knowledge to us, knowledge which is always available, knowledge which is at once thorough, detailed, abundant, and exact. Every man knows the difference between the flow from a full vessel and a half-empty one. It is not so much that more comes out of it, but it comes out with greater force.[109]

In June, 1877, the *Sunday School Record and Teacher’s Assistant* published extracts from the Reverend Joseph Shenton’s paper on ‘The Qualifications For Successful Sabbath School Teaching’ delivered at the Convention of Methodist workers in Staffordshire. Shenton identified ‘*intelligence’* [his italics] as a prominent attribute needed to accomplish successful teaching,

> In order to make our Sabbath schools more efficient the best talent in the church should be employed in teaching the young. We want men and women of culture, as well as

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[106] Ibid., 2. Gender-bias persisted in the use of specific terminology, especially ‘his” which neglects to recognise the role of women in the Primitive Methodism Movement had been established in 1811. The status of women was subordinate to that of men which failed to recognise their important educational role in the Sunday School movement.

[107] The *Sunday School Record and Teacher’s Assistant,* No. 5, Vol. 1, May, 1877, 1.

[108] Ibid.

[109] Ibid.

> those of humbler abilities, engaged in this great work. The children come to the Sabbath school nowadays, not to learn how to read, but to learn how to think aright on the subject of religion . . . If a teacher lacks intelligence, he lacks the ability to educate, - to draw out the mind-power of his scholars, he cannot lead them to the fountains of knowledge and truth, and he will never make them reverent students to the Word of God.[110]

Shenton goes on to stress the important role of teachers in stimulating inquiry in the learning process by creating opportunities for pupils to question, reflect and, thereby, develop thinking skills. His progressive conceptualisation of a pedagogy of faith suggests an interactive learning process between pupils and teachers which was at variance with traditional information transmission models of instruction. He reiterates the need for lesson planning because "there can be no true teaching without preparation."[111] Shenton advocates progressive ideas about the initial assessment of each pupils' needs and capabilities so that teachers adapt their teaching methods to the requirements of each individual learner. It would appear that the current educational emphasis on meeting pupils' individual learning needs through differentiation by task and assessment are authentically Victorian in their origins. Shenton emerges as a relatively unknown figure whose views reflected Methodism's commitment to progressive pedagogical ideas and practices which were also disseminated at their conferences.

At the Lichfield Sunday School Teachers' Conference in 1876, the programme included discussions on the cross-fertilisation of pedagogical methods through the development of learning communities. [112] The *Sunday School Record and Teacher's Assistant* reported that "at the evening meeting, Mr. W. Johnson gave a model lesson to a class of boys from 13 to 15 years of age, illustrative of the best method of teaching."[113]

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[110] The *Sunday School Record and Teacher's Assistant*, No. 6, Vol. 1, June, 1877. *The substance of a paper read at a Convention of Methodist workers, held at Longton, Staffordshire, January 29,* (their italics), 1877, by Joseph Shenton, 1.

[111] Ibid.

[112] Papers presented at the Sunday School Teachers' Conference, Lichfield, on Monday, October 9, 1876.

[113] The *Sunday School Record and Teacher's Assistant*, Jan. 7, 1877, 14.

Johnson used the "interrogative method" which involved diagnostic assessment and open rather than closed questions.[114] Whether his approach was superior to alternative teaching and learning methods is debatable but using 'model lessons' stimulated an on-going discourse about pedagogies in the wider teaching community. Clearly, Primitive Methodists were committed to the professional development of Sunday school teachers, raising the status of teaching and ensuring the circulation of educational ideas and practices through the *Sunday School Record and Teacher's Assistant*. In doing so, Primitive Methodism made an important contribution to debates about elementary education in late nineteenth-century England. In particular, this was achieved by advocating pupil-centred learning, rejecting superficial knowledge and promoting depth and breath in the educative process which were characteristics of a quest for improvement in industrial England. The periodical press was a catalyst for the exchange of ideas, observations and the transformative potential of education which no longer needed to be defined in terms of the values of the past. However, as Richard Evans argues, traditional educational ideas and practices persisted:

> The dominant cultural models of the era, and through much of the nineteenth century, were Classical; the education of the upper and middle classes concentrated on Latin and Ancient Greek, and through the poetry, history, philosophy and drama of classical authors, attempted to impart to young men values variously described as 'Corinthian', 'Athenian' or at the tougher end of education, 'spartan'.[115]

In the context of these 'dominant cultural models', the rapidly increasing middle-class was the primary intended reading audience for Charles Dickens's weekly publication, *Household Words*. His periodical published, among other things, serialised fiction, reviews and case studies on education that revealed tensions between progressive and traditional educational ideas and practices. It is this combination of journalism and fiction which provide us with alternative perspectives on the education debate as I go on to show.

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[114] Ibid.

[115] Richard Evans, *The Victorians: Art and Culture* . (paper presented at Gresham College , Museum of London, Monday, 4 October, 2010), 3.

Journalism and fiction in debates about elementary education in Charles Dickens's *Household Words*

To take a twentieth-century response, George Orwell argued that Charles Dickens's criticisms of education were neither constructive nor destructive; for example, he refers to the "woolly vagueness" of the reference to Doctor Strong's school in *David Copperfield* (1849-1850). Dickens is accused of an "utter lack of educational theory" because "he can imagine the *moral* atmosphere of a good school, but nothing further." For Orwell, the root of society's ills and evils according to Dickens is a *moral* [his italics] one. This is exemplified in his comment about Dr Strong's school compared with Creakle's "as good is from evil." Change of spirit rather than change of structure is the imperative in Dickens's writings.[116]

Orwell argues, then, that Dickens's position on education was essentially neutral, which is difficult to reconcile with his counter assertion that "except for the universities and big public schools, every kind of education existing in England gets a mauling at Dickens's hands."[117] In fact, Dickens's ferocious attacks on English institutions are invariably cited as incontestable evidence of a writer content with being critical but ill at ease when it came to suggesting solutions to society's problems.

By drawing on primary and secondary literary and historical sources, I argue that alongside his treatment of education in his novels more importance needs to be given to progressive ideas that Dickens advanced directly as author or co-author of articles, or indirectly as 'conductor' of *Household Words*. By progressive, I mean a form of advancement, a progression or upward trajectory of a person's knowledge, creativity, imagination and understanding of themselves and others, which corresponds with David Halpin's conceptualisation of the term.[118] In another sense, progressive meant the extension of elementary education for working-class children through increasing State intervention. Progressive educational ideas ran counter to dominant, conservative principles and practices in Victorian England. They were the antithesis of a curriculum that neglected or dismissed innovative ideas, privileged subject matter legitimised by the values of the past and, as Halpin argues, promoted

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[116] George Orwell, *Inside the Whale and Other Essays* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1940*), 1.*

[117] Ibid.

> Antiquated educational sentiments which sees schooling as one means of discipling young people, instilling in them "basic skills" which are judged necessary to ensure that they function as acceptable and useful members of society.[119]

Conversely, progressive theories and practices were more consistent with education as conceived by the Romantics including William Wordsworth, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, John Keats, Percy Bysshe Shelley, George Gordon Byron and William Blake. Education as understood by Dickens and the Romantics had, above all, to advance and enhance the individual child's affective and intellectual development within a model of freedom to think and discover the world.

Dickens regarded inadequate and harmful pedagogical practices as a barrier to an education of the intellect and feelings. Dinah Birch challenges the generalizability of specific representations of "the grotesque parody of education in Charles Dickens' *Nicholas Nickleby*: "

> Obedient to this summons there ranged themselves in front of the schoolmaster's desk, half-a-dozen scarecrows . . .
>
> "This is the first class in English spelling and philosophy, Nickleby . . . Now then, where's the first boy?"
>
> "Please, sir, he's cleaning the back-parlour window", said the temporary head of the philosophical class.

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[118] David Halpin, *Romanticism and Education* (London: Continuum, 2007), 9.
[119] Ibid., 10.

> "So he is, to be sure," rejoined Squeers. "We go upon the practical mode of teaching, Nickleby: the regular education system. C-l-e-a-n, clean, verb active, to make bright, to scour. W-i-n, w-in, d-e-r, der, winder, a casement. When the boy knows this out of book, he goes and does it."[120]

Birch considers the scene as

> Unforgettable, but it is also misleading. Victorian education was not simply a matter of victimized children and brutal schoolmasters. Much more often it was a vision of hope, promising to transform the misery of impoverished minds into the prospect of a richer life for every child.[121]

Evidence from articles in *Household Words* would suggest that this view, at least in terms of 'vision', is justified as evidenced by the aspirational and progressive views about education expressed by contributors to that magazine. Orwell's analysis of Dickens and education relied exclusively on fictionalised accounts. Consequently, it is a partial and misleading interpretation because his critique tended to neglect an investigation of non-fiction in *Household Words*. In my view, an exploration of the educational theories and practices described in a selection of articles in *Household Words* begins to establish a corrective to Orwell's verdict.

The relationship between parents and children is integral to an understanding of elementary education in the period 1833-1880. Prior to the 1830s, periodicals voiced strong opinions about parental responsibilities for their children's education. In the late-Regency period, the *London Magazine* criticised societal and parental neglect, and lack of understanding of education which meant that "parents set up scarecrows in every path that leads to knowledge."[122] The diatribe continued as the article accused parents of being barriers to inquiry and so "the door to knowledge is closed."[123] Critical and unsympathetic to parental shortcomings in the education of their children, such articles, though indulging in gross generalizations, fuelled debates about the role of parents in education. Those debates continued in *Household Words* and fictionalised representations are present in Dickens's novels: *Nicholas Nickleby*,[124] *Dombey and Son,*[125] *David Copperfield*[126] and *Hard Times*[127] which are investigated subsequently in literary case studies.

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[120] Dinah Birch, *Our Victorian Education* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, Ltd, 2008), 1.

[121] Ibid., 2.

[122] *The London Magazine*: Scott, John (ed.) Taylor, John (ed.), October 1828, 303-17, vol.2. Issue 7,303. Founded in 1732, politically opposed to the Tory *Gentleman's Magazine,* the periodical went through various reincarnations. John Scott became editor in 1820. Contributors included William Wordsworth, Percy Bysshe Shelley, John Clare and John Keats. Two instalments of *Thomas De Quincey's Confessions of an English Opium-Eater* were published in September, 1821. John Taylor succeeded Scott who was killed in a duel with J.H. Christie. He was the friend of Blackwood's Magazine's John Gibson Lockhart who had criticised the "Cockney School" which included Leigh Hunt and John Keats. Members of Taylor's working staff included Thomas hood, William Hazlitt and Charles Lamb. The periodical ceased publication in 1829 but revived in 1875. Sources: Hathi Trust, *The London Magazine, or, Gentleman's monthly intelligencer*, 1832-c. 1882. *The London Magazine* website: https://www.thelondonmagazine.org.

Formal, institutionalised elementary education preoccupied legislators, civil servants, Her Majesty's School Inspectors, educators, novelists, poets and polemicists in Victorian England. Such widespread interest, and the sustained debates that persisted throughout the Victorian period, strengthens the case for the importance of elementary education. In Chapter 3 of my thesis, I argue that alternative, non-institutionalised education provide us with important source of evidence about learning and child development. Unsurprisingly, given Dickens's significant exposure to experiential education in the streets of London, depictions of children learning from experience surface in his writings as noted by Michael Slater: "Dickens's lifelong fascination with the sights and sounds of London, and with the myriad strange life-forms bred or shaped by the city, really took hold of him, and even found its first expression in his writing." [128]

The argument can be taken further by drawing attention to the emphasis Dickens placed on memory and reflection; for example, the furnace-keeper in *The Old Curiosity Shop*, who reawakened memories as he contemplated the fire as if it were a book. [129] Two central concepts in experiential learning are 'reflection' and 'lived experiences' which were integral features of Romantic conceptions of progressive education. Both concepts are necessary in order to make sense and meaning of memories as confirmed by contemporary educational theorists such as John Dewey,[130] David A. Kolb[131] and Jack Mezirow.[132]

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[123] Ibid., 195.
[124] Charles Dickens, *Nicholas Nickleby* [1838-9], (London: Scolar Press, 1982).
[125] Charles Dickens, *Dombey and Son* [1848] , (Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Classics, 2002).
[126] Charles Dickens, *David Copperfield* [1849-50], *(*Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Classics, 2000).
[127] Charles Dickens, *Hard Times* [1854], (London: Penguin Classics, 2003).
[128] Michael Slater, *Charles Dickens* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2011), 18-19.
[129] Charles Dickens, *The Old Curiosity Shop* [1849]. (Hertforshire:Wordsworth Classics, 1995).

Dickens believed in the humanizing effects of education on children. However, Birch concludes that "[he] believes in the extension of learning, but when it has the nature of programmed schooling he starts to get anxious."[133] Such reservations may have influenced Dickens's decision to value alternative forms of learning outside of formal, institutionalized settings. While that possibility remains highly speculative, his contribution to debates about elementary education in Victorian England is confirmed by the following investigation.

Representations of elementary education in Charles Dickens's periodical, *Household Words*

> 'Journalists are now the true Kings and Clergy.'[134]

'Conducted' by Charles Dickens, *Household Words* was a weekly magazine aimed primarily at the middle-classes, influential people and aspirational members of the working-class. Dickens's ambitions for this new publishing project were expressed in a letter to Angela Burdett Coutts in April 1850:

> The Household Words I hope (and have every reason to hope) will become *a good property.* It is exceedingly well liked, and 'goes', in the trade phrase admirably . . . and although the expenses [sic] of such a venture are necessarily very great, the circulation much more than pays for them, so far. The labor, in conjunction with Copperfield, is something rather ponderous; but to establish it firmly would be to gain such an enormous point for the future (I mean my future) that I think nothing of that. It is playing havoc with the villainous press.[135]

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[130] John Dewey, *Experience and Education* (New York: Touchstone, 1938).
[131] David Kolb, *Experiential Learning; Experience as the source of learning and development* (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc. 1984).
[132] Jack Mezirow and Associates, *Fostering Critical Reflection In Adulthood* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1984).
[133] See note 121, 3.
[134] Thomas Carlyle, *Sartor Resartus: The Life and Opinions of Herr Teufelsdrockh* (London: Chapman and Hall, Limited, 1836), 30. Acknowledgement: this epigraph was suggested to me by Professor Susan Oliver – my supervisor at the University of Essex.
[135] Letter to Miss Coutts, 12 April 1850, Pilgrim Letters, vol. VI, 83.

Sally Ledger argues that Dickens's motivations for launching *Household Words*

> Were commercial, cultural and political. Long aware of the financial precariousness of novel writing, Dickens was, like his friend Douglas Jerrold, haunted throughout his life by the proximity of debt amongst his family and friends.[136]

In John Drew's view, "crusading social journalism" was at the core of the publication's agenda, with some three hundred and eighty contributors, ninety of whom were women.[137] Edgar Johnson concurs with Drew's characterisation of *Household Words* when he writes that

> Hardly a week goes by in which it is not attacking some abuse. It consistently opposes racial, national, religious and class prejudices. It crusades against illiteracy and in favour of . . . public education and free elementary and industrial schools.[138]

Dickens authored and co-authored numerous articles published in his magazine, as he did for its successor *All The Year Round.* Usually they were unsigned. The importance of education was evidenced by the fact that over the lifetime of the magazine, one thousand articles or references were devoted to the subject. Invective, satire, parody, cynicism, scepticism, irony and the comic were all used to express views and correctives to what were regarded by the writers as ineffective and harmful educational theories and practices. One contemporary newspaper, the *Derby Mercury*, was in no doubt about the quality of *Household Words:*

> A peculiar charm in the publication [. . .] will be found in the unruffled good temper, which pervades it [. . .]. In exposing popular error, and lending a hand in the destruction of popular fallacy, the object is [. . .] happily achieved by a raciness of banter which keeps the reader in admirable good humour with himself, never hurting his self-esteem by declamation against his prejudices but felicitously laying bare the absurdities and improprieties by which numerous social abuses are fenced around [. . .] The contents are varied, and in their variety, excellent. The mode in which the subjects are treated shows sound judgment and great tact.[139]

As John Cuddon observes, in nineteenth-century England

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[136] Sally Ledger, *Dickens and the Popular Radical Imagination* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 168.

[137] John Drew, *Dictionary of Nineteenth-Century Journalism* (Academia Press and the British Library, 2009): extract from University of Buckingham website: *Household Words*, 1.

[138] Edgar Johnson, *Charles Dickens: His Tragedy and Triumph* [1952], (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1979), 365.

[139] The Derby Mercury, 9 Apr. 1851,4.

> Prose was the chosen medium for satire and articles in *Household Words* often had a satirical edge intended to be derisive and corrective while, at the same time, ridiculing parental ignorance of, in the following case, choice of private schools. [140]

The following example of liberal, crusading journalism was aimed at revealing abuses in private schools, which could be established by anyone without a teaching qualification or even knowledge of pedagogical theories and practices. Proprietors of putative educational establishments were concerned far less with providing a meaningful education than they were with profit. Parents, children and elementary education were recurring themes in *Household Words.* Parents were held to account as contributors to the publication exposed deficiencies in their attitudes about education and decision-making about schools for their children.

Private schools, parents and the promise of paradise: misleading testimonials and fraudulent advertisements

On January 15, 1853, an article entitled '*Scholastic: The March of Mind,*' was published in *Household Words.* [141] Criticism of fraudulent advertisements and misleading testimonials placed in newspapers by private schools was a recurring theme in the magazine. Sarcasm allied to a thick layer of cynicism propelled the invective against private schools whose advertisements stated: "No vacations"- for was it not cruel to have children home on vacation as they would be deprived of idyllic surroundings in "sixty-roomed mansions."[142] One advertisement promised: "Greek, Latin, French and German (by natives), Mathematics, Drawing, Mapping, Globes" and all for "£20 per year!" [143]

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[140] J.A.Cuddon, *Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory* (London: Penguin Books, 2014), 633.

[141] *Household Words*- Jan. 15, 1853; 6, 147, 409.

[142] Ibid.

[143] Ibid.

Private schools sought to attract interest from parents by promising "the highest references.[144] One advertisement, placed no doubt by a school desperate for business, sought to attract children with "weak lungs."[145] Others sought to entice parents with the stress on maternal care provided in the school.[146]

Parents who made ill-informed choices of schools were heavily criticised. They accepted uncritically the lure of false claims in newspaper advertisements for private schools for middle-class children. The article contrasted parents who are duped by falsehoods with those who assiduously scrutinised schools' publicity before making informed choices. Contemporary criticisms of private schools are at variance with Hugh Cunningham's assertion that such establishments "flourished because they gave parents some control over times of attendance, modes of punishment, and syllabus."[147]

In Dickens' novel, *The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby,* easily duped, uncaring parents and guardians were singled out for particular ridicule and condemnation. Educational establishments were, for them, convenient places for inconvenient children who trespassed on their adult lives as illustrated in the following scenario.

'The Yorkshire Schoolmaster at the 'Saracen's Head'

An illustration by "Phiz" in the original monthly parts of *The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby* depicts the central character, Wackford Squeers, schoolmaster and proprietor of Dotheboys Hall, at the Saracen's Head in London. The fictional Squeers, in common with other proprietors of private schools, had placed fraudulent advertisements in newspapers in order to 'sell' his educational provision to parents. As a prospective parent enters the room in which Squeers has just admonished a new boy, his tone changes towards the boy in order to impress the 'stranger':

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[144] Ibid.
[145] Ibid.
[146] The article condemned the trickery used by school proprietors concerned with profit not education.
[147] Hugh Cunningham, *Dickens as a Reformer,* in David Paroissien, Ed. *A Companion to Charles Dickens,* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2008), 167.

> My dear child…You are leaving your friends but you will have a father in me, my dear, and a mother in Mrs Squeers. At the delightful village of Dotheboys, near Greta Bridge, in Yorkshire, where youths are boarded, clothed, booked, washed, furnished with pocket-money, provided with all the necessaries-"
>
> Mr. Squeers, I believe, Sir?
>
> The same, Sir," said Mr Squeers, with an assumption of extreme surprise.
>
> The gentleman, said the stranger, that advertised in the Times newspaper?
>
> -Morning Post, Chronicle, Herald, and Advertiser, regarding the Academy called Dotheboys Hall at the delightful village of Dotheboys, near Greta Bridge, in Yorkshire, added Mr Squeers.[148]

While misleading advertisements about private schools were common, the dissonance between the rhetoric and realities had significant implications for elementary education. Such schools were, along with the parents and guardians, barriers to an effective, relevant and meaningful education. Hope for education did not reside in 'educational' establishments in which there was no understanding of child development, pedagogy and an absence of qualified teachers. However, *Household Words* published a case study of a school, Gable College, which, contrasted with Dotheboys Hall, was presented as a model of progressive education designed to meet pupils' individuals learning needs.

Gable College: progressive education

This revelatory and instructional article, which was published in *Household Words* on February 28, 1852, provides evidence that Dickens, either directly or indirectly as 'conductor' of the magazine, approved of the effective, progressive educational practices at

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[148] Charles Dickens, *The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby,* First published in monthly parts by Chapman and Hall, 2 April 1838 to 1 October 1839. This edition first published in (London: Scolar Press, 1982), 25.

Gable College.[149] The evidence revealed in the article tends to reject Orwell's view that Dickens was incapable of suggesting or supporting systemic solutions to educational issues. As Philip Collins argues, the characterisation of "Dickens (as) a homespun thinker, not always well-informed about the subjects on which he summarily pronounced, and not much given to reflection" would appear to be misleading given, for example, Dickens's direct experiences of Ragged Schools.[150] His first-hand knowledge of such establishments, and his sensitivities towards the plight of the children within them, is evidenced in his letter on the subject to Angela Burdett – Coutts in which he writes

> The school is miserably poor, you may believe, and is almost entirely supported by the teachers themselves. If they could get a better room (the house they are in, is like an ugly dream); above all, if they could provide some convenience for washing; it would be an immense advantage.
>
> My heart sinks within me when I go into these scenes, that I almost lose the hope of ever seeing them changed.[151]

Although Dickens praises the "Masters [as] extremely quiet, honest, good men," he is highly critical of an uninspiring, irrelevant curriculum restricted to religious instruction. Dickens believed in the transformative potential of education to improve the lives of such children in Ragged Schools but radical educational reforms were needed to realise the desired outcome. Recent research by Laura Mair provides us with an alternative interpretation of the Ragged School movement which contrasts markedly with the specific case in Dickens's letter. Mair argues that such schools fulfilled an essential role in teaching reading and writing to economically-disadvantaged children who would otherwise have been excluded from formal elementary education. Rather than relying exclusively on official sources of evidence, she uses 227 letters from former pupils to their teacher which showed the varying degrees of literacy achieved and the importance they attached to learning.[152]

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[149] *Household Words* Feb. 28, 1852; 4,101

[150] Philip Collins, *Dickens and Education* (London: MacMillan & Co. Ltd., 1963), 218.

[151] Jenny Hartley, ed.*The Selected Letters of Charles Dickens* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 21-124.

Progressive education at Gable College provided Dickens with an opportunity to reject educational ideas and practices legitimised by reference to the values of the past. *Household Words* reported how this educational establishment was rejecting ineffective, traditional pedagogies that were rooted in an obsession with classical antiquity in favour of a progressive alternative. The article had a pedagogical function as it presented a readership of educators and the public with an exemplar of a 'model' school which did not define itself in terms of the past. The College had instituted a modern approach to education that appealed to Dickens's commitment to educational reform.

The College provided an education that was the antithesis of the "chop-and-steak, steak-and-chop of education which rang the changes of Latin, Greek, and Mathematics . . . (and) served to curb originality."[153] Consequently, a predominantly classical curriculum was now at odds with the needs of a country transitioning rapidly and inexorably into a modern, industrialised nation. Latin and Greek were regarded as "the one and only standard" and as the line of demarcation that was to separate the educated from the illiterate . . . but [they were] languages [that were] no longer spoken."[154] There is the possibility that George Orwell may have approved of the criticism that Latin was deteriorating the purity of the English language. The article challenged educational orthodoxy; specifically the pre-eminence of the classics, which in effect was regressing to those times in English history when only a small elite could understand Latin. Moreover, a rejection of the primacy of classicism, which Anthony Grayling describes as "the old world, orthodoxy, established dogma," was an indicative feature of the tension between progressive and traditional educational ideas and practices.[155]

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[152] Laura M. Mair, '*A Transcript of Their Mind'? Ragged School Literacy in the Mid-Nineteenth Century, Journal of Victorian Culture (JVC)* v.24, no. 1. (Jan. 2019): 18-32.
[153] See note 150, 547.
[154] Ibid.

Gable College offered a positive environment, suitable accommodation, which contrasted with two in a bed, thirty in a room. The article noted the importance of stimulating texts that were on the shelves in "a good private library."[156] Displays of pupils' work celebrated individuality in learning and contrasted with the distressed state of other schools. The technical curriculum [for example, carpentry] meant that pupils progressed to trades and professions related to their current education. There was a common core curriculum: English, spelling, writing and options to develop specific talents. Education was regarded as a means of eventually earning a living. Brain-fever was cured at Gable College as the harmful effects of information overload were beginning to be understood.[157] Education at Gable College reflected Matthew Arnold's conviction that knowledge must be 'useful'- it served a purpose and made a difference in the lives of the pupils who applied their learning to future careers. In this case, education was conceived as vocational and relevant to some of the essential and pressing occupational requirements of a modern nation; specifically, this was an example of education as human capital.

Boys were admitted to Gable College free of expense and their status was kept unknown to pupils whose parents paid fees which meant there was a school ethos that promoted equality of which Dickens would have approved. As Hugh Cunningham argues,

> Dickens's contribution to the education debates was not really at all on the role of the state: it was on the way in which the ethos of the school and the quality of teaching could make or mar a child.[158]

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[155] A.C. Grayling, *Descartes, The Life of René Descartes in Its Place in his Times* (London: Simon & Schuster UK Ltd, Pocket Books: 2006), 122.

[156] *Household Words* Feb. 28, 1852; 4,101.

[157] Brain fever was essentially the deleterious effects of the excessive information transmission pedagogical model that relied on rote learning and forcing inordinate quantities of facts into pupils' minds. William Wordsworth, for example, opposed passive, fact fetishism, preferring a child-centered pedagogy, which required active learning methods.

[158] See note 148, 168.

Gable College encouraged independence and self-reliance within the framework of a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum in which the Classics were not compulsory. The 'putative' education at Dotheboys Hall in Dickens's *Nicholas Nickleby,* contrasts markedly with the progressive version at Gable College. As Richard Altick argues,

> When Dickens turns his attention to fee paying establishments for boys they are treated [. . .]seriously, and the perspective is generally that of the anguished pupil [. . .] Dickens denounced these establishments as examples of 'the monstrous neglect of education in England and his attack helped to speed their demise.[159]

The headmaster and teachers at Gable College exemplified the enlightened, virtuous and benevolent educators favoured by Dickens who have nothing in common with the sadistic Wackford Squeers

> Who looked at the little boy to see if there was anything he could beat him for: as he happened not to be doing anything at all, he merely boxed his ears, and told him not to do it again.[160]

Squeers was an example of those quack 'teachers' who delighted in exercising "the lash of the pedant."[161] Returning from the novel to prose non-fiction, the *Household Words* article argued for a more humane and enlightened approach to discipline, which eschewed corporal punishment. There was a clear recognition of the consequences of harsh disciplinary regimes in schools where "those . . . who had once lost the power of loving, soon became clever in cruelty."[162] These punitive, emotionally damaging practices were, according to the reviewer, perpetuated

> By fathers [who] sent their sons to enjoy the canings they had experienced in their own time; and their sons in turn bequeathed the same to their successor [. . .] leading to any absence of feeling among judges, bishops, dean and chapter. [163]

"Birch-fostered studies" were now recognised as serving only to induce fear in children.[164] They did not represent the basis for effective pedagogical practices but established an unhealthy relationship between fear, punishment and painful learning. As Marie Parker-Jenkins argues, "pre-emptive whipping" or beatings were not uncommon in a society that regarded children as tainted by sinful dispositions.[165] As a result, violence was condoned and encouraged as a remedy for the ever-present stigma of being a child. However, I agree with Dinah Birch's position which suggests that it would be misleading and inaccurate to generalise from Dickens's portrayals of extreme cases.[166] However, in using hyperbole, parody and invective to draw attention to the worst abuses in some institutions, Dickens was ultimately successful in arguing for educational reforms.

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[159] Richard Altick , *Education*, in *Oxford Reader's Companion to Dickens*, ed. Paul Schlicke (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 217.

[160] See note 148, 24.

[161] See note 142, 546.

[162] Ibid., 547.

[163] Ibid., 546.

I now examine Dickens's contribution to our understanding of wider educational issues in Victorian society through further fictional representations of education. The 'educative' process in *Dombey and Son* reinforced Dickens's position on the compelling need for a modern approach to education by focusing on pedagogies that were damaging children's psychological and physical development.

Grinders, Grinding and Gradgrind: pedagogical theories and practices in Charles Dickens's *Dombey and Son, Hard Times and David Copperfield*

Dombey and Son[167]

'Grind' was a motif used by Dickens to represent the monotony and ultimate futility of an education based on his interpretation of Utilitarian principles. 'Brain-forcing' was essentially a method that subjected children to information overload in schools; specifically synonymous with 'grinding' or wearing down individuality through a dominant didactic approach to teaching. Scientific advances in the study of 'brain-forcing' in childhood

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[164] Ibid.

[165] Marie Parker Jenkins, *A Question of Balance: Schools, Discipline and Children's Rights* (paper presented at BERA Conference, Queens University, Belfast, August 27th. - August 30th, 2008), 1.

[166] See note 121, 2.

[167] Michael Slater draws our attention to a review in *Chambers Edinburgh Journal* , October 24, 1846 that lauded *Dombey and Son* by stating that 'the good ship Boz' was now 'righted and once more fairly afloat. Michael Slater, *Charles Dickens, (*New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2011), 262. *Dombey and Son* was "published in 1846-8 by BRADBURY AND EVANS in twenty monthly parts, it is generally considered the first novel of his artistic maturity." Paul Schlike, *Oxford Reader's Companion to Dickens* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 184.

supported Dickens's view of the physical, mental and emotional damage associated with this teaching and learning method. Some forty years after the publication of *Dombey and Son,* an article on the subject by William A. Hammond was published in the *Popular Science Monthly.* Hammond, a medical doctor, examined a twelve year old child:

> She was pale, tall, and thin. The muscles of her face twitched convulsively and she could not keep her hands and feet still. She was suffering from chorea or St. Vitus's dance and, in addition, had almost constant headaches and other symptoms of nervous derangement . . . I asked her to empty her satchel of the books it contained, and which, she informed me, she had been studying that morning and the night before. This is the list:
>
> 1. An English grammar. 2. A scholar's companion. 3. An arithmetic. 4. A geography. 5. A history of the United states. 6. An elementary guide to astronomy. 7. A temperance physiology (whatever that may be). 8. A method of learning French. 9. A French reading-book.
>
> Nine in all – nine different subjects of knowledge which that poor child was required to study between the hours of three in the after-noon of one day and nine in the morning of the following day![168]

He concluded that her disease "is directly the result of the excesses of the brain [and] is only one of the many that are constantly coming under the observation of physicians."[169] Although Dickens had drawn attention to 'brain-forcing' in the 1840s, Hammond's account shows the persistence of the practice up to the end of the nineteenth-century. As this case shows, fictional representations of damaging educational practices did not always result in the changes sought by authors.

Dickens described the worst excesses of the 'brain-forcing' method, which was a feature of an information transmission approach in which the pupil was a passive recipient of the presentation and packaging of facts. In effect, Dickens argued that such instruction had no relationship whatsoever with education which he conceived in much broader terms. For him, learning involved pedagogical practices which developed children emotionally, creatively, intellectually and imaginatively within a strong moral framework.

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[168] William Alexander Hammond M.D., *Brain-Forcing in Childhood, The Popular Science Monthly*, v. 30 (April 1887), 1.

[169] Ibid.

In *Dombey and Son*, Mr. Dombey was concerned with an accelerated education for his son so that he might arrive with alacrity at adulthood as a partner in his firm. Dombey could not imagine his child who was named after him, which was a common practice in Victorian England, as a person in his own right. As Robert Douglas–Fairhurst comments, there was a

> Growing sense that children were not so much miniature versions of their parents as opportunities to put right the mistakes of the past. It is an idea Dickens plays with skeptically in *Dombey and Son,* where little Paul Dombey is far too frail to survive the burden of hope his father places on him.[170]

Mr. Dombey was obsessed with an internalized mantra that conflated a familial relation with a business name: 'Dombey and Son', 'Dombey and Son', 'Dombey and Son.' Unsurprisingly, therefore, Paul's future education was inevitably tailored to fulfil, as quickly as possible, his entry into the family business. In Brigid Lowe's view,

> "Dombey and Son" are the three words (that) conveyed the one idea of Mr. Dombey's life" (ch. 1); he is the unreflecting, walking embodiment of the pride of a whole age. The true target of this famous passage, as it is of the novel as a whole, is the rising mid-Victorian confidence in the all conquering power of science, of empire, of progress and, most of all money. It is Dickens's first attack against the spirit of the age, conceived as more than the sum of its social ills and personal vices.[171]

Dombey, a prideful patriarchal figure, believed that people and time must be controlled. Control of time had important consequences for the type of education that his son and other children experienced in Victorian England. No time lost for learning condemned children to a pressured existence in which the speed and the demands of industrial change had an instructive parallel in the schoolroom.

Paul Dombey was consigned by his father to a dame's school housed in "the Castle of this ogress and child-queller," Mrs Pipchin, who epitomizes the early Victorian 'educators' ignorance of the formative stages in child development.[172] Paul's private education is contrasted with the Charitable Grinder's school to which Dombey sends Mr. and Mrs Toodle's son, Robin. After all, that is the important middle-class and working-class educational comparison that Dickens makes in this novel – and it includes social advancement opportunities for the working-classes.

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[170] Robert Douglas-Fairhurst, *Becoming Dickens, The Invention of a Novelist* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, London, England: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2011), 260.

[171] Brigid Lowe, *Dombey and Son* in *A Companion to Charles Dickens,* ed. David Paroissien (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2008), 359.

In common with many other proprietors of private educational establishments, Mrs Pipchin was not a qualified teacher nor did she have any knowledge of pedagogy. Her irrational practice of sending children to bed at 10 a.m. was a humorous satire on incoherent thinking that mistakenly believed that such bizarre 'training' benefitted children bodily and mentally. Dickens's comic depiction of Mrs. Pipchin's aberrant 'professional' attributes was in effect drawing attention to the more serious matter of the corrosive effects of her ineptitude on the children under her supervision:

> She was generally spoken of as 'a great manager' of children; and the secret of her management was, to give them everything that they didn't like, and nothing that they did—which was found to sweeten their dispositions very much. She was such a bitter old lady, that one was tempted to believe there had been some mistake in the application of the Peruvian machinery, and that all her waters of gladness and milk of human kindness, had been pumped out dry, instead of the mines.[173]

'Managing' rather than 'educating' children was consistent with the most ineffective practices of Dame 'schools'. A review in *Household Words* criticized self-styled 'teachers' who were

> Uninformed, not only of the philosophy, but of the very mechanism of the mind, they neither know how to guide its growth of to control its operations.[174]

From the outset, Paul Dombey's educational experiences were mechanistic and deterministic which were suggestive of an industrial model; the texts represents 'instruction' rather than a progressive education defined by a child-centered pedagogy whose defining characteristics were the development of the pupil's creativity, individuality and imagination. Paul must grow up to satisfy Mr. Dombey's need for a business partner but his childhood represents an inconvenient interlude that frustrates his father's commercial ambitions.

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[172] Charles Dickens, *Dombey and Son* [1848], (Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Classics, 2002). 96.
[173] Ibid.
[174] *Household Words* October 18, 1856, 313.

Mrs Pipchin's management of children was rooted in rules, discipline and sanctions for straying from her authoritarian, uncompromisingly repressive regime. David Halpin considers such behaviours as "the chief bulwark against genuinely progressive education."[175] Paul's enquiring mind, epitomized by his questioning of Mrs Pipchin, was neither nurtured nor approved of by her:

> Wickam, retorted Mrs Pipchin, colouring, 'is a wicked, impudent, bold-faced hussy.' 'What's that?' inquired Paul. 'Never you mind, Sir,' retorted Mrs Pipchin. 'Remember the story of the little boy that was gored to death by a mad bull for asking questions.'[176]

A questioning child was regarded as a rude, rebellious 'individual,' subversive of the expectation that children were born to listen, to conform to discipline and that they should not, under any circumstances, try to engage in meaningful dialogue through enquiry. In the above passage, Dickens forcefully expressed and contemptuously rejected the maxim that "children should be seen and not heard" as passive recipients of knowledge.

The inexorable process of advancing Paul into adulthood continued at Dr. Blimber's Academy. Blimber was the principal of a small school in Brighton which was described by Dickens as "a great hot-house" establishment. [177]

> 'Ha!' said Doctor Blimber. 'Shall we make a man of him?' 'Do you hear, Paul?' added Mr. Dombey; Paul being silent. 'Shall we make a man of him?' repeated the Doctor. 'I had rather be a child,' replied Paul. 'Indeed!' said the Doctor. 'Why?' [178]

Paul was denied a childhood because the unremitting pursuit of adulthood had now reached, in Mr. Dombey's obsessive mind, a critical stage in which Dr. Blimber's

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[175] David Halpin, *Romanticism and Education* (London: Continuum, 2007),10.

[176] See note 172, 101.

[177] Ibid., 134.

[178] Ibid., 138.

'instructional hothouse' was considered the terminus for Paul's formal education. The child's opinion on the matter was brushed aside as inconsequential and fanciful which again reflected adult attitudes towards children which were common in the Victorian period. The young Dombey was most certainly not a person in his own right which confirmed, as far as Dickens was concerned, a dominant cultural construct of childhood which was the antithesis of an alternative edenic version associated with Romanticism. If, as Brigid Lowe argues, *Dombey and Son* "is Dickens's first attack on the spirit of the age, conceived as more than the sum of its social ills and private vices," then education as depicted in this novel is a central focus for his scathing criticism.[179]

Blimber's character is unlike that of the sadistic Squeers in *Nicholas Nickleby* and Mr. Creakle in *David Copperfield.* Although his dispositions and temperament are comparatively benign, Blimber is wholly unaware of the detrimental effects of his instructional regime on young minds:

> The young gentlemen were prematurely full of carking anxieties. They knew no rest from the pursuit of stony-hearted verbs, savage noun-substantives, inflexible syntactic passages, and ghosts of exercises that appeared to them in their dreams. Under the forcing system, a young gentleman usually took leave of his spirits in three weeks.[180]

Blimber's obsession with classicism is representative of a tension between traditional and progressive educational ideas and practices in early Victorian England. He epitomizes, in respect of an education for middle-class and upper-class children, a Victorian preoccupation with the past as determining and validating the curriculum of the present. His pedagogical practices are consistent with the 'mug and jug' theory of learning, as in *Hard Times,* in which the child is the receptacle into which information is poured relentlessly. [181] This approach, consistent with 'brain-forcing,' was the hothouse method of inculcating knowledge but not necessarily an understanding of Latin and Greek. Blimber's unthinking pedagogy, and narrow curriculum content, represented excessive rote learning for the children of the middle–classes who attended his academy. Paul was subjected to a grinding, wearisome instructional regime that paid no attention to either individual learning needs or an age-appropriate curriculum which was also present in working-class elementary school classrooms in the late 1840s.

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[179] See note 172,359.
[180] See note 172,136.
[181] Charles Dickens, *Hard Times* [1854] , (London: Penguin Classics, 2003).

Blimber's academy fostered, somewhat unintentionally, a culture of ignorance as exemplified by one pupil, Mr. P. Toots. He passed through the academy and out the other side as unenlightened and uneducated as the day he entered it "and people did say that the Doctor had rather overdone it with young Toots, and that when he began to have whiskers he left off having brains."[182]

Paul was reduced to a state of painful emptiness by a combination of the psychologically damaging effects of Mrs Pipchin's approach to forcing open a child's mind as if it were an 'oyster', and Dr. Blimber's 'death by over-instruction,'

> He sat, with folded hands, upon his pedestal, silently listening. But he might have answered 'weary, weary! very lonely, very sad!' And there, with an aching void in his young heart, and all outside so cold, and bare, and strange, Paul sat as if he had taken life unfurnished, and the upholsterer were never coming.[183]

Paul was deprived of his childhood by unrelenting over-instruction which ignored the harmful consequences of subjecting children to the excessive pressures of a force-feeding of facts. No time lost for learning was Blimber's maxim, which, in effect, meant controlling time by ensuring his pupils were constantly at their books. Under this classroom regime, there was no time for childhood. Paul might well be regarded as a victim of the new commercial and industrial culture which was expressive of an economic model of education as described by Thomas Carlyle:

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[182] See note 172, 135.
[183] Ibid., 142.

> This condition of the two great departments of knowledge – the outward cultivated exclusively on mechanical principles; the inward finally abandoned, because, cultivated on such principles, it is found to yield no result, - sufficiently indicates the intellectual bias of our time, its all pervading disposition to that line of enquiry.[184]

While 'mauling' the production line system of putative education, Dickens was also condemning society's treatment of children. Sally Ledger draws attention to "Dickens's interest in and commitment to projects for social improvement" which included educational reform allied to the pressing need for a radical shift in Victorian attitudes towards childhood.[185] As Ledger goes on to remark, "Dickens . . . desired to influence government policy as well as public opinion through his writing of fiction and journalism."[186] In doing so, Dickens contributed significantly to debates about elementary education in the nineteenth-century.

Mr. Dombey's obsession with Paul contrasted markedly with his rejection of his daughter. She was an inconvenience, an encumbrance to be kept at a distance and shown no paternal love: "his feeling about the child had been negative from her birth . . . She troubled his peace. He would have preferred to put her idea aside altogether, if he had known how."[187]

Other characters, Captain Cuttle, Sol Gills and her future husband, Walter Gay, provide the security and love that Florence's father denied her. Child abuse and neglect were not uncommon in Victorian society. Mr. Dombey's disdain, bordering on hatred, for his daughter reflected the elevated social and educational position of males over females in the mid-Victorian period. Florence was clearly literate; her learning appeared to be of the informal, experiential kind. While her father had a clear educational plan for his son, Florence was left marginalized and adrift as far as formal education was concerned. The psychological damage experienced by Florence was somewhat surprisingly minimized by the recurring, dominant theme of her unconditional love for her father. Conversely, the emotional harm, as a consequence of paternal neglect, expressed itself in her fear of Mr. Dombey.

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[184] Thomas Carlyle, *Signs of the Times*, [1829], originally appeared in the *Edinburgh Review.* This quote comes from Volume three of the Collected Works of Thomas Carlyle. 16 Volumes. (London: Chapman and Hall, 1858). www.victorian web.org, 1. Accessed August 5, 2019.
[185] Sally Ledger, *Dickens and the Popular Radical Imagination* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 8.
[186] Ibid., 182.
[187] Charles Dickens, *Dombey and Son* [1848], (Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Classics, 2002), 31.

Paul's love for his sister was regarded by his father as unmanly and a sign of weakness. Here was a child seeking solace in his relationship with his sister. For Mr. Dombey, Florence was in that moment an impediment to Paul's passage to adulthood:

> The child sat on the table looking at him, with a curious expression of suppressed emotion in his face, and beating one hand proudly on his knee as if he had the rising tears beneath it, and crushed them. But his other hand strayed a little way the while, a little farther—farther from him yet—until it lighted on the neck of Florence. 'This is why,' it seemed to say, and then the steady look was broken up and gone; the working lip was loosened; and the tears came streaming forth. 'Mrs Pipchin,' said his father, in a querulous manner, 'I am really very sorry to see this.' 'Come away from him, do, Miss Dombey,' quoth the matron .[188]

Dombey was unaware of the emotional and psychological damage experienced by Paul as he continues to insist on a grinding, crushing regime of 'brain-forcing', which would ultimately contribute to his son's premature death. As Brigid Lowe observes, Florence

> Somehow creeps from the darkened margins to the core of this scene (her mother's death and her repeated cries of "Mama"), later, when Paul dies, she again moves into a position of indispensability that signals to Dombey the possibility of his own unimportance. Herein lies the root of his growing dislike of her. She demonstrates that, at root, it is not power but love, not the denial of human frailty but the accepting embrace of it, that are needed to deal with life *in extremis* [author's italics].[189]

In my view, Dickens is also making a categorical statement in *Dombey and Son* about an education that must be rooted in love, guided by virtuous, qualified teachers who possess an intimate understanding of child development and progressive pedagogies. Moreover, Dickens challenges parents to make prudent, informed and effective decisions about their children's education.

A review in *Household Words* admonished parents such as Mr. Dombey who "trust to the presumed skills of teachers" and "accept superficial acquirements as the criterion of success." [190] Such low parental expectations were regarded as another barrier to much needed reforms in the education system. According to this reviewer, ineffective pedagogical practices were "grinding on, year after year in the same weary circle of monotonous routine" and wore down the child who was reduced to an unthinking, fact-grubbing existence.[191]

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[188] Ibid., 138.

[189] See note 176, 361-362.

Promoting progressive education: a model school in *Household Words*

On January 21, 1854, an anonymous contributor to *Household Words* argued the case for significant improvements in teaching as a profession which was consistent with views expressed previously in the College of Preceptor's *Educational Times*. The public's attention was drawn to "quack-educators who possess much knowledge but are not well-educated – for to know much and to be well-educated are two perfectly distinct things – and they are gentlemen." [192]

In this writer's view, the guiding principles for 'progressive' schools ought to be underpinned by a philosophy that there was no one definitive method of education. Moreover, schoolmasters ought to establish their own educational principles that work for them and their pupils. Given the recurring theme of the virtuous teacher in Dickens's writings on education, it is unsurprising that pedagogical expertise needed to be exercised by an individual possessing "unimpeachable integrity; pleasure in his work; be fond of children; put faith in the good spirit of childhood and not be destitute of imagination."[193]

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[190] *Household Words*, October 18, 1856, 313.

[191] Ibid., 314.

[192] *Household Words*, Jan.21, 1854; 8, 200, 499.

[193] Ibid., 501.

Furthermore, as far as this polemicist is concerned, progressive education meant a broad and balanced curriculum which emphasised thinking skills and the acquisition of practical, useful knowledge. Above all, teachers should have a full elementary knowledge of the sciences and be well read in the literature of several countries and his own.

Such ideas challenged what was "rotten in [a] school system, planned upon models set up in the Middle Ages."[194] The article suggested the need for the professional development of teachers and that teaching should not be an ill-paid profession which currently diminished its status in Victorian society. References to the professionalisation of teaching represented one feature of a fundamental change in educational discourses in periodicals in mid nineteenth-century England. While teachers were considered socially valuable, they were not always valued by society to the extent that they were often regarded as entering 'service' in the same way as maids, footmen and butlers. Articles such as this one, played an important part in bringing to the public's attention the need to rethink teacher identity as socially and culturally important in a modernising, industrial nation. In doing so, *Household Words* was contributing to debates on the professionalisation of teaching which was gaining increasing momentum through the work of the College of Preceptors and the *Educational Times*.

The article asserted optimistically that children "are wonderfully teachable" but cautioned teachers not to overload children with excessive amounts of information in recognition of what was believed to be the limitations of their attention span.[195] Clearly, this was a rejection of the 'brain-forcing' method which persisted in schools at that time. According to the writer of this article, education should not be a matter of "racks and thumbscrews" but rewards for attention and application and sanctions for misconduct ought to be applied rather than corporal punishment.[196] These were radical ideas at a time when physical punishment was considered an acceptable, necessary and integral part of the learning process. The case study school, on which the article was based, offered the following curriculum: languages, arithmetic, mathematics, history, science, geography, reading and good books on travel. An innovative practice was a "system of mutual examination" by pupils that developed their oracy and creative thinking skills.[197] This authentically Victorian practice provides an instructive parallel with the current contemporary education system in England with its emphasis on assessment for learning, which involves pupils formulating their own questions. Pupils in the case study school were encouraged to enquire and engage in stimulating learning through debates and critiques of social movements in Victorian England. Not only does this account offer an alternative to the uninspiring, brain forcing, rote learning educational regime at Dr. Blimber's academy but served as an antidote to, and the antithesis of, education as depicted in Dickens's novel *David Copperfield.*

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[194] Ibid., 504.
[195] Ibid., 501.

David Copperfield

Environments are a recurring motif in Dickens's novels. Invariably, educational establishments are inhospitable, darkly oppressive, threatening and reflective of the personalities of the proprietors of those 'schools.' David Copperfield's first experience of Salem House School establishes a context for his subsequent humiliations and impoverished education:

> I gazed upon the schoolroom into which he took me, as the most forlorn and desolate place I had ever seen [. . .] A bird, in a cage, very little bigger than himself, makes a

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[196] Ibid., 503

[197] Ibid.

> mournful rattle now and then in hopping on his perch, two inches high, or dropping from it; but neither sings nor chirps.[198]

The headteacher of the School, Mr Creakle, takes a sadistic approach to disciplining his pupils and uses ritual humiliation as punishment, power and control. For example, a placard is placed around David's neck that reads: "Take Care of Him. He bites."[199] Creakle was the opposite of a virtuous teacher because he acts out of self-interest, has an obsessive need to dominate and pursues materialistic ambitions. The teachers that were acceptable to Dickens are morally unimpeachable, altruistic, trained, qualified and provide a relevant and meaningful education. While Creakle may be considered as an extreme example of a sadistic, ignorant and loathsome character, Dickens does not settle on him as a singular, exceptional case. Cumulative, evolving depictions of ineffective, sadistic or self-interested 'teachers' can be found in his other novels: Wackford Squeers in *The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby*, Bradley Headstone in *Our Mutual Friend*, M'Choakumchild [a comic name with sinister nuances] in *Hard Times* and Dr. Blimber in *Dombey and Son*.

Salem House was essentially a putative educational establishment in a distant location to which parents sent their children to relieve themselves of the burden of responsibility. In some cases, stepfathers regarded it as a convenient and effective way to avoid parental responsibilities. Illegitimate children could also find themselves experiencing treatment akin to a punitive, custodial sentence simply for being unwanted. By sending children to such institutions, parents were consequently erecting barriers to learning by denying their offspring a beneficial education. Learning was not the primary purpose of such establishments which were fundamentally commercial concerns that attracted Dickens's condemnation.

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[198] Charles Dickens, *David Copperfield [1849-50*], *(*Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Classics, 2000), 70-71.

[199] Ibid., 71.

David's acquisition of the "crumbs of knowledge" was due to the kind attention shown to him by one teacher, Mr Mell.[200] Dickens's preoccupation with the mediation of a benevolent individual is a consistent theme in his writings. Mell is also the persecuted teacher whose pupils exploit his mild-mannered character and despise him when learning that his mother is in a workhouse. Salem House represents a raft of abuses associated with the provision of private education and pedagogical practices that Dickens argued were in need of urgent reform. Moreover, as Gareth Cordery argues, "the novel . . . [is not] a transparent expression of some dearly held and revered Victorian values and beliefs, but a site where they are interrogated, tested, and even subverted."[201] Dickens would go on to condemn, 'interrogate, test and subvert' ineffective education in his most polemical novel, *Hard Times.*

Hard Times

In this novel, published in weekly instalments in *Household Words,* the tyranny of facts shackles and, thereby, controls and disempowers not only working-class children but also the son and daughter of Thomas Gradgrind, the School Board Superintendent. Facts are, in effect, a force for the subordination of the lower orders by the aristocracy, gentry and the commercial and industrial elites. They are synonymous with indoctrination, control and an imposed world-view as dictated primarily by a new, rapidly increasing middle-class factory owners. In effect, the sole purpose of education lies in inculcating facts consistent with the 'mug (child's mind) and jug (fact container/dispenser)' theory of instruction. Dickens refers to children as “little pitchers [. . .] who were to be filled so full of facts.” [202] He uses metaphors and hyperbole to illustrate and condemn educative processes in which the pupil is passive and imagination is eschewed in favour of the packaging and presentation of facts.

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[200] See note 197, 84. Dickens draws attention to the fact that David's acquisition of "some crumbs of knowledge" was exceptional as the majority of pupils acquired none at all. That fact is revealed when David states that he was "an exception to the general body."

[201] Gareth Cordery, *David Copperfield* in *A Companion to Charles Dickens,* ed. David Paroissien (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2008), 374.

In the context of this novel, Benthamite Utilitarianism is depicted as formulaic, bereft of compassion and concerned not with the ‘good’ of all but designed for the economic, social and political benefit of the Victorian ruling classes. However, Terry Eagleton argues that Dickens “paints a partisan view of Coketown, the north-of England industrial town in which the novel’s action is set.” He takes exception to Dickens’s depiction of Utilitarianism as “a savage caricature” of a movement that was “responsible for some vital social reforms in Dickens’s England.” In Eagleton’s view, “Utilitarianism involved a lot more than making a fetish out of facts.”[203] However, that verdict need not detract from the important pedagogical contrast that is drawn by Dickens between rote learning with a much more stimulating, alternative vision of education in which imagination and creativity predominate. The importance of those contrasting pedagogical methods was much more to do with Dickens’s disdain for a mechanistic and deterministic education and his preference for an education of the intellect and feelings.

Facts alone, as represented in *Hard Times*, are mechanistic: in the Victorian novel they are congruent with industrialisation and deterministic because representing specific outcomes decided upon by commercial interests. In other words, they are ‘produced’ and arguably ‘manufactured’ in a way that is synonymous with a factory production line. Such facts are satirised by Dickens as the incontestable merchandise of the fact-makers, whose design and framework for their delivery and subsequent circulation was intended to be so prescriptive that they act as a barrier to any dispute or alteration. Furthermore, they represent an immutable, integral dimension of how society should be ordered to ensure stability while maintaining carefully calibrated social distinctions. The facts-based system neither recognised nor encouraged individuality in learning but advanced a procrustean model of education concerned with the memorisation of facts and statistics. Facts are the means that justify the predetermined ends that represent an outcomes model of education concerned with the memorisation of facts and statistics. An example of the latter occurs in *Hard Times* when Thomas Gradgrind asks a pupil, Bitzer, to define a horse:

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[202] Charles Dickens, *Hard Times* [1854] reproduced (London: Penguin Classics, 2003),10.

[203] Terry Eagleton, *How to Read Literature* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2014), 94-95.

> Quadruped. Graminivorous. Forty teeth, namely twenty-four grinders, four eye-teeth, and twelve incisive. Sheds coat in the spring; in marshy countries, sheds hoofs, too. Hoofs hard but requiring to be shod with iron. Age known in mouth.[204]

Jeremy Bentham was prejudiced against poetry which was the creative imagination beloved of the Romantics. *Hard Times* condemns Bentham's philosophy of education and, by way of contrast, uses the joy of the circus, to represent freedom of expression, fun and creative dynamism which was the opposite of what Paul Schlicke refers to as "hard-headed rationalism."[205] The circus is depicted as the antithesis of a society dominated by self-interest and soulless, emotionless, sterile facts in which 'hands' [workers] do not need 'heads' [education] to distract them from toil. The Romantic vision, which represented a turning point in the history of education in England, is expressed in the joy of the circus where Sissy Jupp's horse trainer father is portrayed as far more loving, caring and enlightened than Mr. Gradgrind. Gradgrind regards the creative imagination as not only subversive but having the potential to destabilise, undermine and, ultimately, overthrow England's established hierarchies. His attitude tends to betray his own personal insecurities and anxieties. For him, education is a formulaic process by which the Establishment ensures economic, political and social continuity and, ultimately, dominance over the emerging industrial working-class.

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[204] See note 201, 12.

[205] *Paul Schlicke, Hard Times: fact and fancy. Theme: The novel 1832-1880 (British Library, https// www.bl.uk), 1. Accessed August 6, 2019.*

Dickens is relentless in his criticisms of incompetent teachers nad ineffective pedagogies. He was unsparingly critical of Schedule B, Minute of 1846, Committee of Council, under the direction of James Kay-Shuttleworth, which set up a national teacher-training scheme. [206] Supposedly inaugurated to drive up educational standards, the scheme met with complaints that it valued rote learning rather than reasoning and understanding, and failed to develop imaginative teaching methods. In *Hard Times,* Dickens satirised teacher-training as the product of an industrial production line:

> Mr M'Choakumchild [. . .] and some one hundred and forty other schoolmasters, had been lately turned at the same time, in the same factory, on the same principles, like so many pianoforte legs [. . .] If he had only learnt a little less, how infinitely better he might have taught much more. [207]

Dickens contrasts this industrial model of education with Louisa Gradgrind's increasing awareness of alternatives to a fact-based existence which involves fun, imaginative thinking, emotions and a sense of wonder which Dickens called 'fancy.' Louisa's epiphany represents a rejection of her father's deep-rooted prejudices. The circus stimulates her imaginative sensibilities but, in her father's eyes, she has strayed into a dangerous, subversive world which threatens the stability of society and his family. Louisa's progressive and enlightened perspective on education illustrates the importance of taking seriously a female perspective on learning. By her own admission, she had been 'trained [. . .] so well [. . .] that I never dreamed a child's dream. You have dealt so wisely with me, father, from my cradle to this hour, that I never had a child's belief or a child's fear."[208]

Her anguish is rooted in an education bereft of play, fun, exploration, imagination, curiosity and enquiry. Moreover, an education that failed to stimulate awe and wonder and recognise and develop her individual learning needs. That system of facts was challenged and undermined when Louisa encounters individuality in "one of the dwellings of the Coketown Hands."[209] Until that time, she knew only of the industrial working-class as a nameless, faceless mass of hundreds and thousands. Dickens might well have been signalling to Victorian society that lived experience, in this particular case, represented significant learning for Louisa, which Gradgrind's 'system' could never offer.

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[206] James Shuttleworth-Kay, *Four Periods of Public Education as Reviewed in 1832, 1839, 1846, 1862.* (1862). (Brighton: The Harvester Press,1973), 294-386.

[207] See note 202,15.

[208] Ibid., 101.

Journalism and fiction in *Household Words as* a contribution to debates about elementary education

Household Words and Dickens's fictional representations of education made important contributions to the spectrum of opinions on the need for educational reform in Victorian England. Fictionalising education at the same time that the periodical press published so many articles on the topic brought the public's attention to tensions between traditional and progressive educational ideas and practices. As an integral part of England's cultural scene, *Household Words* was prominent in a periodical culture that formed and informed public opinion on the desirability and, ultimately, the inevitability of a national system of elementary education for working-class children. The sustained debates about education in nineteenth-century England developed an inexorable momentum that was due in no small measure to the importance of the periodical press. *Household Words* and its successor, *All The Year Round*, were part of a growing consensus in periodicals for the professionalisation of teaching, the damaging effects of 'brain-forcing' on children, the need for pedagogical reforms and the unreformed state of English education compared with Europe. Education was most certainly ‘the question of the day’ as evidenced by the continuous coverage of the subject in periodicals and almost every other medium. [210]

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[209] Ibid., 155.

As novelist, journalist, letter writer, speechmaker and ‘conductor’ of *Household Words*, Dickens was at the forefront of literary engagement with the debates about elementary education in Victorian England. *Household Words* suggested alternative educational theories and practices based, at times, on empirical evidence, and championed the cause of a progressive, relevant and meaningful education for middle-class and working-class children.

The prominence given to education in the periodical press was very important to contemporaries as it created a space for opposing political, religious, cultural, economic and educational views on the nature and purpose of elementary education.

Elementary education as a means to what ends?

If “coarse hands” needed ‘heads’ then what was the intended purpose of elementary education for children from the lower middle and working-classes? Is there a meaningful link between that education and the schooling provided for children from wealthier families? A timeline stretching from the early years of Queen Victoria’s reign to the late nineteenth-century reveals a complex picture of traditional and progressive views about the purpose of elementary education which featured prominently in periodicals.

In 1839, William Gladstone was quoted in the *Edinburgh Review* as someone who believed that “no education deserves that name which is not founded upon pure and

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[210] The scope of this thesis doesn’t allow for a sufficiently detailed analysis of print cartoons, illustrations or other visual materials. They constitute a topic for further research.

Christian doctrine. This doctrine must form an essential and indispensable part of school instruction."[211]

Gladstone represented a view that was common among sections of society who regarded the ultimate aim of elementary education as the formation of moral citizens. From the 1830s onwards, successive Governments tended to view education as social investment and the development of 'human capital', which were regarded as essential in an increasingly industrialised nation.

From another perspective, the Reverend Thomas Guthrie believed that education, specifically through the establishment of more Ragged Schools, was the principal way to ameliorate social problems among urban dwelling children.[212] Cities were viewed as nurseries of criminals in which the children of the "submerged tenth"[213] had become independent criminals and no longer "appendages of the burglar."[214] Guthrie drew attention to the rising child prison population, street urchins who "cannot pay for education, nor avail themselves of a gratis one" and that "the ignorance of vice has ceased [but] the knowledge of virtue has not replaced it."[215] In his view, education needed to provide instruction in useful employment. Guthrie suggested a novel approach to voluntary contributions to educate the poor, which involved sponsoring and visiting a child in the Ragged School. According to him,"every misery has its degrees and shades. Feed as well as teach."[216]

The purpose of education as social investment gained further support in an article by HMI Henry Moseley in the *Edinburgh Review*: "the education of the people does not tend to destroy the old relations of society, but to restore them; and the danger to be averted does not lie in this approximation but in the widening chasm."[217]

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[211] The *Edinburgh Review,* Oct., 1839, 141, Pg. 149ff. *Recent Measures for the Promotion of Education in England.*

[212] The *Edinburgh Review* 85. 172 (Apr. 1847) 520-535. *A plea for Ragged Schools: or Preventing better than cure*. By the Rev. Thomas Guthrie. Edinburgh, 1847.

[213] The term was used by the Salvationist William Booth (1829–1912) In *Darkest England (*1890).: *The Oxford Dictionary of Phrase and Fable.* The "submerged tenth" were the poorest of the poor.

[214] See note 288, 527.

[215] See note 210, 525.

[216] Ibid., 532.

Education was seen as a corrective to juvenile crime and a way of out of pauperism and, consequently, out of a culture of dependency. Moseley, as Sydney Smith had done before him, situated education in its historical context by citing agrarian outrages, strikes, political unions, Chartism and Socialism. The Great Exhibition (1851) had clearly underscored deficiencies in England's industrial education compared with its foreign competitors which had been brought to the public's attention by the periodical press in the early decades of the nineteenth-century. Moseley's seminal report stressed the importance of education in the context of commercial competition and manufacturing which meant that in his analysis 'hands' did most certainly need 'heads.' He urged a better education for factory operatives which meant an industrial education focused on vocational skills because an intellectual element of manufacture was missing in Victorian England. From this perspective, education was conceived as economic utility and social investment.

While the education of working-class children featured prominently in the periodical press, *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* reflected on the recent Royal Commission on Grammar schools, which bemoaned falling standards.[218] A classical education was still regarded as the gold standard of an education for the middle-classes but progressive thinkers raised questions about its appropriateness as an education for modern life. *Blackwoods* published the views of various correspondents who suggested that "education should be general, not specific" in order to address "the practical business of life."[219] Conflicting positions reflected a growing antagonism between traditional views of a Grammar school education and progressive ideas that advocated a curriculum for a modern, industrial nation. In Grammar schools, the classical past was still determining the curriculum of the present which was increasingly out of step with transformative and revolutionary changes in English society.

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[217] *The Edinburgh Review 97.198. (Apr. 1853); 461 -511.*Public Education as affected by the Minutes of the Committee of the Privy Council, from 1846 to1852; with suggestions as to future policy, 493. (Wellesley attribution: Moseley, Henry, 1801-1872, divine, School Inspector: dictionary of National Biography).

[218] *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine;* May 1868; 103, 631. County Grammar Schools.
The Taunton Commission (1868), which enquired into the state of Grammar Schools. A central issue concerned the direction of reform. Traditionalists associated a culture of refinement with an education rooted in classicism. Progressive thinkers argued for a curriculum that included practical knowledge. What constituted an effective curriculum was a contentious issue. Meritocracy - "boys of exceptional ability and industry to rise to distinction from the humbler ranks of life" (610)- must remain. Reference was made to "a mere commercial or technical education" (611),which had no parity with a liberal education.

From the perspective of the ruling, elite socio-economic classes, education was a means for ensuring compliance by the working-classes with dominant cultural and commercial values that were the foundations of a clearly defined hierarchical structure. Schools, pedagogy and teachers functioned as providers of the discipline, moral instruction and authoritarianism that maintained the social order by encouraging conformity. The Established Church of England aligned itself with this view of education, and wanted to ensure that education was a preparation for good citizenship based on moral and religious principles.

Disputes about the purpose of formal, institutionalised elementary education persisted throughout the nineteenth-century. Charles Dickens shared Thomas Arnold's views about the transformative effects of education on the quality of life for the economically-disadvantaged and marginalised sections of society. Clearly, education was seen by contemporaries as serving multiple purposes and, in my view, confirms Dinah Birch's positive and optimistic view that "the Victorians for all their quarrels, affirmed the creative force of education again and again."[220]

Within the context of these opposing positions on educational issues, the secular periodical press was prominent in shaping and developing debates about elementary education into a coherent and meaningful movement from 1833 to 1880. The next chapter investigates religious periodicals which provided a further cultural space in which the nature and purposes of elementary education were expressed in terms of denominational preference.

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[219] *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine;* May 1868; 103, 631. County Grammar Schools.

[220] See note 121, ix.

Chapter Two: Religion and Elementary Education

In this chapter I respond to two questions that authors and journalists asked about the place of religion in education. Firstly, it is necessary to ask what was the significance of the relationship between religion, specifically Anglicanism, Methodism and Roman Catholicism, and the extension of elementary education? Secondly, how did religion further, inhibit or redefine ideas about 'progressive' or 'liberal' early education from the mid to late nineteenth-century? I argue that our understanding of the complex and nuanced issues associated with these questions can be extended by comparing and contrasting opinions that were publicly expressed in religious periodicals. These publications were, Joshua King points out, "building conflicting imagined communities for British readers – print-mediated communities that required the conceptual displacement of others."[1] King draws on data that shows how

> Increasing fourfold in number by 1825, comprising about 20 per cent of the total number of journals, and outpacing the sale of all other magazines, religious periodicals were becoming the mainstay of reading, communication, and propaganda for religious groups – and these publications were often firmly divided along partisan lines [. . .][2]

Consequently, the nineteenth-century witnessed the formation of a denominational periodical culture with reading audiences for specific publications. Relevant to my thesis is a spectrum of religious opinions on elementary education that were expressed in periodicals which I explore in this chapter. My choice of particular periodicals is premised on their opposing positions on progressive and traditional education, and the alternative perspectives they advanced on the purposes of elementary education. Leading Anglican periodicals included the *British Magazine*,[3] the National Society's *Monthly Paper for*

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[1] Joshua King, *Imagined Spiritual Communities in Britain's Age of Print* (Columbus: The Ohio State University Press, 2015), 63.

[2] Ibid, 67.

[3] This periodical was published from 1832-1839 and promoted the conservative views of Anglicanism as the State religion. <http://www.catalog.haithitrust.org> (accessed 28 July 2019): 1.

Promoting the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church,[4] the *Christian Observer,*[5] the *Record,*[6] the *Church Times*,[7] the *Christian Remembrancer,*[8] the *Church Quarterly Review*[9] and the *British Critic.*[10] The most important Roman Catholic periodicals were the *Dublin Review*,[11] the *Rambler*[12] *a*nd the *Tablet.*[13] Methodism's position on elementary education was expressed in such publications as the Wesleyan *Methodist* Magazine,[14] the *Primitive Methodist Magazine*[15] and the *Christian Ambassador.*[16] While recognising the contribution of other religious preferences to elementary education, it is not possible to consider every position in this thesis, so the case studies that follow are limited to these three denominational groups. In my introduction, I acknowledged that Unitarianism was immensely influential on education. Among the main Unitarian periodicals were the *Monthly Repository*,[17]the *Christian Reformer*,[18] the *National Review* [19]*and* the *Theological Review.*[20] Unitarianism was at the forefront of promoting progressive ideas on female education which was a subject that Harriet Martineau wrote about in many articles for the *Monthly Repository.*

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[4] As the leading periodical of the National Society, its self-proclaimed aim was that "the National Religion should be made the foundation of National Education, and should be the first and chief thing taught to the poor according to the excellent Liturgy and Catechism provided by our Church." The *Monthly Paper* was published from 1846 – 1875.

[5] This was an evangelical periodical that was published from 1802 to 1874.<http://www.catalog.haithitrust.org,>(accessed28 July 2019): 1.

[6] This publication was known initially for its extreme evangelical views. Alexander Haldane (1800 – 1882) was the proprietor of the *Record.* The publication gave its name to the "Recordite" faction of Evangelicals in the Church of England, intended for a middle-and upper-class readership. (Josef L. Altholz, *Alexander Haldane,* the *Record, and Religious Journalism, Victorian Periodicals Review*, v. 20, no. 1 (Spring, 1987): 23-31. Published by: The Johns Hopkins University Press on behalf of the Research Society for Victorian Periodicals. <https:// www.jstor.org/stable/20082243>(accessed February 6,2019): 8.

[7] "The *Church Times"* is the oldest surviving Anglican Weekly newspaper. It was founded in 1863 by a London printer, George Josiah Palmer, to help forward the ideals of the Oxford Movement." Bernard Palmer*, Gadfly for God: History of the Church Times* (London:Hodder and Stoughton, 1991): Religious Synopsis.

[8] The *Christian Remembrancer*, a High Church Anglican periodical, was published in London from 1819-1868. "In 1844 [. . .] the editorship was assumed by Rev. J.B. Mozley and the Rev. William Scott. <http://www.newcastle.edu.a/data/assets/pdf_file/0011/59960/CLLC >*Christian Remembrancer* (accessed 28 July, 2019): 1-4.

[9] This was published in 1875 in London by Spottiswoode & Co. as a periodical promoting High Church Anglican views. <http://www.catalog.haithitrust.org,>(accessed 28 July, 2019): 1.

[10] Described by S.A Skinner as a "politically and theologically conservative quarterly periodical, between 1838 and 1843 [. . .]The *Critic* [. . .] came to serve as the principal medium for the movement's (i.e. The Oxford Movement) commentary." Among leading S.A.Skinner<DOI:https://www.doi.org/10.1017/S0022046999002493,>published online by Cambridge University Press:1 October 1999, Abstract.

[11] The *Dublin Review* was "published in London, primarily for English (not Irish) readers." <http://www.uwindsor.ca/people/Ihowsam> (accessed 2 July, 2019):1.

[12] The *Rambler* (1848-1862) promoted Liberal Catholic views as an alternative to the conservative position of The *Dublin Review.* The *Rambler* was closely associated with Lord Acton who argued that "it was the duty of a Catholic review [. . .] to uphold the Catholic cause [. . .] but also to educate the Catholic public." Josef L. Altholz, *The Liberal Catholic Movement in England*: The *"Rambler" and its Contributors, 1848-1864* (London: Burns and Oates, 1962). Chapter V. The "*Rambler*," *the Bishops, and Newman, 1859.* <http://www.victorianweb.org.>(accessed 28 July, 2019).

[13] Frederick Lucas, founding editor of the *Tablet,* was born into a Quaker family and educated at Darlington friends School, then University College, London. He converted to Roman Catholicism in 1838. Michael Walsh, *The Tablet, A Commemorative History, 1840-1990,* (London: *The Tablet* Publishing Company Ltd., 1990), 5.

[14] The Wesleyan Methodist Magazine was founded by Rev. John Wesley in 1778 and ceased publication in 1969. Online Archives: microform.digital, Wesley and Primitive Methodist periodicals, 1744-1960, (accessed 28 July, 2019): 1.

[15] "The Primitive Methodist Magazine (1819-1932)was edited by Hugh Bourne, one of the founders of the denomination: "Peter S. Forsaith ,W*esleyan and Primitive Methodist periodical,* (2011): an introduction to the British Online Archives edition: < https://boa.microform.digital/collection/3/view.>Last updated: January, 2012 (accessed 28 July, 2019): sections 5 &6.

[16] This publication was edited by C.C. McKechnie and Thomas Smith, London, 1858-1878, when it merged with the *Primitive Methodist.* Samuel J. Rogal's *A Survey of Methodist Periodicals Published in England* -1900, *Victorian Periodicals Review,* Vol.14, No. 2 (Summer, 1981) Published by: Johns Hopkins University Press on behalf of the Research Society for Victorian Periodicals. <https//www.jstor.org/stable/20081974> (accessed 8 March, 2019).

The educational philosophy and practices of Monsignor William Petre provide material for a case study that illustrates tensions between progressive and traditional education within the Roman Catholic Church. Petre made an important contribution to pupil-centred pedagogical practices which reflected Romanticism's vision of a creative, imaginative and experiential, yet doctrinal education. At a more mainstream level, fictional works by George Eliot, Charles Dickens and Charlotte Brontë will be explored in order to reveal what the integration of religion and education meant. These novels were extensively reviewed in the periodical press. In the interest of depth of historical analysis, anecdotes are cited as evidence of the desirability and inevitability of educational reform. Paul Fry argues that the relationship between literature and the historical contexts to which it responds is a fundamental bond because "the return to the real world is language bound, because it is by means of discourse that power circulates knowledge, and that it is by language that the real world shapes itself."[21] One of the central arguments of my thesis is shaped by Fry's argument that "literature has a discursive agency that affects history every bit as much as history affects literature."[22] The relationship between historical events and a public domain of thought has been described by Anthony C. Grayling: "ideas are the fuel of the machines of history, and in the form of ideologies, beliefs, political and social, commitments and ideals, they are the human factor that lie behind the events that drive historical change." [23]

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[17] The *Monthly Repository of Theology and General Literature* (1806 -1838): "its founding editor, Robert Aspland, established the journal as the foremost Unitarian monthly."< http://www. ncse.ac.uk> (accessed July 22, 2019).

[18] Robert Aspland was the editor of The *Christian Reformer, or, Unitarian Magazine and Review* which was published from 1834 -1863.

[19] The *National Review* (1855-1864) published articles and reviews on "general literature, politics and social and religious philosophy [. . .]" (The *National Review,* v. 1. (July and October, 1855): 1.

[20] *The Theological Review* (1864-1879) was edited by Charles Beard who was Unitarian minister and scholar; see Alexander Gordon, revised by R.K.Webb; ODNB: https://www.doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb>(accessed 28 July, 2019).The *Theological Review* was a quarterly journal of religious thought and life. Beard contributed articles on the history of "religion and literature in France" and the "reformation of the sixteenth-century." <http://www. catalog.haithitrust.org.> (accessed 28 July, 2019): 1.

[21] Paul Fry, *The New Historicism*. Transcript of lecture 19 delivered at Yale University, March 31, 2009, 3.

[22] Ibid.

Grayling goes on to argue that writers are "creatures of their time and place."[24] In 1858, Wilkie Collins referred to his time as "the age of periodicals."[25] It was also an age of doubt and intellectual enquiry stimulated by revolutionary and transformative changes in science, technology, theology and historical research. Moreover, with the publication of Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* in 1859*,* denominational education was used as a means to defend religion in the face of evolutionary theory. In the context of those historical events, periodicals and fictional works communicated diverse, sectarian opinions on the relationship between society, religion, science and the future of elementary education. I go on to investigate issues associated with the extension of elementary education for the working-classes which featured prominently and continuously in religious periodicals.

Do "coarse hands" need heads?[26]

The *Mechanical Theatre* in Hellbrunn, Salzburg[27]

Reflecting on a much earlier period in history, Stephen Greenblatt refers to Shakespeare's world in which "authority naturally inhered in the elderly for whom the priority was an ordered, well-regulated society imbued with deeply ingrained degrees of class distinction."[28]

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[23] Anthony C. Grayling, *Descartes* (London: Pocket Books, 2006), 297.

[24] Ibid., 301.

[25] Wilkie Collins, *The Unknown Public, Household Words,* 1858, *v.*18, 222.

[26] In Charles Dickens's *Great Expectations*, which was serialised in *All The Year Round (*1 December , 1860 – to August, 1861), the character Estella remarks on observing Pip, "what coarse hands he has." 'Hands' that symbolised social class, manual labour and, quite possibly, a lack of education. I make reference to "coarse hands" in my introduction to this thesis.

[27] Simon Schaffer, *Mechanical Marvels: Clockwork Dreams*, BBC4 documentary, 3 June, 2013.

[28] Stephen Greenblatt, *Will in the World* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2004), 359.

The persistence and pervasiveness of this world-view found expression in a remarkable automaton created in the eighteenth-century. In the 1740s, an Austrian Archbishop, Jakob von Dietrichstein, commissioned a private automaton for the Palace of Hellbrunn in the wealthy city of Salzburg. The Theatre, comprising two hundred figures performing their daily work in a mechanical, automatic manner, represented a princely world-view of a harmonious, orderly and perfect society. Aristocratic figures, on a balcony high above the toiling labourers below, contemplate a utopian vision of society as the titled, wealthy patrons of the Enlightenment believed it should be. The automaton projected a visual representation of power and subservience. There was, however, a darker side to the sophistication and elegance of the apparatus. The machine that operated the *Mechanical Theatre* was designed and built by a salt-miner. Salt-miners were mainly Protestant and generated the wealth upon which Salzburg relied and, therefore, funded the automaton that visually, for the purpose of education as well as entertainment, enacted and re-enacted the restriction on their ambitions. The *Mechanical Theatre* was also emblematic of an oppressive and tyrannical system that had expelled many Protestants from Austria. Significantly, the schoolroom was not given a place in this three dimensional representation of an ideal society. An uneducated labouring population is engaged in serving the interests of Church and State, helping to maintain authority, censorship and mastery of an aristocratic and theological class over its citizens. Masters of trades needed ‘hands’ but clearly in this society there was no need for dairymaids, ploughboys, miners, chimney sweeps and factory workers to be educated beyond the requirements of their job. In the early decades of nineteenth-century England, secular and religious periodicals were primarily concerned with publishing opinions on whether or not the working-classes in urban and rural areas should be educated to think as well as produce. In other words, did “coarse hands” need heads?

The dominant cultural values and norms expressed visually through the automaton were not exclusive to Austria in the eighteenth-century. They were common to all European countries in which monarchy, aristocracy and Church combined to form powerful cultural, political, social, economic and religious elites. Power relationships demanded that the circulation of ideas through print-mediated sources conform rigidly to religious orthodoxy, as Church and State were inextricably connected and mutually supportive and dependent. Anthony C. Grayling argues that in seventeenth-century France, for example, René Descartes "was devout enough in his ostensible commitment to Catholic Christianity . . . and gave no reasons for anyone to think differently about his orthodoxy."[29] In France, education was the principal means used by the Jesuits to educate the young in their faith; although pushing forward the boundaries of knowledge, essentially that meant counter-reformation through education. The Jesuits' pedagogical practices were based on discipline, characterised by "military-style structure, and high standards."[30] As Grayling points out, the main objective of education was to ensure that minds were "secure in the faith forever" and barricaded against heresy.[31] As far as Owen Chadwick is concerned, education was essentially religious education as it was deemed to be in Victorian England.[32]

In 1861, a review in the *Evangelical Christian Observer* challenged accusations that education in England was inferior to other countries and argued for the continuation of State funding of elementary education by referencing statistical information provided by the Royal Commissioners:

> Those who have maintained in Parliament that our educational state in England formed a disgraceful contrast to continental nations have here their answer. In Prussia, with compulsory education, the proportion at school is 1 in 6. In Holland and France, with

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[29] See Note 23, 73.
[30] Ibid., 29.
[31] Ibid.
[32] Owen Chadwick, *The Victorian Church: Part One, 1829-1859* (London: SCM Press, 1987), 336-346.

> organized government systems, it is 1 in 8 and 1 in 9, respectively. In our maligned England it is 1 in 7. Those who maintain that education has made little or no progress amongst us, are met by these facts: 1803, the number of day scholars was 1 in 17½; in 1818, little better that 1 in 7¼; in 1833, before our present system, 1 in 11¼; in 1858, 1 in 7. Those who, in the face of these facts mount their hobby, and say that education can do without public aid, have an answer at least of authority. The commissioners are seven. The *majority* [reviewer's italics] give it as their opinion that public aid is indispensable.[33]

The review noted that the Commissioners did not recommend the extension of elementary education by "a general system of compulsory legislation" to address the problem of

> Those who never see the inside of a school [who] are the children of degraded, vicious, and brutal parents, and that their exclusion from school is due to the habits of that sunken and sinking class, and not to the want of schools, or the character of schools, or the cost of schools. It is also plain that that some classes of occupation – as potters, founders, miners, and such like – are unfavourable to education. Those pursuits degrade the parents, and by imposing the need of juvenile labour, and offering a high wage for it, they tempt the parent to sacrifice his child.[34]

The assumption here is that there were sufficient schools available for anyone who had the initiative and ability to make use of a formal education. This was clearly unfounded, and the 1870 Education Act was primarily designed to 'fill up the gaps' in school provision. By 1861, arguments for an increase in early-years schooling grew but as far as the Royal Commissioners were concerned, there was no need for a system of national, compulsory elementary education. For example, in Germany compulsion had not guaranteed attendance at schools, especially in poorer families whose children were needed as workers not scholars. In respect of parents whose anti-education life views were being passed on to the next generation of citizens and workers, the Commissioners' "hope for the mitigation, and, at length the correction of the evil, by the progress of opinion, a change in the views and intelligence of parents, the moral influence of employers, and the powerful assistance of night schools."[35]

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[33] The Christian Observer, v.61 (1861), 385.

[34] Ibid.

Subsequent legislation on elementary education would show that the extension of elementary education could not rely solely on attitudinal changes among parents who regarded their children as essential contributors to household income. Seven years later, a High Church periodical, the *Christian Remembrancer*, would add its voice to the sustained debates about a national system of denominational elementary education. It did so by continuing an emerging trend, common to secular and religious periodicals, characterised by comparing the progress of education in England and other modernising nations.

Developments in elementary education in Europe and the USA featured in the *Christian Remembrancer* in January 1868. The review described education "as the national subject of discussion."[36] Matthew Arnold, and the Reverends Mark Pattison and James Fraser reported respectively on the state of popular education in France, Germany and the USA. Their research represented a continuation of an outward looking approach to educational systems, ideas and pedagogies that could be found in periodicals from the early nineteenth-century.[37] In the countries surveyed, elementary education was compulsory, supported by taxpayers and there were no religious impediments. The review raised an important question about the degree of educational reform needed in England: should there be radical change or merely a tinkering with the present system?

The *Remembrancer* drew attention to non-educationalists who most certainly did not believe that 'hands' needed heads on the grounds that reading and writing would distract workers from manual labour and toil. The reviewer contested arguments suggesting that by comparison with other nations, education in England was "very inferior" as a means of improvement by referencing the relationship between education and social mobility.[38] He argued that ”the number of young persons who gain an advance in life as clerks or shopmen, or in various positions of female employment, is very large indeed.”[39]

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[35] Ibid.

[36] The *Christian Remembrancer,* Jan, 1868; 55, 139, 90. Reports of the Assistant Commissioners appointed to inquire into the State of Popular Education in Continental; Europe. v.1V: France, by Mr. Matthew Arnold; and Germany By Rev. Mark Pattison,1861. 2. Report of School Commission in America. By Rev. James Fraser, MA. 1867.

[37] References in secular periodicals to developments in Holland, Germany and Prussia are discussed in chapter1 of my thesis.

Progress in education was associated with increasing literacy rates and its impact on the quality of public reading, as shown by the reviewer’s claim that “periodical literature of the cheapest kind has enormously increased; which proves the same of its readers.”[40] The supposed supremacy of education in other nations was rejected on the grounds of significant historical developments in England :

> The whole system of commercial transaction – the penny post, the development of printing, the complication of trade accounts, the foreign and colonial connexions of England, the rise, if we may so express it, of the great competing idea of all kinds of employment – all answer as to the progress of education in a strong affirmative.[41]

While the *Christian Remembrancer* acknowledged the role of elementary education as a religious or proselytizing agency, it also noted that ‘some’ critical commentators regarded religion as a barrier to the extension of a progressive elementary education: “religion is viewed by some as a very obstinate prejudice, which interferes with the national progress and the simplicity of Government in the work of education.”[42]

Crucially, the review goes on to reveal a significant change in the relationship between the Government as a political body and Anglicanism as the State religion: “the theory of an Established Church, as implying that the law of the land openly and boldly expresses a religious opinion through it, recognising no other on the part of loyal subjects, is a thing wholly of the a past.”[43]

By 1868, England had developed into a multi-denominational civil society in which religious sectarianism was extending its influence through elementary education.

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[38] See Note 36, 90.
[39] Ibid., 91.
[40] Ibid.
[41] Ibid.
[42] Ibid., 101.
[43] Ibid.

Competing religious preferences were very important in determining the defining characteristics and, ultimately, the purposes of an elementary education during the mid to late nineteenth-century.

Anglicans, Nonconformists and Roman Catholics shared the conviction about the relationship between religion and education: religion was a prerequisite for a complete education. Conversely, what was perceived to be an incomplete education was an education entirely secular in theory and pedagogical practices. We can conclude that the mid to late-Victorian insistence on denominational schools by clashing religious preferences was indicative of a persistent crusading campaign against the secularisation of elementary education. Dinah Birch takes such a position, arguing that "religious devotion was usually expressed within a denominational context, and for many this was still part of the point. Anglican schools would produce firm young Anglicans; Non-Conformist schools would guarantee a new generation of committed dissenters."[44]

Sectarianism in education was lamented by the latitudinarian Dr Thomas Arnold who believed that "a commitment to Christianity should outweigh any sectarian affiliation."[45] Although he was a committed Anglican, Arnold's views on competing and clashing religious preferences were expressed in conciliatory, tolerant terms with an emotional concluding plea for unity:

> I groan over the divisions of the Church, of all our evils I think the greatest, - of Christ's Church I mean, - that men should call themselves Roman Catholics, Church of England men, Baptists, Quakers, all sorts of various appellations, forgetting that only glorious name of CHRISTIAN, which is common to all, and a true bond of union.[46]

The firmly entrenched positions of Roman Catholicism, Methodism and Anglicanism on elementary education meant that denominational considerations far outweighed any possibility of a realisation of Arnold's desire for ecumenical non-sectarianism. The antagonistic and oppositional rhetoric used by Anglicans and Nonconformists in religious periodicals reinforced the central importance of educational sectarianism.

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[44] Dinah Birch, *Our Victorian Education* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2008),56.

[45] Ibid.

[46] Arthur Stanley, *The Life and Correspondence of Thomas Arnold,* 2 vols. (London: B. Fellowes, 1845) v. 1,402: cited by Birch, 56.

Education was contested ground throughout the nineteenth-century and, according to Rene Kollar, its relationship with religion "has always been an emotional and contentious issue." [47] In response to anti-Catholic prejudices in William Gladstone's government (1868 to1874), the Catholic theologian William Ward Geary, writing in the *Dublin Review,* escalated the importance of the subject beyond emotionalism and contentiousness by stating "education is now the chief battlefield" and that "the political and social future of Catholicism, and of the civilised world depended on the education of the Catholic poor and Higher Education."[48] Geary echoed the convictions of the Catholic Hierarchy that had been re-established in 1850; an event described by Edward Norman as "the great institutional change of the English Catholic Church."[49] Roman Catholic identity in a modern, industrial nation depended significantly on education as an assertion of Catholicism's participation in the cultural, social, political and economic life of the nation. In effect, it meant progressing Catholicism from emancipation to mainstream integration in Victorian society without the loss of religious identity.

As Joshua King argues, discourses on the relationship between religion and education in the Victorian period benefit from a rejection of

> Traditional secularization narratives as inadequate for describing the vital role played by religion in nineteenth-century culture; highlight the intersection of nineteenth-century reading, religion, and conceptions of the nation; and include in our studies a wide range of texts, from poems to newspapers.[50]

My critical stance, informed by a new historicist approach to interpreting evidence, accords with that part of King's position suggesting the necessity of a range of texts to examine

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[47] Rene Kollar, 'Foreign and Catholic: a plea to Protestant parents on the dangers of convent education in Victorian England', *History of Education,* v. 31, no 4 (2002), 335-350.

[48] *Dublin Review*, Vol. 18, Iss. 36, Ap. 1872; 409-440 (Wellesley attribution: Ward, William Geary, 1812-1882; RC Theologian; ed. *Dublin Review*. DNB.

[49] Edward Norman, *The English Catholic Church in the Nineteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), 69.

[50] Joshua King, *Imagined Spiritual Communities in Britain's Age of Print* (Columbus, Ohio*:* The Ohio State University Press , 2015), 6.

"conflicting versions" of the relationship between Christian religions and elementary education in Victorian England. [51] The case for examining a 'range of texts' is strengthened when considering evidence from Anglican, Methodist and Catholic periodicals that challenge the vagueness of Birch's argument that

> Those Victorians whose writing engages most urgently with the relation between religion and education were not much concerned with doctrinal instruction, or sectarian affiliation. Their definitions of a vital education allow for a connection between the disciplines of learning and the growth of the imagination. [52]

In fact, religious periodicals provide compelling evidence of the importance of 'doctrinal instruction' and 'sectarian affiliation' throughout the Victorian period. Dr. Thomas Arnold's views, quoted previously, confirm a contemporary view of the persistence and conspicuousness of sectarianism and doctrinal preferences in formal, institutionalised elementary education. Joshua King goes on to argue that "two of the most important historical changes over the course of the nineteenth-century were the transformation of reading into a socially normative activity and the removal of nearly all penalties for nonconformity with the Church of England."[53] While concurring with that view, another important development was the connectivity between geographically dispersed communities throughout England made possible by advances in Victorian transport and communications. Without those transformations, King argues that "the expansion of the modern mass media as a medium of national imagination and self-understanding" would have been seriously curtailed in Victorian England. [54]

Catholicism and Non-Conformism benefitted significantly from these historical changes, but especially from legislation that included The Catholic Emancipation Act

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[51] Ibid.

[52] See Note 44, 74.

[53] See Note 50,6.

[54] See Note 50, 47.

(1829) and Religious Disabilities Act (1846).[55] Leading secular periodicals had traditionally promoted either the liturgical and doctrinal views of Anglicanism as the State Church and, in particular, its position on elementary education, or the perspectives of dissenters that mainly comprised Unitarians.[56] Legislative conditions had now been established that enabled an increasingly diverse range of religious preferences to engage in competitive public discourse about education through the pages of denominational periodicals. As a result, schools were now being established as a space for the expression of a more tolerant, civil society.

Religious periodicals contributed significantly to the discourse on elementary education in the Victorian period. Raymond William's theoretical model of cultural materialism is helpful in showing how such a majorly interested sector of Victorian society made their voice heard: "in any society, in any particular period, there is a central system of practices, meanings and values, which can be properly called dominant and effective."[57] Williams's onward assertion that "educational institutions are usually the main agencies of an effective dominant culture" helps to illuminate the importance religious groups attached to the relationship between pulpit, periodicals and the schoolroom.[58] Making and remaking this cultural dominance was part of a dynamic social process in formal educational institutions, the family and work.

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[55] Cardinal Wiseman noted that "The year 1829 was to us, what the egress from the catacombs was to the early Christians" (Cardinal Wiseman , *The Religious and Social Position of Catholics in England*: An Address Delivered to the Catholic Congress of Malines, August 21, 1863),9. Edward Norman argues that "the achievement of civil liberties as such – important as they were – which made Emancipation in 1829 a crucial point in Catholic history: the advance into public Life" had developed over the previous fifty years (see note 49,29). Significantly, Catholicism could now also advance into the educational life of the nation. The Religious Disabilities Act removed the remaining restrictions imposed on Catholics and Dissenters.

[56] In chapter 1 of my thesis, I explore the contribution of leading secular periodicals to the sustained debates about elementary education in Victorian England.

[57] Raymond Williams, 'Base and Superstructure in Marxist Cultural Theory' in *New Historicism and Cultural Materialism: A Reader,* ed. Kiernan Ryan . (London; Arnold, 1996), 23.

[58] Ibid.

William Ward Geary described the importance of elementary education as "the chief-battlefield" for promoting different sectarian and doctrinal convictions.[59] Opposing perspectives on the nature and purposes of elementary education were published in Anglican, Catholic and Methodist periodicals from which the following questions arise. First, what was the significance of the relationship between religion, specifically Anglicanism, Methodism and Roman Catholicism, and the extension of elementary education? Secondly, how did religion further, inhibit or redefine ideas about 'progressive' or 'liberal education' from the mid to late nineteenth-century?

Elementary education: "the chief battle-field"[60]

It would be inaccurate and misleading to suggest that religion retreated in the wake of a move toward secularization in Victorian England that in turn was characterised by scientific advances and sophisticated historical scholarship. There were shifting balances of power at play: political and cultural, but in Dinah Birch's view, "this was also a period of religious revival [in which] religion continued to dominate the national consciousness."[61] Historians and literary scholars no longer accept a view prevalent in the twentieth-century that secularization swept away all before it. As Birch argues, the continuing importance to the Victorians of "religious identity was not just a matter for private preference. A public allegiance to faith, of whatever kind, was a basic qualification for respectability, and often for employability too."[62]

Competing religious preferences and affiliations were clearly alert to the importance of elementary education. The classroom emerged as more important than the pulpit, platform and periodical as the primary means of promoting religious convictions among child learners. Anglican, Methodist and Roman Catholic opinions were expressed forcefully, frequently and dogmatically in denominational periodicals and reinforced the position of elementary education as contested ground. Subtle, diplomatic and conciliatory rhetoric was rarely present in periodicals that popularised diverse religious preferences among English reading audiences, but as Birch has noted:

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[59] The *Dublin Review*, Vo.18. Iss. 36. Ap. 1872; 409-440. (Wellesley att. Ward William Geary, 1812-1882; Roman Catholic Theologian; ed. *Dublin Review.*DNB)

[60] Ibid.

[61] See note 44, 42.

[62] Ibid.

> What does emerge with clarity from these disputes is that Victorian education was animated by many of the ideals that had found their home in religious faith, in ways that often account for the passion with which ideals of learning were pursued. Religion and education may have often found themselves at odds, but they were never wholly separate.[63]

Animation, passion and idealism are evident in John Moore Cape's article on education in the *Rambler* in 1852.[64] In Cape's view, the relationship between Catholicism and elementary education was focused on saving children's immortal souls in the face of their "enemies*:"* proselytizers and other sectarian schools. While there was nothing new in this view as it was well-trodden territory, it was a reiteration of the salvific purpose of elementary education. The priority was the establishment of good Catholic schools that would take advantage of demand as "the world clamours for the education of the poor."[65] The importance of the relationship between religion and education was clear to him: it is in the humble schoolroom and among the children of the poor that the real strength of Catholicism is to be consolidated."[66] According to Capes, education should emphasise and elevate moral and invisible work above material considerations: in other words, education should privilege the supernatural and metaphysical above the natural world.

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[63] See note 44, 44.

[64] The *Rambler*, Vol. 10. Sep. 1852. 169-179. (Wellesley attribution: Capes, John Moore, 1862-1869, author or, ed. Prop.). Capes (1812-1879) was "an editor, journalist, proprietor, clergyman and composer. He converted to Roman Catholicism from the Oxford Movement in the 1840s [. . .] He founded *The Rambler* in 1848." See Laura Brake and Marysa Demmor, *Dictionary of Nineteenth-century Journalism in Great Britain and Ireland* (Ghent: Academia *Press* 2009).

[65] Ibid.,the *Rambler* 173.

[66] Ibid., 174.

There was, however, a far more worldly but nonetheless important subtext in progress. According to Eric G. Tenbus, elementary education was "a facilitator of change in the identity of [the] English Catholic Community."[67] For Tenbus, Roman Catholicism was in the process of "positioning (or repositioning) [itself] within the elaborate milieu we call Victorian religion."[68] The *Rambler*, which he described as "a notoriously provocative liberal Catholic journal" shows its "characteristically hyperbolic and alarmist tone" [69] when stating in an article on English Catholicism and the education of the poor in July 1850: "without the Catholic education of the Catholic poor, all our other efforts are something like a mockery and self-delusion."[70]

In recognising the central importance of education, the editors of the *Rambler* were in fact far more prescient and analytically accurate in their position than 'hyperbolic' and 'alarmist.' That favourable interpretation would appear to be consistent with Tenbus's subsequent, altered position that "other factors such as a growing Catholic middle class and economic prosperity, the extension of political reform, and changes in Catholic forms of devotion contributed to that evolution in identity. *However, education predominated* [his italics]."[71]

Meanwhile, Methodism's position on formal, institutionalised elementary education was encapsulated in the 1850 Wesleyan Education Committee Report that included an attack on Roman Catholicism:

> It is not a question whether the youth of our country shall be educated, but who shall educate them. If Christian churches do not [do] their duty, the irreligious, the worldly, and the infidel will wrest the opportunity from them. If the Protestant people fail to meet the emergency, the priests of a dark and degrading polluting superstition will seek to inspire devotion and images of saints – will teach the morality of Loyola and Liguori – endeavour to frighten infant minds with superstitious fears and will instil into

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[67] Eric G. Tenbus, *English Catholics and the Education of the Poor, 1847-1902 (*London: Pickering & Chatto, 2010), vii.

[68] Ibid.

[69] See note 68, 1.

[70] 'Short Notices', *Rambler*, July 1850, 82.

[71] See note 68, 2.

> susceptible youth a hatred of the Bible and of their fellows [. . .] So long as British Christians are faithful to their high trust, this will never be.[72]

As John T. Smith argues, Catholicism was clearly not alone in seeking to defend itself against "proselytizing aggression on the part of other educational societies."[73] The centrality of the Bible in Wesleyan Methodist religious instruction was wholly consistent with John Wesley's insistence on the reading of scripture as the primary means by which grace and salvation could be attained. The nuanced, almost synonymist relationship of instruction and education becomes complex in this debate, with the conviction that education was a "powerful auxiliary" to the "preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ" appearing in a Methodist Minister's diary entry on September 24, 1850.[74] Having completed a pastoral visitation, the Minister drew conclusions about education; apprehending "the fearful fact [of] mental and moral degradation" and "a greater gulf" between theory and fact in education." Realistically and pragmatically, he was critical of the view that "education is the balm for every grievance – the emollient for every wound. It is to shed peace and prosperity over every land, diffusive of the soft light of morning."[75]

While education was not, in his view, a panacea for society's ills, it was essential as a bastion against "ignorance [that] may be the mother of Romish devotion."[76] Education as evangelisation, and as a proactive response to the challenge from competing religious preferences, was wholly consistent with Wesleyan Methodism's persistent and pervasive traditional values. The Minister's misleading and inaccurate assertion that others will "train for time, and not for eternity. They will train the head, and neglect the heart" failed to acknowledge Catholicism's privileging of education for the supernatural above the natural.[77] However, his critical standpoint on the subject reinforced the view that elementary education was undeniably contested ground.

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[72] Wesleyan Education Report (1850), 29.

[73] John T Smith, *Methodism and Education*,1849-1902 (Oxford: Clarendon Press,1998), 17.

[74] *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine,* v. 6, (July 1850): 728-731.

[75] Ibid.,728

[76] Ibid.

Anglicanism's traditional position on elementary education was advanced by The National Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church which founded and maintained National Schools. According to M. Anne Crowther, the Society , founded in 1811, "had in its hands a great deal of responsibility for national education, and for a long time it successfully opposed any attempt to set up a centralised, secular educational system."[78] In 1839, the Society's periodical, the *Monthly Paper*, published *The Correspondence of the National Society With The Lords of the Treasury and With The Committee of Council on Education.* Anglicanism's stance on the relationship between religion and elementary education was as unequivocally represented as that expressed by Roman Catholicism and Methodism, and claimed an exclusive role as the director of the nation's elementary education:

> That it is an object of the highest national importance to provide Instruction in the truths and precepts of Christianity and should form an essential part of every system of education intended for the people at large, and that such Instruction should be under the superintendence of the clergy, and in conformity with the Doctrines of the Church of this realm, as the recognised teacher of religion.
>
> This densely populated Metropolis in whose streets and alleys there are at this moment wandering thousands of ignorant and neglected children, in danger of perishing eternally for want of those advantages which it is one object of this present Meeting to procure for them in abundance.[79]

In these interactive arguments, 'instruction' in religious doctrine and practice is at the heart of an education that was being defined as "the entire training of a moral and accountable agent for fitness to accomplish the great ends of his existence."[80] According to such a world-view, education without Christianity at its core was at best inadequate and at worst was no education at all. Religious subjects were deemed to be the foundation of all true education, and essentially that meant a 'complete education'. In Birch's view, religion was characterized by various functions, which were "pervasive and contradictory" and consequently there was an unrealistic aspiration that education could fulfil the work previously undertaken by the church.[81] Clearly, The National Society did not share this view as shown by authoritative statements on the integration of education and religion in the *Monthly Paper*.

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[77] See note 75, 728.

[78] M. Anne Crowther, *Church Problems and Church Parties*, in *Religion in Victorian Britain, Volume IV: Interpretations*, ed. Gerald Parsons (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998), 4-27.

[79] *The Monthly Paper* of The National Society, London. Publication: Pamphlets on Education, Vol.1. 1839-1870, page references: A2-A15.

[80] Ibid., A4.

According to The National Society's periodical, education was "the training of an accountable being, destined for immortality" and religion was "the one guiding, regulating, sanctifying principle."[82] The role of the preceptor was expressed forcefully by the *Monthly Paper* in a concluding condemnatory judgement: "to be neutral in religion (on the part of the religious teacher) is *treason* [their italics] against the truth." [83] The whole tone and substance of the correspondence with the Government suggested a seamless progression of religious instruction from school to Church which was, according to the *Monthly Paper*, "the recognised and authorised instrument of education in this country."[84]

In a letter to the editor of the *British Magazine* in 1838, an anonymous correspondent reflected conservative Anglican opinion on the subject of elementary education:

> [It is] time for the clergy throughout the land to rise as one man, and protest against any attempt to withdraw its children from the Superintendence of the parochial minister, or, for the sake of a very limited number of dissenters, to render the Bible in its school 'as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal.'[85]

The *British Magazine's* editorial policy opposed educational experimentation, condemned modern educationalists as "theorists," "dreamers" and "fanciful," while advocating a

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[81] See note 44, 43.
[82] See note 80, A6.
[83] Ibid.
[84] Ibid., A10
[85] The *British Magazine,* 1831 -1849; Apr. 1838, 450.

"religious national education."[86] This was, in part, a response to successive unsuccessful attempts in the 1830s by the former Whig Lord Chancellor, Lawyer and *Edinburgh* reviewer, Lord Henry Brougham to introduce legislation designed to free education from all sectarian and religious influence.[87] Brougham's intended secularising liberal reforms were recognised by the *British Magazine* for what they were: a direct threat to the influence and control of the Anglican Church over the education of children through the agency of clerics and a strict adherence to biblical teachings. Brougham's proposals, according to an extreme view published in the *British Magazine*, would see "the abolition of Christianity."[88] The position taken by the *British Magazine* underscores the importance of the 1830s as a watershed in the developing tensions between religion and the State which sought greater control over the extension of elementary education for working-class children. At that time, Anglicanism was inhibiting systemic changes to elementary education, rejecting progressive pedagogical ideas and upholding conservative values in its schools. New educational theories were dismissed by the church's Synod as anti-scriptural. In effect, progressive educational ideas were rejected as antithetical to Anglicanism's dominant role in the education of the poor.

Criticisms of an elementary education suffused with religious teachings would find expression in Charles Dickens's views on the subject when on September 16, 1843, he wrote to Angela Burdett-Coutts:[89]

> On Thursday night, I went to the Ragged School;[90] and an awful sight it is. I blush to quote *Oliver Twist* for an authority, but it stands on that ground [. . .] The school is held in three most wretched rooms on the first floor of a rotten house [. . .] I have seldom seen, in all the strange and dreadful things I have seen in London and elsewhere, anything so shocking as the neglect of soul and body exhibited in these children.

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[86] Ibid., 452.

[87] Lord Brougham's prominent and influential role in seeking educational reform is discussed in Chapter 1 of this thesis.

[88] Note 86, 453.

[89] Angela Burdett-Coutts was a socialite and philanthropist She was born on 21st. April, 1814 and died on 30th. of December1906. Aspects of her contribution to social reform are explored in chapter 3 of this thesis.

[90] "The Ragged School movement provided free education for the poorest children. CD visited the Field Lane Ragged School, near Saffron Hill, London EC, which opened in1841. Fagin's den in OT is in Saffron Hill" (Jenny Hartley, ed. *The Selected Letters of Charles Dickens*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 121-122.

> The Masters are extremely quiet honest, good men. They are well-grounded in the Scotch – the Glasgow – system of elementary instruction, which is an excellent one [91] . . . To impress them, even with the idea of God, when their own condition is so desolate, becomes a monstrous task [. . .] And here it is that viciousness of insisting on creeds and forms in educating such miserable beings, is most apparent. To talk of Catechisms, outward and visible signs, and inward and spiritual graces, to these children, is a thing no Bedlamite would do, who saw them.[92]

In a subsequent letter to John Forster, he wrote: "I have sent Miss Coutts a sledge-hammer account of Ragged Schools [. . .]" [93] As Philip Collins argues, Dickens was concerned with "extreme cases – those of the Ragged School type, or [children] afflicted with other misfortunes. His novels and reportage abound in the deaf, dumb, blind, crippled, orphaned and maltreated: good occasions for pathos and emotionalism, no doubt, but also urgent social problems."[94] His letter to Burdett-Coutts raised the same issue of sectarian religious instruction that Thomas Arnold had addressed.[95] Dickens's perceptive and disturbing observations raised the persistent and pervasive pedagogical problem concerning the defining characteristics of a meaningful and relevant curricula. 'Creeds', 'forms' and 'Catechisms' were deemed the bedrock subjects for the poor, but Dickens, writing in *Household* Words*,* was scathing in his criticism of

> The Priests and Teachers of all denominations [who] quarrelled among themselves – 'Teach this! – Teach that! – Teach t'other' – and the Minister of state, though distressed by the spectacle, 'shrugged his shoulders, and replied, "It is a great wrong – BUT IT WILL LAST MY TIME." And so he put it from him."[96]

Fictional representations of curriculum provision and clerical instruction were no less critical than reviews in *Household Words* as illustrated in this passage from George Eliot's *The Mill on the Floss* (1860):

> Mr. Stelling's faculties had been early trained to boring in a straight line, and he had no faculty to spare. But among Tom's contemporaries, whose fathers cast their sons on

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[91] Group teaching and learning by doing: some of the methods introduced by David Stow.

[92] Jenny Hartley, ed.*The Selected Letters of Charles Dickens (* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 121-122.

[93] Ibid.,124. 24 September, 1843.

[94] Philip Collins, *Dickens and Education* (London: MacMillan & Co.,1963), 72.

[95] See note 45.

[96] 'A December Vision' and 'The Finishing Schoolmaster', *Household Words,* 14 December, 1850, 17 May 1851; 307,312.

> clerical instruction to find them ignorant after many days, there were many far less lucky than Tom Tulliver. Education was almost entirely a matter of luck–usually of ill-luck–in those distant days. The state of mind in which you take a billiard-cue or a dice-box in your hand is one of sober certainty compared with that of old-fashioned fathers, like Mr. Tulliver, when they selected a school or a tutor for their sons. Excellent men, who had been forced all their lives to spell on an impromptu-phonetic system, and having carried on a successful business in spite of this disadvantage, had acquired money enough to give their sons a better start in life than they had had themselves, must necessarily take their chance as to the conscience and the competence of the schoolmaster whose circular fell in their way, and appeared to promise so much more than they would ever have thought of asking for, including the return of linen, fork, and spoon. It was happy for them if some ambitious draper of their acquaintance had not brought up his son to the Church, and if that young gentleman, at the age of four-and-twenty, had not closed his college dissipations by an imprudent marriage; otherwise, these innocent fathers, desirous of doing the best for their offspring, could only escape the draper's son by happening to be on the foundation of a grammar-school as yet unvisited by commissioners, where two or three boys could have, all to themselves, the advantages of a large and lofty building, together with a head-master, toothless, dim-eyed and deaf, whose erudite indistinctness and inattention were engrossed by them at the rate of three hundred pounds a-head,–a ripe scholar, doubtless, when first appointed; but all ripeness beneath the sun has a further stage less esteemed in the market.[97]

Eliot's critique of education is central to *The Mill on the Floss* and, subsequently, to *Middlemarch* (1869). Laura Morgan Green argues that

> Eliot takes moral development to be at the heart of the educational project. She shares this concern with contemporary cultural and political theorists such as Matthew Arnold and John Stuart Mill, although her response is different. The two men, despite their political variance, both expected educational institutions to combat what they identified as the growing commodification and mental mediocrity of middle-class society.[98]

Eliot's position differs markedly from the optimism of Arnold and Mill, since she represents the extension of the currently constituted formal, institutional education as being part of the problem rather than its solution. The Reverend Stelling's inadequacies were symptomatic of a general, contentious issue: the insistence by religious bodies that clerics, invariably possessing knowledge without pedagogical expertise, must by right of ordination be the best teachers. Eliot draws attention to Stelling's pedagogical myopia as he ploughs on with his curriculum agenda without regard for Tom's individual needs and academic abilities:

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[97] George Eliot, *The Mill on the Floss* (London: William Blackwood, 1860), 107.

[98] Laura Morgan Green, *Educating Women: Cultural Conflict and Victorian Literature*, (Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2001), 72.

> Tom had never found any difficulty in discerning a pointer from a setter, when once he had been told the distinction, and his perceptive powers were not at all deficient. I fancy they were quite as strong as those of the Rev. Mr. Stelling; for Tom could predict with accuracy what number of horses were cantering behind him, he could throw a stone right into the centre of a given ripple, he could guess to a fraction how many lengths of his stick it would take to reach across the playground, and could draw almost perfect squares on his slate without any measurement. But Mr. Stelling took no note of these things; he only observed that Tom's faculties failed him before the abstractions hideously symbolized to him in the pages of the Eton Grammar, and that he was in a state bordering on idiocy with regard to the demonstration that two given triangles must be equal, though he could discern with great promptitude and certainty the fact that they were equal.[99]

As Green argues, the effect on Tom Tulliver of Stelling's educational practices were "entirely narrowing and stultifying."[100] Furthermore, George Eliot portrayed the cleric as "conventionally mercenary, snobbish and misogynist; worse yet, he is an unimaginative teacher, unable to tailor his lessons to the particular needs and capacities of his pupil:"[101]

> Mr. Stelling was very far from being led astray by enthusiasm, either religious or intellectual; on the other hand, he had no secret belief that everything was humbug. He thought religion was a very excellent thing, and Aristotle a great authority, and deaneries and prebends useful institutions, and Great Britain the providential bulwark of Protestantism, and faith in the unseen a great support to afflicted minds; he believed in all these things as a Swiss hotel-keeper believes in the beauty of the scenery around him, and in the pleasure it gives to artistic visitors. And in the same way Mr. Stelling believed in his method of education; he had no doubt that he was doing the very best thing for Mr. Tulliver's boy.[102]

Eliot was equally critical of the slavish adherence to a classical education that flowed uninterruptedly from the universities to schools for middle-class and upper-class pupils. Mr. Stelling's prior educational experiences are portrayed as both anachronistic and as a barrier to progressive, educational practices that were needed in a country transitioning into a modern, industrial nation. Significantly, literary texts had by that time become of central importance in raising the profile of discourses about education, and the urgent need for the professionalisation of teaching in Victorian England. Eliot also raised issues of gender and physical disability in the *Mill on the Floss.* Maggie Tulliver is depicted as her brother's intellectual superior and an autodidact with a creative imagination. Philip Wakem's educational accomplishments, perceptive character and appreciation of Maggie's intelligence are used by Eliot to reject a dominant cultural construct of physical disability as an impediment to intellectual development.

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[99] *The Mill on the Floss, 88.*

[100] See note 97, 78.

[101] Ibid.

[102] See note 98.

Contrasting reviews of *The Mill on the Floss* appeared in the *Examiner* in June, 1860[103] and *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* in May of that year.[104] The *Examiner* made no reference to educational issues raised by Eliot but criticised the treatment of religion in her novel:

> Take, for example, the suggestion with regard to Maggie of the "knowledge or the irreversible laws within and without her, which governing the habits, becomes morality, and developing the feelings of submission and dependence, becomes religion." The saying looks profound yet what could be more inadequate than to define religion, the highest energy of life, as a mere submission to irreversible laws.[105]

According to the review in the *Examiner*, Maggie's intellectual development had merely culminated in her becoming "clever at rowing."[106] Such a gendered, reactionary and dismissive summation of her accomplishments contradicts, in this case, the radical editorial policy of the *Examiner.* In comparison, the review in *Blackwood's* reflects on "the absurdity of applying a Procrustean system of instruction to all tastes and capacities" which is an important theme in the novel.[107] The review notes that Eliot is endeavouring thereby to "demolish a theory of education" in two to three pages that had previously been done in the *Quarterly*, *Westminster* and *Edinburgh Reviews.*[108] The reviewer emphasises

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[103] The *Examiner,* June 16, 1860, 372-373. The periodical is also referenced and investigated in chapter 1 of my thesis.

[104] Blackwood's *Edinburgh Magazine*, Vol. 87. Iss 535, May 1860, 611-623.

[105] See note 102, 372-373.

[106] Ibid., 372.

[107] See note 103, 618.

[108] Ibid.

Maggie's educational accomplishments, love of books and enquiring mind which acts as a counterweight to stereotypical views of the female intellect being inferior to that of the male.

The reference in *Blackwood's* to 'a Procrustean [sic] system of instruction' is highly significant because it was common pedagogical practice in elementary schools controlled by Anglican clergymen in the Victorian period. Contemporary reviews were clearly alert to this traditional and anachronistic pedagogy, which with its insistence on uniformity and conformity inhibited the development of a progressive education responsive to the individual. 'Instruction' in this instance meant an information transmission model of packaging and presenting facts which had been condemned by Dickens and Eliot. Anglicanism's insistence on the clergy as the best teachers reinforced contemporary opinion that the primary purpose of education was actually religious instruction. The consistent position of Anglicanism, whether that was manifested by members of the High (Tractarian, Oxford Movement) or Low (Evangelical) Church, on the purpose of elementary education from the beginning of the nineteenth-century to the 1860s was published in the *Christian Remembrancer* which described "education as the training which is to enable the member of Christ to use his talents to the utmost in his own office in the one great Body, and to lead him to transform himself through life into the image of God."[109]

I will now investigate the transformation of the individual through an education grounded in pedagogies of faith which was central to Roman Catholicism's engagement with elementary education.

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[109] The *Christian Remembrancer*, Jan. 1866: 50, 131, 26.

The Roman Catholic Philosophy of Education: implications for the curriculum

As Joshua King argues, religious periodicals formed part of "the untold myriad of printed texts dispersed through nineteenth century Britain with reach, speed, and diversity unmatched in any previous age."[110] Print-mediated denominational representations and interpretations of elementary education circulated throughout the nation, and diverse religious bodies were determined to be part of "the circulating printed page."[111] Daniel O'Connell, Irish political leader and campaigner for Catholic emancipation, expressed his views on the importance of the *Tablet* in the first issue of that publication on May 16, 1840:

> I am rejoiced to find that the Catholics of Great Britain and Ireland have at length in London an organ to communicate to the public facts of importance to the religious liberty of all classes. I for one intend to avail myself of this channel of communication, to enable my fellow-subjects differing from me in religious belief, to judge of the manner in which the rights of Catholics are either directly opposed, or by disreputable management infringed upon.[112]

Eric Tenbus asks what were the differences between "Catholic and state interpretations of education, the latter of which was steadily becoming influenced by secularism in Victorian society?"[113] An anonymous Catholic priest's letter to the *Rambler* in 1852 articulated those differences, which had important implications for curriculum provision in Catholic Schools:

> Catholic education has for its one and sole aim the training of the soul for its citizenship in the eternal kingdom of God; state education, the drenching of the mind with a diversified knowledge of facts and science [. . .] The Catholic idea of education presupposes a state of moral and intellectual disorder, the fruit of original sin . . . [and] it must combine guardianship . . . moral [and] intellectual with its tuition. State education, ignoring the doctrine of original sin, appears to presuppose an original perfectibility; thus State education is tuition without guardianship.[114]

From this perspective, according to Roman Catholic principles, religion should permeate all aspects of the intellect; Biblical studies alone "did not equate to an education dependent upon and infused with the authority of God."[115] State education seemed lacking in guardianship according to such a model. One reason for this judgement is that Roman Catholic doctrine presumes a connection between sin and moral as well as intellectual disorder, which religious guardianship exercised through the curriculum can correct. In the Victorian period this did not mean that science and other academic subjects were not an intellectual education but that a pedagogy of faith should direct the ethos and practices of Catholic schools. Curriculum design was based on a collection of premises: education as the formation of character; the inculcation of doctrinal truths, devotional and catechismal, and as a defence against secularisation and proselytism. There was, in conclusion, a strong sense in the distillation of these educational aims of a proactive counter-reformation, and not a religion wholly "defensive in nature."[116]

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[110] Joshua King, *Imagined Spiritual Communities in Britain's Age of Print* (2015), (Columbus: The Ohio State University Press ,2015), 2.
[111] Ibid.
[112] Michael Walsh, *The Tablet*: A Commemorative History, 1840-1990 (London:The Tablet Publishing Company Limited, 1990) 4.
[113] Eric G. Tenbus, *English Catholics and the Education of the Poor, 1847-1902,* (London: Pickering & Chatto, London, 2010), 20.
[114] The *Rambler,* July 1852, 81.

In January 1849 a letter to the editor published in the *Rambler* from Frederick Oakley, an Oxford convert from Anglicanism who had lived in retirement for three years in St Edmund's College, Ware, provided a layman's view of what a Catholic elementary education should comprise. He emphasised the centrality of a moral education, which was not incompatible with the position of competing religious preferences and successive governments in Victorian England. Oakley challenged the view that secularisation was triumphing over the ecclesiastical in schools, but he was concerned with the corruption of boys who might later become clerics by exposure to subjects that were "the very borderland of ruinous sin."[117]According to Oakley, the primacy of "moral training" ought to be allied to "the formation of (mental) character" by "storing the mind with a certain amount of valuable facts."[118] He favoured a liberal education that included modern history, European politics, elements of physical sciences and modern languages for scholars from the middle-classes. Conspicuous by its absence is the suggestion that working-class children should benefit from this liberal education. Oakley's position was symptomatic of a much wider view in society that curriculum must be commensurate with the social class to which learners belonged.

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[115] Ibid., 20-21.

[116] Ibid., 31.

[117] The *Rambler,* Jan. 1849, 372.

[118] Ibid.

The Catholic church's position on a complete education was also stated unequivocally at the hierarchical level by Cardinal Vaughan, Bishop of Salford (1872 to 1892), Archbishop of Westminster (1892 to 1903) and Cardinal (1893 to 1903), in the ultramontane publication, the *Dublin Review*. [119] Vaughan referred to "intellectual paganism" as the outcome of the State taking complete control of a secular, national system of elementary education.[120] Clerics, laypersons and the Cardinal agreed, as Tenbus argues, on "a unifying issue": "education must be based on and built upon religion [and] . . . education is more than the acquisition of knowledge and should have a salvific quality."[121]Again, Catholicism's educational philosophy is seen to be endorsed unanimously by the Catholic hierarchy: "declaring education of the poor as the foremost necessity and goal of the Church."[122] Vaughan was acutely alert to the importance of the press in promoting Catholicism's popular education agenda, exemplified in his exhortation to be "constantly recurring to the use of the press." [123]

Vaughan reported his encounter and subsequent conversation with three or four working-men who stated that "the upper classes had taught them to read and write, and that now they should govern them no longer."[124] Opportunistically and playing to middle-class and upper-class fears that a discontented working-class might violently rebel against their subordinate life conditions, Vaughan exploited this radical view to assert that education must rest upon a religious basis if rebellion was to be avoided. He believed that if you "banish religion, you let loose disorder and Revolution."[125] Vaughan associated the secularist party with radicalism and atheistic rationalism. According to his socially conservative view, a Catholic education was an assurance that the country would not be "swallowed up in the riding waters of unbelief and rationalism."[126] Catholic education as counter-reformation was fervently expressed in the third verse of Frederick William Faber's hymn, *Faith of Our Fathers*, written in 1849,

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[119] The *Dublin Review*, v.10. Iss.9 (Jan. 1868): 131-165.
[120] Ibid., 135.
[121] See note 112, 21.
[122] Ibid.
[123] See note 118, 135.
[124] See note 118, 161.

> Faith of our fathers, Mary's prayers,
> Shall win our country back to thee;
> And through the truth that comes from God
> England shall then indeed be free.[127]

The Catholic hierarchy's position on the importance of the interaction of religion and education reflected an agenda that extended far beyond Vaughan's view of Catholicism as the guarantor of an ordered society. Catholic clergy, in common with their Anglican counterparts, were to be the directors and superintendents of mental and moral training in the elementary education system. Clerics derived an incontestable, sacred authority from the Papacy down to the English hierarchy and its Priests and ultimately into schools where teaching accorded with Catholic dogma and doctrine. Those schools 'delivered' a pedagogy of faith designed to develop and strengthen the Roman Catholic community in Victorian England.

Education, then, was increasingly seen by competing religious preferences as central to the transmission of the dominant values of a particular denomination. I now investigate the role played by Methodism in the relationship between religion and education. In doing so, I argue that the green shoots of progressive educational ideas and practices are revealed in Methodism's pedagogies of faith.

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[125] Ibid.
[126] Ibid.
[127] Frederick William Faber (1814-63), *Faith of Our Fathers, The Complete Celebration Hymnal* (Great Wakering: McCrimmons, 1998), 68.

Methodism: educational philosophy, curriculum and childhood

Described by John T. Smith as “the dominant Wesleyan spokesman of the second quarter of the [nineteenth] century,” the Rev. Jabez Bunting was committed to a Christian-based education which echoes the concerns we have just seen in Roman Catholicism:[128]

> Education [. . .] without religion is not education. I think that an education which looks only at the secular interests of an individual, which looks only at his condition as a member of civil society; does not look upon him as a man having an immortal soul [. . .] is not education.”[129]

Initially, Methodism’s educational efforts were directed towards establishing Sunday Schools in which reading was taught to ensure the study of the Bible. A link is thereby established between literacy and faith. According to Smith, the Methodists “had more Sunday Schools than any denomination other than the Church of England and in Manchester, Salford, Liverpool, Bury, and York, they accounted for 32 per cent of all such schools in 1834.”[130]

Given that instruction at Sunday school occurred on the Sabbath, secular subjects were forbidden and in the early nineteenth-century, the Wesleyan Conference (1814 and 1823) banned the teaching of writing. Methodism’s eventual participation in elementary education resulted from increasing State involvement in education but, especially, from the dominant position of Anglicanism and other competing religious affiliations.

Writing in the *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine* in 1841, Maxwell Macbrair, Wesleyan Minister and missionary, explored the title of his letter: *The Connexion of Religious Education with Secular Education.* He believed in the inevitability and desirability of popular education that included all social classes. He associated ignorance with crime, degradation and the political exploitation of discontent by "seditious agitators."[131] According to Macbrair, Methodist education, amalgamated with general subjects, should be based on religious principles that connect with social propriety and morality. He raised a number of perennial questions: "What is education?" and "What shall we teach the people?"[132] Macbrair favoured an education beyond reason, memory and imagination (intellectual faculties) – "only part of the man" - to the supremacy of the moral. His views are especially important because they promoted the idea of an elementary curriculum commensurate with the social class to which learners belonged.[133] "Reckless ambition" consequent upon an early years education and leading subsequently to rising above one's allotted station in life were abhorrent to him. The emphasis was on education as citizenship to ensure adherence by the populace to "the duties of their station, in habits of honesty, industry and sobriety." [134]

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[128] John T. Smith, *Methodism and Education, 1849 -1902: J.H. Rigg, Romanism, and Wesleyan Schools* (Oxford: Clarendon Press,1998), 2.
[129] G.M. Best, *A Historical Perspective On Methodist Involvement in School Education After Wesley* <https://www.methodist.org.uk.edu./ March 27,2012>(accessed January, 2018).
[130] See note 127, 1.

In this anti-aspirational approach to the education of poorer people, Macbrair asserted dogmatically (and by today's sensibility, offensively) that "we agree that all . . . peasants should be taught to read and write." [135] The pejorative reference to 'peasants' suggests that Macbrair's thinking was fixed in the social structures of a pre-industrial, feudal age. Yet he also argues that the gentry were disposed to "vice and indolence" due to a purely intellectual education.[136] According to this view, which was commonplace among the Victorian middle-classes, education without a moral and religious foundation was "a miserable delusion."[137] The Bible was promoted as "a complete system of Divine Truth" under which selective extracts from the scriptures were not the "marrow of religious knowledge" because they represented the basis for a flawed and incomplete moral philosophy.[138] His position was at variance with more conventional church practices as tracts and passages aimed at memory were very much part of Methodist culture. The letter concluded with a rallying cry: "it is time for the religious world to rouse itself, and insist upon a new method of education, based upon Christian principles."[139]

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[131] The *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine,* March 1841, 190.
[132] Ibid.
[133] See note 130, 191.
[134] Ibid.
[135] Ibid., 192.
[136] See note 130, 192.
[137] Ibid.

Macbrair's position on the relationship between ignorance and social problems would not have been disputed by competing religious preferences and political parties in Victorian England. The secular periodical press repeatedly drew the public's attention to the temperance movement and what the *Methodist Times* referred to as "The Three Deadly Enemies of England:" "Drink, Impurity, Gambling."[140]The leading religious bodies, while disputing doctrinal and theological principles and practices, agreed that elementary education must be grounded in religious and moral instruction so that alcoholism could be avoided before it began. There was also a hope that children would educate their parents once they had received their own instruction. The civil authorities wanted an education for good citizenship based on moral conduct to ensure the maintenance of social stability, continuity and order. Curricula commensurate with the social class to which learners belonged reflected a dominant cultural feature. A Methodist Minister described his encounter with a group of men which illustrates a view commonly held in Victorian society: "one of the party strongly reprobated the idea of educating the masses. What did plough-boys or milk-maids want to know about geography or grammar?"[141]

According to this view, which is again socially pejorative, "coarse hands" did not need heads. While religion provided impetus and direction to the extension of elementary education, it was often a barrier to social mobility and resistant to a national system that threatened the voluntary principle and denominational schools.

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[138] Ibid.

[139] See note 130, 194.

[140] The *Methodist Times* , 6 June, 1895. Although outside of the period of my study , this view was consistently expressed throughout the Victorian period.

[141] The Wesleyan Methodist Magazine, Vol.6 (July 1850), 729.

Methodism's educational philosophy was based increasingly on the principle that "all children are of great value, and needing to be cherished."[142] Orthodox ideas about elementary education as outlined by Macbrair were slowly being re-evaluated and dismissed as socially and educationally anachronistic. In 1855, John Scott, a President of The Methodist Conference, told trainee teachers at Westminster College

> The children [. . .] are not machines [. . .] We wish to have a thorough sympathy with their human feelings [. . .] Is a child less rational, less capable of intellectual and moral improvement, of living an orderly, creditable, and useful life in society, of serving God and ensuring blissful immortality because his parents are poor?[143]

There was also a socially progressive side to Methodist education. Rhetoric and reality would appear to have been in accord as Matthew Arnold, Her Majesty's Inspector of Methodist Schools from 1851, praised attitudes towards pupils that, in the case of infants, prioritised the development of "perception, observation and curiosity."[144] As John T. Smith argues, Wesleyan schools, promoted "equality of the sexes in education, which was an advanced concept at this time."[145] In 1858, Scott challenged the view held by Macbrair and others that it was "wrong to educate girls of the lower classes, who were destined to 'do the drudgery of life', supposing it would make them 'dissatisfied and unfit for their proper station.'"[146] Reading, writing and arithmetic were the core subjects for both girls and boys but, in a progressive move, Methodist teachers were encouraged to develop their pupils' thinking skills and "train their intellectual powers that they will readily apprehend and appreciate the importance of [. . .] lessons, on whatever subject."[147] The importance of developing critical thinkers was supported by the Reverend J. A. James in an article in the *Primitive Methodist Magazine* in 1851. He advanced the view that "an ignorant, unreasoning, unreflective population are likely to become the prey of Romanism. We must give people habits of independence. We must enable them to reflect and reason [. . .] The whole system of public and private education should be thoroughly Protestant."[148] I argue that these progressive educational ideas and pedagogical practices that included developing critical and reflective thinking skills represented the antithesis of the procrustean system of education associated with Anglicanism and Catholicism.

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[142] See note 130, 22.
[143] See note 127, 23.
[144] Ibid.
[145] Ibid.
[146] Ibid., 24.
[147] Ibid.

An anonymous contributor to the *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine* in 1846 criticised educational traditionalism and cultural orthodoxy that underpinned the persistence and pervasiveness of a classical education for middle-class and upper-class scholars. According to the writer, "the common sense of the intelligent reader revolts at [the] groundless assertions" that the study of the classics was "the only efficient help to a liberal education." While acknowledging that the "ancients were wise", the writer stated that "we do not affirm . . .that [they] possessed all wisdom."[149]

According to this view, the classics were not essential for a 'good education', which was defined as thinking wisely and avoiding an uncritical acceptance of acquired knowledge. While, in the opinion of this contributor to the *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine,* the classics were highly important for a liberal education, "a mere classical scholar is by no means a thoroughly educated man."[150] These arguments constituted progressive ideas about education, embodied in the principle advanced in the above article that "we should not aim to make the mind a mere reservoir of other men's thoughts, but a living fountain, sending forth its own refreshing streams."[151]

While classics were regarded as useful for the training of memory, and rhetorical style, critical reflection was seen as crucial for lawyers, judges, advocates and public speakers. I suggest that the views expressed in this correspondence would most likely have found acceptance among the Romantics earlier in the century, such as William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge, who advocated the benefits of an active intellect that builds knowledge from immersive experience in the world. Some of the most progressive principles underlying Romanticism's educational philosophy, such as child-centred learning, reflection and critical thinking had by the middle of the nineteenth-century emerged as prominent features of the new discourse on elementary education in periodicals. It is well known that Romanticism's educational ideas had been strongly influenced by Jean Jacques Rousseau's *s*eminal treatise *Emile and Julie, or the New Heloise*.[152] Dominant, traditional cultural values that had permeated educational theories and practices were being challenged here by alternative conceptions of what constituted a good education. Such opposing positions would find expression in literary works, such as Charlotte Bronte's *Jayne Eyre* which I shall now go on to explore.

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[148] The *Primitive Methodist Magazine,* Nov. 10, 1851, v.32, 473-474.

[149] The *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine,* Vol. 2 (Jan.1846) 53-58. *The Study of the Classics.*

[150] Ibid.

[151] Ibid.

Literary case study: Evangelical education in *Jayne Eyre*

According to Owen Chadwick, competing religious affiliations were agreed that

> [. . . .] the education of the poor must be Christian. But two ideas of religious education contended for the nation's money. Religion, said one side, cannot be taught like arithmetic. It is a life, a tradition [. . .] Religion, said the other side, cannot be given to the labouring nation, unless we give them that which is common to religions, for today each denomination has its equitable place in the sun. And that which is common to the Christian denominations is the Bible. Whether the Bible could be sensibly taught without interpretation remained to be seen.[153]

As we have seen, where education was concerned, Anglicanism was not a unified religion and neither were Methodism nor Catholicism. Robert Bickersteth, the Evangelical Bishop of Ripon, regarded education

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[152] See chapter 1 of my thesis.

[153] Owen Chadwick, *The Victorian Church: Part One, 1829-1859* (London: SCM Press, 1987), 346.

> As neither the teaching of the three Rs nor the cramming of the mind with facts but as the development of the faculties with which God has endowed them, with a view to their employment for the good of others, as well as for the glory of God, which was the highest object which any human being could aim.[154]

In common with views expressed by both Catholicism and Methodism, the Bishop regarded the ultimate and central purpose of education as preparing humankind for eternity.

In her novel *Jane Eyre*, which was reviewed in periodicals, Charlotte Brontë portrayed an evangelical parson, Mr Brocklehurst, as severely humourless, hypocritical, arrogant, sanctimonious and ultimately sadistic, pontificating at his first meeting with the girl Jane.[155] Chadwick interpreted Brontë's portrayal of the parson as "grim, gaunt, prim and hard as black marble."[156] Whatever the choice of descriptive terminology, the cleric school proprietor and his brand of evangelism were deeply abhorrent to Jane who is narrating the episode with hindsight and the voice of an adult. As an arch-apologist for education as an austere religious education, Brocklehurst personified an extreme evangelical culture that was as intolerant of opposition and criticism as it was of luxury. Education's primary purpose at Lowood school was instruction in moral restraint, self-deprivation and values consistent with the doctrines of Protestantism. Brocklehurst's deeply engrained evangelical rhetoric associates education with a virtuous life when he affirms that "humility is a Christian Grace, and one peculiarly appropriate to the pupils of Lowood school."[157] Brontë's characterisation of Mr Brocklehurst's cruelty and severity was possibly reinforced by anecdotal evidence, cited by Chadwick, that the evangelical sister of the Frederick Denison Maurice, Professor of Theology at King's College London and a

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[154] David N. Hempton, *Bickersteth, Bishop of Ripon: The Episcopate of A Mid-Victorian Evangelical,* in *Religion in Victorian Britain, Volume IV: Interpretations*, ed. Gerald Parsons (Manchester: Manchester University Press,1998), 41.

[155] Charlotte Brontë, *Jane Eyre: An Autobiography* [1847]. Kindle Edition: transcribed from the 1897 Service & Paton edition by David Price. I discuss contrasting reviews of *Jane Eyre* in chapter 3 in relation to her portrayal of the role of the governess and a version of education for girls and women beyond the classroom.

[156] See note 152, 446.

[157] See note 154, 18.

Broad Churchman, "used to put delicious puddings on the table before her child and just as he was expecting to eat would order him to carry them away to the poor of the village."[158]

As Chadwick observes, it would seem that "by chance or by law of averages evangelical parents or schoolmasters succeeded in breeding distinguished rebels."[159]

Dinah Birch argues that

> The novels of Charlotte Brontë are closely bound up with the potential for fulfilment through education. Her sense of what it might mean to teach, and be taught, consistently shapes her representation of the needs of the self. Bronte's engagement with the principles of schooling is part of an autobiographical impulse, grounded in her intensely inward understanding of Romanticism.[160]

Brontë challenged the orthodox view that men were women's intellectual superiors. In doing so, she was throwing down the gauntlet to a patriarchal society for whom education was primarily intended for males. Having benefitted from education, Charlotte Brontë wanted girls and women to experience learning commensurate with their needs in life. The stress here was on a curriculum for middle-class girls and women that was 'commensurate' with their individual expectations of marriage or work [usually as a governess]. Her personal 'pilgrim's progress' was one she desired other females to experience in their own way and according to their hopes and aspirations. Jane's literal, physical, metaphorical and emotional journey shares some of the features with the character Christian in John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress*. However, among the differences between the two on their journey to self-fulfilment, Jane's educative process is consistent with Romanticism's advocacy of intellectual engagement with an immersive experience of life that builds knowledge. Compliance and collusion with a male-dominated society, especially in relation to education, was not part of Brontë's agenda. Her position on a restricted, stereotypical curriculum determined by gender was unambiguous:

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[158] See note 152, 445.
[159] Ibid., 445.
[160] Dinah Birch, *Our Victorian Education* (Oxford*:* Blackwell Publishing, 2008), 89.

> It is vain to say human beings ought to be satisfied with tranquility: they must have action; and they will make it if they cannot find it [. . .] Women are supposed to be very calm generally: but women feel just as men feel; they need exercise for their faculties and a field for their efforts as much as their brothers do; they suffer too much rigid a restraint, too absolute a stagnation, precisely as men would suffer; and it is narrow-minded in their more privileged fellow-creatures to say they ought to confine themselves to making puddings and knitting stockings, to playing on the piano and embroidering bags. It is thoughtless to condemn them, or laugh at them, if they seek to do more or learn more than custom has pronounced necessary for their sex.[161]

Brontë rejected the relationship between the evangelical Christianity and the educational principles of the Reverend William Carus Wilson, founder and head of Cowan Bridge Clergy Daughter's School, attended by the Brontës. Wilson's beliefs were underpinned by a sinister book, *Child's First Tales* that was intended for "infant schools and children in general."[162] The stories provided "rigid moral instruction for its young readers. Many stories featured children who had behaved badly and received divine retribution; for example, children who tell lies or prefer to play than go to church; others tell of children who have behave piously and receive reward."[163]

These moral tales reflected the belief, prevalent in the early nineteenth-century, that children were born sinners predestined to hell, and must repent to save their souls. The book might have been used as inspiration for the 'thin pamphlet' Jane received from Mr Brocklehurst. The contents of *Child's First Tales* reflect the tone and teaching of Brocklehurst's recommended reading: *'An account of the awfully sudden death of Martha G---, a naughty girl addicted to falsehood and deceit.'* Instances of lying frequently appear in the book; Wilson and Brocklehurst made the same point when quoting from The Book of Revelation: "all liars will have their portion in the lake burning with fire and brimstone."[164]

The clerical monopoly on elementary education is represented as a malign force in the aforementioned views expressed by Charles Dickens, George Eliot and Charlotte

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[161] See note 155, 96.

[162] Sally Shuttleworth, *Jayne Eyre and the rebellious child* (which includes a reference to Reverend William Carus Wilson's *Child's First Tales* (1836)*;* British Library <http://www.bl.uk >15 May, 2014 (accessed, January, 2018), 1.

[163] Ibid.

[164] See note 154, Ch.4, 93.The Book of Revelation 21:8.

Brontë. However, on a more positive note, an article by the Reverend F. Temple in the *Christian Remembrancer* in 1856, argued that religious zeal had been the impetus for the extension of elementary education for the '"lower-classes": a pejorative term commonly used in the Victorian period. Reflecting on educational developments in the 1830s and 1840s, Temple cited James Kay-Shuttleworth's statement that "a system of National Education [. . .] is necessarily of slow growth. For a country possessing representative institutions, public opinion must first be convinced of the necessity and utility of so vast a creation as that of universally accessible and efficient 'elementary schools.'[165]

Temple acknowledged progress in terms of provision but his position on the quality of education bore some similarities to criticisms articulated by Dickens, Eliot and Brontë. He drew attention to inadequate teaching, while recognising advances in teacher training, poor buildings and a lack of comprehensive regulatory oversight through inspection. However, it should be noted that there was a developing system of school inspections from the 1840s onwards which he goes on to acknowledge. He was critical of an inadequate curriculum for working-class children as he reflected on "the 'three r's [that] ran rampant over the land; the dames administered instruction as an impatient nurse-maid administers medicine."[166] For him, the future of "A system of a National Education" should be settled by the middle-classes because "their voice, if once pronounced, would finally settle all points in dispute."[167] This somewhat simplistic and unrealistic suggestion would not emerge as a solution on its own for resolving the evolving religious and secular complexities associated with a national system of elementary education. Temple was alert to education as an expression of civil as well as religious freedom which had important implications for lay influence and secular instruction in the future direction of elementary education. On that subject, he wrote that

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[165] The *Christian Remembrancer*, Art. VIII, National Education. The Rev. F. Temple MA, late fellow of Balliol College. From the Oxford essays (J.W. Parker and Sons, 1856), 188. James Kay –Shuttleworth was the first secretary of an early version of the 'Ministry of Education' that was established in 1839. Norman Morris states that he was "a natural choice for appointment as its first Secretary, as both an experienced civil servant and a notable authority on the education of lower class children." (again, a pejorative term). See the Introduction by Norman Morris to James Kay-Shuttleworth's *Four Periods of Public Education As Reviewed in 1832, 1839, 1846, 1862* (Brighton, Sussex: Harvester Press, 1973),vii. Kay-Shuttleworth was immensely influential in the development of public education during the nineteenth-century and features in chapter 1 of my thesis.

[166] The *Christian* Remembrancer Art. VIII, National Education. The Rev. F. Temple , 1856, 190.

[167] Ibid., 187.

> Civil education cannot exist without the moral training essential to religious education; and up to this point they are not incompatible. The truth, perhaps, is that the relationship between them is somewhat like that between food of the mind and that of the body; one is higher, the other more indispensable; one is needed for right living, the other for living at all.[168]

Although Temple had no appetite for purely secular schools, he is clearly arguing for the necessity of a civil and religious elementary education. In his view, without religion you get an imperfect education and without the civil dimension there is no education at all. The impetus given to the extension of elementary education by religious societies was acknowledged by Kay-Shuttleworth when he wrote in 1846 that

> The National Society has successfully embodied the spirit and applied the resources of the Church of England to the foundation and support of parochial schools, in which the doctrines of the Church, as taught in her Catechism, are inculcated. The British and Foreign School Society, founded on the principle of religious equality, was established with the intention of uniting all Protestant congregations on the basis of the authorised version of the Scriptures without note or comment, and to the exclusion of all catechical instruction. From the voluntary labours of these two great societies, elementary education received its chief, if not its sole impulse down to the year 1833.[169]

In subsequent decades, The National Society continued to express opinions on the defining characteristics and future direction of elementary education. As Josef Altholz has observed, it "became the rule [in nineteenth-century Britain] that every movement, every school of thought, every sect, and every party had to have at least one organ of expression," which, in the case of the National Society, was the *Monthly Paper.*[170] I now show how religious periodicals were prominent in promoting and upholding clerical influence and control over elementary education in the face of increasing State intervention in educational matters.

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[168] Ibid., 195.

[169] James Kay-Shuttleworth, *Explanation of the Minutes of 1846 in Four Periods of Public Education As Reviewed in 1832, 1839, 1846, 1862 (*Brighton: The Harvester Press, 1973), 442.

[170] Josef Altholz, *The Religious Press in Britain, 1760-1900* (Westport, Connecticut: Green Wood Press,1989), 1.

Pragmatism and traditionalism: religion as anti-progressive education

The front cover of the *Monthly Paper of the National Society for the Promoting The Education of the Poor* displays a crest inscribed: *"Feed My Lambs."* The message was clear: teachers, specifically clerics, were shepherds whose sacred duty was the moral, liturgical and doctrinal instruction of their pupils. Based on traditional pedagogical practices, such instruction was consistent with John Dewey's description of "formation from without . . . Education is a process of overcoming natural inclination and substituting in its place habits acquired under external pressure."[171] Essentially, this was education as the formation of Christian identity in accordance with the principles, in this case, of the Protestant Church.

An article from the *Hereford Times* in 1868, entitled *Education of the Poor,* was reproduced in the *Monthly Paper*. Compulsory education was dismissed as an interference with the voluntary principle because the denominational system was considered to be the best way forward for extending the education of the poor. Concern was expressed about compulsory, secular education that would inevitably "fail to secure the moral and religious training which alone makes good citizens or loyal subjects, and which alone deserves the name of education."[172]

Criticisms of a secular elementary education system appeared regularly in the *Monthly Paper.* The Reverend D. Melville's letter to the editor insisted that "every school . . . should teach principles and historical religion. The Church should have, as far as possible, the education of the country in its own hands."[173] Control of elementary education by the Church of England was a consistent theme in the *Monthly Paper*, especially in the context of the rise of Non-Conformity and Roman Catholicism, from the founding of The National Society For Promoting The Education of The Poor in 1811.

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[171] John Dewey, *Experience and Education* [1938], (New York: Touchstone,1997), 17.
[172] *The Monthly Paper* (1868, April). Vol. 16, 85.
[173] Ibid., 142-143.

According to Anne Digby and Peter Searby, the mid-Victorian curriculum in elementary schools represented a wide "gap between the progressive ideal and the reality of the classroom."[174] Romanticism's educational ideas and ideals that had enthused and influenced Charlotte Brontë, had not found general acceptance or application in the majority of elementary schools. Inadequate professional training meant that teachers did not have the theoretical and practical knowledge and skills to create the conditions for progressive learning methods. The excessively large numbers of pupils in classrooms exacerbated the pedagogical challenges faced by teachers in elementary schools. As Digby and Searle have observed, teaching manuals concentrated on "classroom mechanics (often depicted as akin to barrack-room drill) and in their relative neglect of any psychological insight into child development these manuals revealed only too clearly the limited objectives of many elementary schools [for working-class children]."[175]

Again, this view supports the argument that minimal curricula provision was determined by the pupil's social class. In a more optimistic vein, Digby and Searle comment that the progressive educational practices developed, for example, in Methodist Infant schools "were to spread gradually throughout elementary schools" [176]

The diversity of school provision for middle-class children developed during the nineteenth-century. In William B. Stephens's view the "social cachet of a classical curriculum" was favoured by aspirational "better-off middle-class parents."[177] Stephens goes on to argue that Grammar schools did not always provide a sufficiently diverse curriculum, which resulted in the proliferation of private schools and "since the grammar schools normally took only boys, [these schools] and governesses accounted for virtually all the education of middle-class girls."[178] A liberal curriculum for girls included "modern languages, literature, grammar, history and geography, and sometimes even arithmetic and science, most tended to concentrate on decorative 'accomplishments' rather than academic instruction."[179] There were different categories of private schools, some were established by Anglicans, Nonconformists and Roman Catholics and provided a classical curriculum with a selection of general subjects.[180]

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[174] Anne Digby and Peter Searby, *Children, School and Society in Nineteenth-Century England* (London and Basingstoke: The Macmillan Press ,1981), 35.

[175] Ibid., 36.

[176] Ibid., 35.

[177] William B. Stephens, *Education in Britain 1750-1914 (*London and Basingstoke: Macmillan Press Ltd. ,1998), 44-46.

The priorities of the leading religious bodies in Victorian England were generally, though not always exclusively, concerned with an instructional pathway that privileged the salvific objective of a moral education over an intellectual curriculum. In religion's world-view, pragmatism and traditionalism tended to predominate over progressive educational ideas associated with Romanticism.

David Halpin has argued that Samuel Taylor Coleridge's vision of education, along with the significant contributions of William Hazlitt and William Wordsworth, was symbolic of "some of the chief features of Romantic sensibility, and notably the high value it places on childhood, love, heroism, criticism and imagination." [181] It will help to consider how the educational backgrounds of these Romantic poets profoundly influenced the progressive pedagogical ideas that they passed on to the Victorians. Given that those just mentioned were all members of the Protestant faith, what is the connection between them and a Roman Catholic cleric, aristocrat and educator, Monsignor William Joseph Petre?

Coleridge's education, after his father's death, at Christ's Hospital School led him to attack what Halpin refers to as the communication of "too much inert knowledge."[182]

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[178] Ibid.
[179] Ibid.
[180] Ibid., 45-46.
[181] David Halpin, *Romanticism and Education: Love, Heroism and Imagination in Pedagogy* (London and New York: Continuum International Publishing, 2007) 1.
[182] Ibid., 2.

Wordsworth shared Coleridge's criticisms of the packaging, presentation and remembering of facts in the grammar and charity school systems; instructional methods that suppressed the active engagement of the intellect and led to the practice of teaching to the test which has persisted into the present century. In Halpin's view, Wordsworth had benefitted from an introduction to the classics at Hawkeshead Grammar School "that eschewed wearisome rote learning and repetitious exercises in verse composition. The fact that Wordsworth continued to educate himself in the classics long after leaving Hawkshead, delighting in classical poetry throughout his adult life, must be attributed, to some degree, to early teaching of rare quality."[183]

Interestingly, Coleridge's sense of isolation and negative experiences at Christ's Hospital School contrast markedly with Wordsworth's schooldays at Hawkshead which Halpin describes as "extremely happy ones." [184] Yet, both poets reached similar conclusions about the defining characteristics of a progressive pedagogy which, according to Halpin, has at its core

> Contact with the grandeur and beauty of the natural world, and the self-forgetfulness in which the imagination is given full scope to accept what reason cannot grasp, is a central dictum of *The Prelude,* and indeed of Wordsworth's poetry in general. So is the importance he gives to the role of book-based learning, and the reading of fantastic stories of magic and adventure in particular, which are seen by him as second only to nature in developing the child's imagination and learning.[185]

Hazlitt's liberal education at New College dissenting academy in Hackney, was characterised by a curriculum that encouraged enquiry within the framework of a broad range of curriculum subjects including the classics. There was an emphasis on free speech, debate and critical thinking. As Hazlitt was withdrawn from the College after two years, it is difficult, as Halpin observes, to gauge "its impact on him."[186] However, he goes on to argue that Hazlitt developed a strong sense of "independence of thought and spirit" which was encouraged at New College.[187] Also, I argue that the emphasis placed on meeting individual needs at this dissenting academy was immensely influential in the development of progressive pedagogical ideas and practices.

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[183]See note 180, 61.

[184] Ibid., 62.

[185] Ibid., 64-65.

I shall now explore the relationship between features of these progressive educational ideas and pedagogical practices as associated with Monsignor William Joseph Petre which strikingly challenged traditional Roman Catholic pedagogies.

Case study: Monsignor William Joseph Petre

Progressive education: "a spice of the adventurous"[188]

The Honourable and Reverend William Joseph Petre (1847-1893) was a member of one of England's leading aristocratic Catholic families. Drawing primarily on his writings, a limited number of secondary sources and the *Dublin Review*, I argue that his contribution to progressive educational ideas and practices, influenced in part by Romanticism, deserves more attention than it has received. I do so because Petre called for debates and discourse about education to be a fundamental part of an evolving participatory democracy in Victorian England. Importantly, within the context of a dominant traditional Roman Catholic education, he advocated an alternative, progressive version associated with pupil-centred learning, an education of the imagination, enquiry and freedom of expression. Also, as Stewart Foster argues, Petre "should not be dismissed as an educator nor should the lasting influence of some of his ideas upon the development of English public school education be underestimated."[189] Given that, the main criticism that can be levelled at Petre is that he focused exclusively on the education of middle–class and upper-class children to the exclusion and detriment of their working-class peers. This was at a time when the education of the poor was the stated priority of the Roman Catholic hierarchy.

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[186] Ibid., 59.
[187] Ibid.
[188] The Hon. and Rev. William Petre, *Remarks on the Present Condition of Catholic Liberal Education* (London: Burns & Oates, 1877), 4.
[189] Stewart Foster, *William Joseph Petre, (*1847-1893).University of Hull: unpublished PhD, 2007, 1.

Petre's three years as a student at Stonyhurst, a Jesuit College, are central to an understanding of the external influences or outer history that converged to form his views and writing on Catholic education and, in particular, his sustained criticisms of the educational practices of the Jesuits. He experienced "discipline at Stonyhurst [that] was strict. Corporal punishment was administered with severity when necessary, and the greatest care was taken to instruct the children in the duties of Religion and Morality." [190] Physically administered discipline was of course not unusual in Victorian education, and depictions of its effects had been brought to the foreground of popular literature. For example, in Dickens's *Nicholas Nickleby* pupils at Dotheboy's Hall are subjected to sadistic beatings as they are at and control over the pupils in those schools.

Petre's experiences at Stonyhurst led him to the conclusion that *"morality of course* [is] *understood to be synonymous with chastity, not with moral development"* [his italics]. [191] The system of surveillance, designed to prevent boys from committing acts of impurity and maintain a rigid system of order, had a profound psychological effect on Petre's thinking about a Jesuit education: "there are numerous and serious defects and errors in their system of training English boys." [192] He reflected on the issue of moral discipline and the dissonance that existed in relationships between boys and their clerical masters. Petre's critique of inexperienced teachers highlighted a lack of subject specialists; one teacher was responsible for teaching "all subjects to his boys".[193] To strengthen his case, he quoted a former pupil of Stonyhurst who wrote to the *Tablet* about incompetent 'teachers' whose "continual experiments are made on the boys [. . .] And if some good material is wasted, if some young lives are spoiled in the process, - why, then that is part of a system."[194] The implication of such criticism of clerics, which echo those made by Brontë, Eliot and Dickens, was putative 'teachers' were scholarly but deficient in pedagogical theories and practices with the consequent negative effects on boys' education. The myth that clerics were always the best teachers was not the sole preserve of other religious bodies.

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[190] Monsignor William Joseph Petre, *The Problem of Catholic Liberal Education,* By The Author of "Remarks on the Present Condition of Catholic Liberal Education"(London: Burns and Oates,1877), 5, 13.

[191] Ibid.,16. Petre was well-known for his excessive use of italics which he invariably used to emphasise either deficiencies in Catholic pedagogical and organisational practices in schools or to underscore his 'progressive' and 'liberal' educational philosophy.

[192] See note 190, 5.

[193] Ibid., 12.

Petre was critical of a system that he believed failed to recognise and respond to the uniqueness and individual learning needs of pupils in the educative process. He noted that boys at school "are always in large masses;" "they study, eat and play in large masses, under supervision."[195] The persistence of surveillance of this kind was a recurring theme in his writings about school discipline. Petre's criticism extended to the mechanistic "mental habit" inculcated by an ineffective pedagogy; that is the undesirable outcome of boys lacking in imagination and intellectual acuity. [196] He advocated responding to the needs of the individual child which establishes a clear connection to that feature of a Romantic education. Petre often prefaced his writings with verses from the Romantic poets, especially from William Wordsworth. For example, his lecture notes on an '*Analytical outline of Lectures on the Culture of the Intellect and the Art of Intellectual Life* include a reference to *The Prelude*:[197]

> Many are our joys in youth,-
> But oh! What happiness to live,
> When every hour brings palpable access
> Of knowledge; when all knowledge is delight
> And sorrow is not there.[198]

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[194] The *Tablet,* 5 January, 1878.
[195] See note 190, 13.
[196] Ibid.
[197] Monsignor Petre's notebooks, 1876.
[198] William Wordsworth *The Prelude, Bk. 11* in *William Wordsworth, The Major Works,* ed. Stephen Gill (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 400, ll. 303-307.

Petre wrote that the purpose of his lectures was "to awaken the attention of the student to the phenomena of his own inner life; & thus to foster habits of reflection, which are the only key to the door of knowledge and power." [199]

What, then, was the public impact of Petre's activity? His views generated resentment among traditionalists whose orthodoxy resisted any criticisms of a Jesuit education. An 'anonymous' correspondent, writing in the *Saturday Review*, was scathing in his criticism of Petre's writings and robust in his defence of the Jesuit educational system, but at the same time he gave more public prominence to Petre's writing. [200] The 'anonymous' author of the pamphlet was, in fact, an Irish barrister who expressed his outrage that Petre had dared to question and criticise the values of Catholic education, especially one provided by Jesuits. Petre would continue to attract both criticism and approbation when he founded a school based on his liberal educational philosophy.

Progressive Education: Woburn School, and the hemlock cup of unorthodoxy[201]

In September, 1877 Petre wrote that "from henceforth I am employed in the earnest endeavour to carry into practice such principles as may be mine, and concerning which there shall be no secrecy."[202] Vincent McClelland notes that Petre was true to his word when he

> Opened his own school at Woburn Park, Surrey, in 1877, as a new "sanctuary of our country's youth" (Downside Review, July 1893, p. 3). Within four years he was educating the sons of many of the oldest Catholic families - Stafford, Clifford, Fotheringham, Eyston, Riddell, Staniforth, Ullathorne, Petre, Stourton, Plunkett, Throckmorton, Gaisford, Cary-Elwes, Garnett, Stonor, Montagu, Wheatley, D'Arcy, Bethell- as well as the

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[199] Monsignor Petre, *The Problem of Catholic Liberal Education,* By the Author of "*Remarks on the Present Condition of Catholic Liberal Education"*(London: Burns and Oates,1877), 1.

[200] The *Saturday Review,* July 6, 1878.

[201] The Hon. Rev. William Petre , I. *The Position and Prospects of Catholic Liberal Education by The Organization of Existing Opportunities of Catholic Liberal Education. The relation between Catholic and Non-Catholic Education Ethically Considered.* (London: Burns and Oates,1878), 5.

[202] The Hon. Rev. William Petre*, Remarks on the Present Condition of Catholic Liberal Education* (London: Burns and Oates, 1877), 5.

> sons of converts (such as de Lisle) and the children of wealthy parents (of which Las Casas is a prominent example).[203]

The curriculum was consistent with Petre's educational philosophy which was published in the *Amoeba*, Woburn school's magazine:

> Within the school, the teaching did not orientate around the classics. "A father of the last century was accustomed to be satisfied with his son's education in proportion to the amount of Latin and Greek which had been with difficulty run down his throat,"*The Amoeba* [Woburn School magazine] declared on 17 March 1881, and it was asserted that this was still a characteristic of the colleges which preserved too rigidly the traditions of penal days. At Woburn, boys were to have time and opportunity to mature their minds and discover to what employment their powers were peculiarly suited. The magazine declared that Stonyhurst still possessed classes, for instance, which "are divided according to a scheme strongly suggestive of the bygone days of Trivium and Quadrivium" (The *Amoeba*, 21 June 1881, p. 11).[204]

The *Amoeba* provided an opportunity for teachers and pupils to contribute to a print-mediated discourse on a variety of topics including current affairs, academic topics and sport. Selected copies of the *Amoeba* were drawn to my attention by Baron Petre of Writtle, in the County of Essex, during my research visit to the family seat at Ingatestone Hall. A broadsheet publication, the school magazine also published detailed and comprehensive coverage of the proceedings of the school Parliament, reviews of current social and political issues and pupils' prize winning essays. Woburn School was designed to be the antithesis of Stonyhurst. Writing in the *Dublin Review*, Petre was clear on the highly sensitive subject of playing the spy, stating that "surveillance, however integral and important a part of a system of moral education, can be ranked as little more than a code of precautionary measures directed to the repression and punishment of evil. Surveillance of the boys was a conspiracy upon their liberties."[205] He was opposed to large schools where surveillance was mechanical, stringent, detailed and literal; inevitably impacting negatively on the psychological well-being of pupils. In his view, large Catholic schools were no more than *"boy-barracks"*[his italics].[206]

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[203] Vincent Alan McClelland, "*The Liberal Training of England's Catholic Youth":* William Joseph Petre (1847-93) and *Educational Reform. Victorian Studies, v. 15, no. 3 (*March, 1972):257-27.< http://www.jstor.org/Stable/382633> (accessed: 26 May, 2017).

[204] Ibid., 270.

[205] *The Dublin Review,* Vol. 31, Iss. 31 (July, 1878), 98-105. Wellesley attribution: Petre William J P; Ward, W.G.

Petre's educational experiment at Woburn school represented his theory of a liberal Catholic education in practice. In establishing a School Parliament at Woburn, he encouraged self-government, the resolution of grievances, debate and critical thinking about current affairs. This constituted the progressive idea of a strong sense of ownership of their education by the pupils at the school. Petre, however, did not surrender complete control of proceedings as he always assumed the role of Speaker of the House. The ethos of the school embraced "democracy, enhancement and personhood"; Petre conceived of children as "learners with rights of inclusion and participation . . . based on respect for them *as persons"* which is consistent with features of a progressive education influenced by Romanticism as expressed by David Halpin.[207] The uniqueness of self-government at Woburn was recognised by G. F. Stafford:

> Writing to the school from Balliol College, Oxford, in 1883, [he] was to claim "it is no empty boast when we say that there are few if any schools in England where the members of the school enjoy so much real freedom and independence, where authority is so highly respected and reverenced, and punishment reduced to such a minimum as it is at Woburn School .[208]

In his writings, Petre stresses the importance of the natural sciences, which were central to the Woburn curriculum. The classics were taught but, as he had argued previously, with an emphasis on classical literature. Pupils were encouraged to pursue their own taste in reading; essay writing was one means by which creative and imaginative abilities were developed. Educators, according to this theory and practice, needed to celebrate and nurture pupils' original thinking or not be an educator at all. Teachers as dispensers of knowledge were at a powerful advantage in the classroom where pupil passivity was part of that process; pupils' originality and creativity threatened traditional pedagogical practices. In effect, Petre placed the pupil at the centre of the learning experience, not the teacher. This progressive approach was at variance with the traditional, dominant role of teachers in the educative process which favoured the information transmission model. It also returned to the child-centred pedagogical ideas that had been promoted by the Romantics that have already been mentioned.

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[206] Ibid.

[207] David Halpin was not referring to William Petre but the description is wholly consistent with his educational philosophy and practices.

[208] Letter of G. F. Stafford, dated 6 November 1883, printed in *The Amoeba*, 30 November 1883, pp. 2-3: cited by Vincent McClelland, 273.

Petre's alternative, unorthodox approach to education attracted further criticism from traditionalists as Vincent McClelland notes:

> When Petre's criticisms became public, the Catholic papers and journals - and more especially the columns of *The Tablet* - were filled with letters from angry correspondents, many of them educated at Stonyhurst. But there were no letters from the members of the Catholic greater aristocracy in favour of the College. Petre was, naturally, much abused and he was himself to write later:
>
> 'Catholic education is a hornet's nest: I beg of you reflect before you meddle with the nest and infuriate the insects . . . I meddled with the nest; I infuriated the insects; I came by a sting or two.'

McClelland goes on to draw our attention to

> One of the most virulent attacks on him appeared anonymously in 1878 in a pamphlet entitled *The New Departure in Catholic Liberal Education.* In this it was stated that the best specimens which Petre's system of education could produce would be :
>
> 'Silly and impracticable dilettanti, destitute of the Englishman's strong idea of duty, full of strange fads and fancies, and taught to consider themselves geniuses because they found themselves incapable of any sustained or practical exertion.'[209]

Petre's educational philosophy, implemented at Woburn school, challenged the dominant, traditional practices in Catholic schools and colleges that served the children of middle-class and upper-class parents. Why did Woburn school close after seven years? In 1877 there were only eight pupils on roll; by 1882 the number had risen to 100. Rising pupil numbers would seem to indicate popularity among parents for the education offered at Woburn. However there were a combination of factors that led to the closure of the school.

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[209] Ibid., 265

Adverse publicity alienated sections of the Catholic aristocracy who did not want to be associated with criticism that had been levelled at Petre. There was a perception that pupils had too much freedom but that view took no account of the fact that the school was divided into Junior (8-11), Junior-Senior (12-15) and Senior (16+). Privileges were not the same across all year groups. Unsurprisingly, opposition from the Jesuits, lack of support from the Catholic Hierarchy, Petre's ill-health (he died prematurely aged forty six) and his father's unwillingness to provide additional financial support contributed to the closure of the school.

Petre was almost regarded as heretical for his ideas about education. He described traditional Catholic educational values as a "comfortable, self-satisfied, mediocre tradition."[210] In publishing his views, he circulated those ideas and generated public debate about the direction of Catholic education in Victorian England. Although he was a committed Roman Catholic, in educational matters he challenged what he regarded as the unwarranted deference to clerical control and the current status of Catholic education. In effect, he argued that as far as education was concerned ecclesiastical authority was not infallible and needed to be critiqued. The laity were invariably reluctant to question the clerical monopoly of views on education. Petre was calling for debates and discourse about education to be a fundamental part of an evolving participatory democracy in Victorian England. He encouraged Catholics to venture to suggest alternative theories and practices. Moreover, he was the only Catholic I have been able to locate who utilised the print media to "publish his opinions on any part of the topic of Catholic liberal education."[211] The rarity of his contributions indicates the unwillingness of Catholics to publicly air views that ran contrary to orthodox, clerical dominance in educational matters. Petre's progressive educational ideas and experimental school at Woburn had ultimately been met by a reaffirmation of Roman Catholicism's traditional position on education.

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[210] The Hon. Rev. William Petre , I. *The Position and Prospects of Catholic Liberal Education by The Organization of Existing Opportunities of Catholic Liberal Education. The relation between Catholic and Non-Catholic Education Ethically Considered.* (London: Burns and Oates, 1878), 5.

Whatever the differences between and within the Church of England, Methodism and Roman Catholicism respecting elementary education, all shared concerns about State intervention and the perceived threat of secular alternatives to religious provision. I shall now investigate the responses of these religions to legislative measures that would culminate in universal, compulsory elementary education.

Religion, Funding, Legislation and the State in Elementary Education

In George Eliot's *The Mill on The Floss*, there was only "a slight wind of controversy to break the calm" in religious matters:

> One aged person remembered how a rude multitude had been swayed when John Wesley preached in the cattle-market; but for a long while it had not been expected of preachers that they should shake the souls of men. An occasional burst of fervor in Dissenting pulpits on the subject of infant baptism was the only symptom of a zeal unsuited to sober times when men had done with change. Protestantism sat at ease, unmindful of schisms, careless of proselytism: Dissent was an inheritance along with a superior pew and a business connection; and Churchmanship only wondered contemptuously at Dissent as a foolish habit that clung greatly to families in the grocery and chandlering lines, though not incompatible with prosperous wholesale dealing. But with the Catholic Question had come a slight wind of controversy to break the calm: the elderly rector had become occasionally historical and argumentative; and Mr. Spray, the Independent minister, had begun to preach political sermons, in which he distinguished with much subtlety between his fervent belief in the right of the Catholics to the franchise and his fervent belief in their eternal perdition. Most of Mr. Spray's hearers, however, were incapable of following his subtleties, and many old-fashioned Dissenters were much pained by his "siding with the Catholics."[212]

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[211] Ibid., 7.

[212] George Eliot, *The Mill on the Floss* [*1860*], (London: *Wordsworth Classics,* 1993), 75.

In this fictionalised version of history, the early years of the nineteenth-century witnessed, as illustrated in the above quote, "Protestantism . . . at ease" and "careless of proselytism"; Dissent was characterised as almost benign, foolish and unthreatening to the Established Church. Catholicism, especially after the Emancipation Act (1829) was re-emerging as a potentially troublesome religion, but England was essentially enjoying "sober times when men had done with change." When Eliot wrote this text which was published in 1860, she was living at a time that contrasted markedly with her representation of an earlier period.

In the *Monthly Paper*, The National Society responded to Anglicanism's increasing concerns about the erosion of the voluntary, denominational principle in the provision of education of the poor.[213] The Church of England as the established church reasserted its position as "the recognised teacher of religion" arguing that "education for the people of a Christian country should be education uniform and undivided."[214] That position was reinforced by the contestable assertion that "we have a right to the exclusive education of those who belong to our Church."[215] Many Victorians, especially secularists and competing religious bodies, would have vehemently disagreed with that claim to dominance in educational matters. Anglicanism fought against the emergence of State intervention in education, and challenged the perceived and real threats from Catholicism and Nonconformism. The conservative position of The National Society was expressed unequivocally: "we are contemplating no innovation."[216]

In the *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, the earlier Government grants in 1833 to Church Societies were described as a watershed in the development of elementary education that recognised a "religious basis for popular education."[217] The exclusive claims of the Anglican Church to represent the State in schooling had thereby been rejected.

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[213] The *Monthly Paper*, Vol. 1, 1839, A7, A14.

[214] Ibid., A7.

[215] Ibid., A14.

[216] Ibid.

[217] The Wesleyan Methodist Magazine, Vol.15 (Dec. 1869): 1106-1112.

Wesleyan Methodists believed that educational grants would be "impartially administered" and that "State interference in education," as far as funding was concerned, was acceptable to the Methodists.[218] However, there was continued opposition from religious bodies to any unchecked State intervention in elementary education that might weaken the voluntary principle and the autonomy of denominational schools.

Sir James Graham's proposals for factory legislation (1843), included education clauses that acted as a catalyst for increasing tensions between Methodism and the State. Clause 67 of the proposal stipulated that non-conformist children should be taken to "some convenient place" for three hours of religious instruction each week.[219] Whereas children of Church of England parents would receive the latter "on as many days in the week, in a separate room, and while others are receiving secular instruction."[220] The United Committee of Wesleyan-Methodists wanted hours of secular education to be "common to all" and opposed any timetabling arrangements that would expose children of Methodists to proselytising influences in schools.[221]

The Committee were critical of the "unjustifiable invasion of civil rights, and . . . the rights of conscience" as it would be compulsory for females under twenty-one and males under eighteen to attend services on Sunday, Christmas Day and Good Friday. The Bill proposed financial support for Church schools whose masters would be appointed by Church of England Bishops; non-conformists were excluded from teaching positions. The Methodists were not only critical of the bias towards the Church of England but described the proposal as "a religious test set up as a qualification for civil employment." They claimed that Graham's Bill would "destroy all schools, chiefly or wholly erected by voluntary seal and liberality."[222] Methodism's critical reaction to State control of curriculum and teaching methods was illustrative of the tension between the voluntary principle and State intervention in elementary education that persisted throughout the nineteenth-century.

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[218] Ibid., 1109.
[219] Ibid., June 1843: 487-489, 487.
[220] Clause 67 of Sir James Graham's proposed factory legislation (1843).
[221] The *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, June 1843; 487 -489, 487. 488

Methodism regarded the Factory Bill as a strategy to reinforce the Establishment's dominance over religion and the elementary education of children in new factory schools, and therefore as a means of gaining political influence over children at an impressionable period of their development. Significantly, Wesleyan Methodists were, according to Lord Ashley, "fearful of popery in the Church of England."[223] While the *Watchman*, Methodism's first newspaper, reflected such sentiments, commenting that "if the Church of England were at present what it was even a few years ago, when it was regarded as the grand bulwark of Protestantism in this country, we should have less objection to such arrangements as these."[224]

The fear was that the "trustees of the Graham schools would be all too often a disciple of the Tractarian sect who would employ his energies in opposition to sound Protestantism."[225] The removal of the education clauses from Graham's Bill was a victory for Methodism and, crucially, strengthened the case for denominational schools.

Catholics were also drawn into the militant response of the Dissenters to Graham's proposals. As Edward Norman has argued

> The militancy of the Dissenters was really directed against the whole constitutional position of the State Church, and it was precisely this radicalism which appealed to Lucas, who used the *Tablet* to swing Catholic opinion behind the Dissenters campaign.[226]

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[222] Ibid.

[223] John T. Smith, *Methodism and Education:1849-1902* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 11.

[224] Ibid. This was the first Methodist newspaper led by Jebez Bunting and committed to promoting conservative views. This publication should not be confused with Samuel Taylor Coleridge's periodical of the same name.

[225] Ibid.

[226] Edward Norman, *The English Catholic Church in the Nineteenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1984), 192. Frederick Lucas was the founding editor of *The Tablet (*1840-1855). Lucas was born into a Quaker family, educated at Darlington's Friends School, then University College London. He converted to Catholicism in 1838.

In March 1843 the Catholic Earl of Arundel wrote an article supporting, with some reservations, Graham's Factory Bill which

> Required children to produce a certificate of school attendance before they could be employed. Where Catholic, or Dissenting schools already existed, these could grant the certificate. Where there were no schools, the Government was prepared to make a grant towards providing them.[227]

The Church of England would control all aspects of pedagogy in these schools, "and the Bible was to be taught in the Authorised version." [228] Arundel's article in support of the dominant role of the Church of England in administering a national education system generated a debate in the *Tablet* and was met with an incensed response from Lucas who dismissed the Earl's authority because "we believe Lord Surrey [i.e. the Earl of Arundel] to be utterly disqualified"

> By habits and education, to pronounce a rational opinion on what is and what is not consistent with the tenets and disciplines of our Church. Hundreds more believe it (i.e., that he was so disqualified) but are too cowardly to say it, and they will abuse us for daring to say it. Let them. We glory in their abuse.[229]

Lucas's views about denominational schools, a subject that featured prominently in the periodical press throughout the nineteenth-century, were published in the *Tablet*:

> For the Establishment out of its own funds to provide an Anglican education for its own members is right and just. For the state to supply funds out of the pockets of all sects for the religious education of all sects is right and just. But for the State to set up schools for the education of all people and to base those schools upon Anglican principles [is] an iniquity, to which Lord Surrey has consented, and against which we protest with all our might.[230]

In the 1840s, the *Tablet* was inextricably identified with Lucas's radical educational journalism. Edward Norman reports that in 1854, Lucas had an audience with Pope Pius X who said, according to Lucas's own account to his wife,"I am afraid the editor of the *Tablet* sometimes exceeds the bounds of patience and escapes from the kingdom of moderation into that of impatience."[231] Given his progressive opinions it is possible that Lucas received this admonition as a compliment.

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[227] Michael Walsh, *The Tablet* (London: The Tablet Publishing Company, 1990), 8.
[228] Ibid.
[229] Ibid.,*The Tablet,* 1843.
[230] Ibid.

In subsequent decades of the nineteenth-century religious and some general periodicals responded excitedly to seminal developments in elementary education legislation. The Revised Code (1862) instituted payment by results determined exclusively by pupil attainment in the three Rs. There was a predictable, critical reaction from the leading religious bodies. The Wesleyan Education Committee expressed its position on the proposed Code in a letter to Earl Granville, prominent Liberal politician and three times Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, dated 18 September 1861:

> The New Code, limiting the attainments by which money to the support of schools will be obtained from Government, must concentrate the attention and efforts, both of teachers and managers, mainly on what the standard requires -the attainments which are allowed a money value; and must prove a great temptation to regard as secondary, or to put out of sight altogether, the prime object of education, the intellectual and religious training of the rising generation [. . .] we are greatly surprised at these attainments being made the 'maximum' in inspected schools [. . .] in our judgement, the poor man's child deserves a better education than the new regulations will give.[232]

The Church of England was equally critical of legislation that it perceived as eroding the importance of religious instruction in schools due to the Code's focus on secular subjects. The *Monthly Paper* criticised the Code for punishing endowed schools by reducing Government grants by the amount of any endowment. There were important implications for the Church of England, given the increasing competition from school building programmes by other denominations. In effect, the Code was adversely affecting the Church of England's ability to expand its school provision and, crucially, reducing that religion's control over elementary education. The perennial problem of Government reducing annual endowments was described in the *Monthly Paper* as "the Great Hardship of the Minute of May 19th, 1863."[233]

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[231] See note 226, 12.
[232] See note 221, 39.

In 1864, a Welsh teacher wrote to the *Monthly Paper* expressing concern about the impact of the financial measures of the Code on staffing cuts:

> There were "63 children" (in his school): "3 under 6;" 12 evening scholars. [The] Grant was £34.8s.8d. Teacher certificated: £23 + £30 (from School committee) and average £16 (from children's pence); the first sum (£23) from Grant; remainder of £11.18s.8d. (Pupil-Teacher). Request to Committee of Council to make it up to £17.10s met with refusal- in effect "you shall not receive a farthing more" – "better dismiss him" (i.e. The Pupil-Teacher)- and he was. "Such has been the first fruits of the New Code in this school; and I have no doubt that ours is not a solitary case." [234]

In April, 1866, Thomas Blackall, St John's School, Middlesbrough, wrote to the *Monthly* about the 'Defects of the Revised Code.' The unequal distribution of financial aid depended on the regularity and length of attendance and varied by district. He remarked that "it obliges the teacher to give too large a proportion of his attention to the irregular and dull children, to the injury of those who are sharp and more regular in their attendance.[235]

In May, 1866, further criticisms were directed at the impact of the Code by the General Association of Church Teachers in England and Wales. According to this organisation, standards of education had been lowered; teaching was mechanical and less intellectually engaging. Moreover, the legislation was "detrimental to true education; though some improvement in the 3Rs may have been affected in the lower class." [236] The standard of teacher qualifications had been lowered; the best teachers were leaving the profession and the pupil-teacher system was broken.

The Association of Church Teachers recommended that "something must be done to induce persons of higher social position and education to enter the profession."[237] Significantly, periodicals were increasingly used as a platform to circulate ideas about the direction of elementary education in Victorian England, and thereby made an important contribution to the evolving discourse on that subject as well as to the recruitment of suitable teachers. The Association of Church Teachers argued that restricting school inspections to pupil attainment in the 3Rs meant that the broader intellectual and specific moral culture of the school was not inspected. These were considered to be the most important aspects of school life: the "most valuable work of a school."[238] Successive Governments were reluctant to create controversy by inspecting the relationship between religious instruction and moral development which, ironically, was considered by the State to be a prerequisite for good citizenship. Education, in the opinion of The Association of Church Teachers, was now about meeting bureaucratic, value for money priorities and not education as intellectual and moral development. Essentially, the Revised Code was being interpreted in terms of actually diminishing the importance of education as moral development, which successive Governments lauded as crucial for order and stability in society. Moreover, The Association of Church Teachers argued that teaching standards needed to be raised significantly; arguments were made for the reintroduction of teachers' pensions, and there were calls for the pupil-teacher system to be reinvigorated. Criticism was levelled at the school inspection regime because it did not examine all pupils; every pupils should be tested and the grant based on whether or not they passed at the required standard.

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[233] The *Monthly Paper,* Vol. 14, January, 1864, 9.

[234] Ibid.,14.

[235] The *Monthly Paper*, Vol. 14, April 1866, 86.

[236] Ibid., May 1868, Vol. 16, 119. Once again, the pejorative term "lower class" is commonly used.

[237] Ibid.

Catholic opinion, expressed in the *Rambler*, adopted an ecumenical rhetoric, arguing that the Revised Code should be rejected by "school managers of all creeds."[239] This periodical was highly critical of Robert Lowe, who was responsible for The Revised Code, "for jeering at educationalists, snubbing inspectors, depreciating managers, and insulting schoolmasters."[240] As far as the *Rambler* was concerned "the Code, then, may be accounted a failure."[241] But, as David Wardle observes, the measure endured until 1897, in spite of being "so comprehensively damned by contemporaries and by later historians."[242] There was a positive side to this condemnatory, consensus view among religious bodies about this highly contentious legislation. The discourse about elementary education became even more prominent in the periodical culture of Victorian England. Education, according to Bishop Ullathorne, was increasingly being recognised "by all thinking persons as the great question of the day." [243]

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[238] Ibid.

[239] *The Rambler,* Vol. 6. Mar. 1, 1862: 293-300, 293.

The proposed 1870 Education Act concentrated the minds of opposing religious preferences on the issue of compulsory elementary education.[244] That Act was described by the *Monthly Paper* as "aggressive upon the Church; and seriously modifies the character and curtails the privileges of Church Schools."[245] The *Monthly Paper* complained about the dearth of recognition by Government of the Church's contribution to education that ought to have been given "a more generous recognition [but] a watchful obedience [to the Act] was the duty of clergymen."[246]

The *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine* reported the views of The United Committee of Wesleyan Education on the Education Bill which was regarded positively in terms of establishing "a better system [than] our existing agencies, and to supply their deficiencies."[247] Essentially, this meant "filling up the gaps" in school provision by increasing the number of elementary schools for children from working-class backgrounds. Concerns were expressed about Clause Nine – known as the Conscience Clause - in rateaided schools where denominational formularies were excluded. The discontinuation of building grants was regarded as a “gross injustice”; especially, as part of the school inspection criteria was the standard of school buildings.[248] Moreover, the The United Committee of Wesleyan Education were sceptical of the compulsory education clause on the grounds that parents would resist compulsion.[249] Support was given by the Committee to the progress towards a national elementary system on condition that the Bill enshrined protection for Methodist schools and the continuation of denominational education. Methodism’s response was indicative of a view that significant progress was being made on recognising the importance of the education “ of pauper and neglected children in particular.”[250]

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[240] Ibid., 298.
[241] Ibid., 299.
[242] David Wardle, *English Popular Education: 1780-1975 (*Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 69.
[243] *The Rambler*, Vol.7 March 1857: 236-237.
[244] The primary purpose of the Act was to "fill up the gaps" by increasing the number of elementary schools which constituted further involvement by the State in that phase of education.
[245] *The Monthly Paper,* Vol. 18, 1870*,* 47.
[246] Ibid.
[247] *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine,* Vol. 16 (June 1870); 546-551, 548.

The Catholic hierarchy were consistently concerned about the secularisation of elementary education, and viewed the proposed Act as an anti-Catholic attack on denominational education. Catholic opinion published in the *Dublin Review* insisted on parental rights: “the liberties and the rights of the poor are equally sacred.”[251]According to views expressed in the *Dublin Review,* education divorced from religion is “no true religion at all:” which was a consistent stance taken by all religions in nineteenth-century England.[252] While there was no serious opposition to William Forster’s Elementary Education Bill from Anglicans and Catholics, equitable representation on School Boards was an important concern for the latter. There was opposition to any clauses in the Bill that would dilute, and thereby marginalise, Catholic elementary education. The Catholic hierarchy were concerned about the expansion of the State’s involvement in the elementary education of the nation. Their consistent position was an insistence on religious independence for the formation of character according to Roman Catholic teaching. However, different religious groups did not have the financial resources to bring about universal and compulsory elementary education for children aged 5-12. Therefore, I agree with Wardle's conclusion that "the forces which drove the government to undertake a direct measure of responsibility for education were clearly complex . . .The provision of mass education was too great a task for voluntary effort."[253]

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[248] Ibid.
[249] Ibid. Vol. 2 (Jan. 1846): 53-58.
[250] Ibid., 56.
[251] *The Dublin Review,* Vol.15, Iss 29 (July 1870): 122-155.
[252] Ibid.

This chapter has shown how religious periodicals contributed significantly and persistently to the on-going debates about elementary education in the Victorian period. Having investigated and reached conclusions about the importance of those publications, I concur with Joshua King and William McKelvy who "both reject traditional secularization narratives as inadequate for describing the vital role played by religion in nineteenth century culture [and] highlight the intersection of nineteenth century reading, religion, and the conceptions of nation . . . .[254] This view is also shared by Josef Altholz who argues that "these periodical organs provide the best means of entry into the minds and histories for whom they spoke. This fact is true for the religious press as for any other. Once the medium had been established, periodical publication became obligatory."[255]

Also in this chapter, I have examined the relationship, mediated primarily through religious periodicals, between competing religious preferences and the extension of elementary education for working-class and middle-class children from 1833-1880. Evidence from religious and secular periodicals suggests that the evolution of elementary education was hotly contested ground in nineteenth-century England. Most importantly, periodicals provided a new cultural space for educational reform as debates about elementary education shaped public opinion in Victorian England. In Joshua King's opinion, the leading religions, Anglicanism, Methodism and Roman Catholicism, took full advantage of the manner in which "printed texts dispersed through nineteenth century Britain, with a reach, speed, and delivery unmatched in any previous age ."[256] Opposing religious views on elementary education were, for the first time, circulating among a much wider and diverse reading audience which meant that educational issues featured prominently in the social, cultural and political spheres in nineteenth-century England.

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[253] See note 241, 174.

[254] Joshua King, *Imagined Spiritual Communities in Britain's Age of Print* (Columbus: The Ohio State University Press, 2015), 6. I recognise that this is, in part, a reiteration of an earlier quote but it seemed to me to be pertinent to include again at this point in the chapter in order to underscore the importance of the religious periodical press in socio-cultural developments in Victorian England.

[255] Josef L. Altholz, *The Religious Press in Britain, 1760-1900* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1989), 1.

Traditionalists among different religious bodies reaffirmed the dominant cultural feature of curricula commensurate with the learning needs of children from different social classes. In 1856, John George Wenham, Inspector of Catholic Schools in Southwark, described education as "an apprenticeship to goodness," echoing a generally held, traditional view that was designed to keep working-class children unaspirational for social mobility:

> I am for a plain, simple education. I hate this modern [approach to] teaching all sorts of things to our poor children instead of giving them an education suitable to their station. It makes them proud and conceited, and unfit for work; and the end of it will be, they will rise up and rebel, and we shall have a revolution. [257]

Middle-class children were much more likely to benefit from a diverse curriculum considered to be commensurate with their social class; although teaching methods nevertheless tended to be didactic. Monsignor William Joseph Petre, influenced by Romanticism's educational ideas from much earlier in the century, promoted progressive teaching methods that radically reasserted the centrality of the child in the educative process. Petre stressed the importance of intellectual enquiry, critical thinking and imagination. His emphasis on education as interiority and creating the conditions by which pupils had greater ownership of their learning anticipated the learner-centred approaches that developed more than a century later, from the 1980s in England. Petre's ideas and pedagogical practices were antithetical to Catholicism's orthodox position which prioritised the elementary education of the poor. Yet he was far more concerned with the education of the economically secure class which reflected his elitist approach. Traditionalism and clerical conservatism triumphed over his progressive ideas and practices which were considered inimical to a prevailing preference for a pragmatic and unaspirational approach to education.

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[256] See note 253, 2.

[257] The *Rambler* Vol. 6. Iss, 36 (Dec 1856): 434: 434-444. Wellesley attribution, Wenham, John George, 1820-1895.

According to Cardinal Vaughan, the education of the poor was "the problem of most pressing necessity for the welfare of the people."[258] The *Dublin Review,* and eventually the *Tablet,* became the leading periodicals of the Catholic hierarchy. Evidence from those print-mediated sources provide us with a much more detailed and comprehensive understanding of the indispensability of the relationship between what was promoted as a complete Catholic education and the development and attempted consolidation of that religion in Victorian England.

Further evidence from religious periodicals emphasises the position of the leading religions on the primacy of denominational schools in the face of secularisation. While State funding was welcomed, and necessary as voluntary contributions alone were insufficient to meet the increasing demands for new schools, religious bodies were determined to resist any erosion of their autonomy, resulting in on-going tensions between them and the State.

There was a reciprocal relationship between articles in religious and secular periodicals and the historical conditions in which they were produced, reproduced and read. Print-mediated interpretations and representations of the interaction of religion and elementary education extend our understanding of the complexities associated with traditional and progressive educational ideas and practices. Such literature reveals with greater clarity and depth a dominant cultural feature of curriculum that was based on the social class in which children were living. Religion provided both impetus and direction to education but the insistence on a limited curriculum for working-class children was a serious barrier to social mobility.

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[258] The *Dublin Review*, Vol.10. Iss.9 (Jan. 1868), 132.

Evidence from religious periodicals supports Dinah Birch's view that religion did not retreat in the face of secularisation but reasserted its importance in the expansion of elementary education in Victorian England.[259] Competing religious pedagogies did not dispute the persistent and pervasive view expressed by John More Capes of "popular education as the great fact of this epoch."[260] How competing religious preferences influenced the defining characteristics of elementary education beyond formal, institutionalised provision are investigated in the following chapter.

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[259] Dinah Birch, *Our Victorian Education*, (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2008), 43.
[260] The *Rambler,* Vol. 6, Aug. 1850: 91-109.

Chapter Three: Elementary Education Beyond the Schoolroom

In this chapter, I investigate the role of periodicals in promoting and facilitating elementary education beyond the schoolroom; specifically, I focus on home education among middle-class and working-class children. In doing so, I respond to the following research question: how important were domestic pedagogies as an alternative to formal, institutionalised elementary education?

The rationale for the selection of periodicals for this investigation was based on the different interpretations that they articulated on complex educational issues involving an interrelationship between home, childhood, parenthood, class and gender. I investigate those interpretations by comparing selected mainstream and minor publications intended for adult and child reading audiences. By using this approach, my thesis aims to extend existing research on home education and domestic pedagogies. As Christina de Bellaigue points out, "we still know relatively little about the history of education beyond the school walls" compared with the extensive scholarship on formal, institutional education.[1] de Bellaigue's view echoes a much earlier analysis by Brian Simon who comments that

> Histories of education are often concerned mainly with the organisation of schools and colleges and the ideas of reformers [. . .] The history of education is full of incident and interest, touching on all sides of life, on the outlook and interests of all classes of society [. . .] Those [are] aspects which are often neglected [. . .][2]

The research for this chapter includes an investigation into the content of the Stubbers, North Ockendon, country house, Victorian library that is held in the Russell Collection at the University of Essex's Albert Sloman Library. This private library contains a wide variety of published works on topics including farming, travel, plants, animals, history, topography, garden design and literature. The main period of publication covered is the mid eighteenth-century through to the early nineteenth-century, demonstrating the value that a country gentleman of the mid-Victorian period placed on the literature of a recent past.[3] Such a heterogeneous range of subjects provides a valuable insight into the accessibility of literature in the home and the reading habits of a Victorian family. Later in this chapter, I discuss the importance of the collection as a resource for children's home education in the Victorian period.

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[1] Christina de. Bellaigue et al., *Home Education 1750-1900*: *domestic pedagogies in England and Wales in historical perspective. Oxford Review of Education, Special Edition*, v. 41, Issue 4 (March, 2015), 421-548.
[2] Brian Simon, *The Two Nations & the Educational Structure, 1780-1870 (*London: Lawrence & Wishary, 1974),13.

Looking back to the eighteenth-century, William Cowper's antagonism, in *Tirocinium; or A Review of Schools,* towards education in the public sphere was consistent with a preference in the eighteenth-century for a private sphere alternative.[4] The possible psychological effects of being bullied at school may have contributed to Cowper's antipathy towards institutionalised education, equating the latter with vice and associating education in the home with virtue.[5] Sophia Woodley has identified a home educational process in the eighteenth- century "with its own discourse and culture. It remained the default choice for girls up until the end of the century and was a significant and widely accepted option for the education of boys."[6] The difference between an interactive taught home education and autodidactism will be clarified and explored in the course of what follows.

Periodicals and novels as indices of interest in home education

The *Quiver (1861-1926)*, edited and published by John Cassell, was an evangelical, moral, religious and intellectual periodical that promoted itself as being "charged with well-poised arrows, each fledged with a motto, to carry it home to some members of the family circle."[7] Education was one of its biggest concerns. The significance of the relationship between the home and social values was articulated in the first issue: "the home [sic] of a nation are the cradle and nursery of its social worth."[8]Home becomes an educative space for inculcating virtues: temperance, frugality, cleanliness, manners, growth of character and formation of habits. In *Great Expectations*, Charles Dickens describes a similar domestic context as living in "a Republic of Virtues."[9] The *Quiver* advocated lifelong learning as an authentically Victorian idea, rather than an exclusively more modern expression of a continuous education. As we will see, elementary education was an important part of that process.

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[3] It is important to bear in mind that many of the books in the library would have been distributed among family members and friends. There would have been more books from the nineteenth-century in the collection. However, what remains provides a valuable insight into the history of reading and book collection.

[4] William Cowper (1731-1800), poet, hymnologist and letter writer. He was vehemently opposed to public education and a passionate advocate of private (home) tuition. (ODNB, 2013: accessed on line: https://doi.org.10.1093/ref.odnb/6513).

[5] The poet made reference to being bullied in *Memoirs of the Early Life of William Cowper, Esq, 1816, Pub.* Edward Earle, T.H. Palmer, printer.

[6] Sophia Woodley, '*Oh miserable and Most Ruinous Measure'; The Debate between Private and Public Education in Britain, 1760-1800*, in *Educating the Child in Enlightenment Britain,* ed. Mary Hilton and Jill Shefrin (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing, 2009), 21.

Writing in the *Quarterly Review* in September 1842, John Stirling, poet and writer, complained that "it is hard in this state of things not to conceive that the time, among us at least is an essentially unpoetic one – one which, whatever may be worth of its feelings, finds no utterance for them in melodious words."[10]

More recently, Kerry McSweeney has argued that Elizabeth Barrett Browning's *Aurora Leigh* supplied "the fullest political representation of the early Victorian Age."[11] Education, specifically relating to autodicatism, was an important feature of Browning's depiction of contemporary life in that poem. Aurora Leigh's passion for books venerates the memory of her father who had begun her education at home prior to his death when she was thirteen, recalling the limits of taught knowledge and the centrality of autodidactism in the educative process. Aurora's love of learning contrasts strikingly with the character Becky Sharp who displayed her rejection of a taught education in William Makepeace Thackeray's *Vanity Fair*:

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[7] *The Quiver,* September 7, 1861: Prospectus (authored by John Cassell who was the first editor).

[8] Ibid., Editorial, 1.

[9] Charles Dickens, *Great Expectations* (1860/1861), (Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Classics, 2007), 234,

[10] *Quarterly Review*, September, 1842, 386. "Sterling, John (1806-1844), writer and poet,was born on 20 July at Kames Castle on the Isle of Bute, the son of Edward Sterling (1783-1847), journalist, and his wife Hester Coningham (1783-1843)." See Eric W. Nye, oxforddnd.com.< https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/26408>(accessed 31 July, 2019).

[11] Elizabeth Barrett Browning, *Aurora Leigh* (1856), ed. Kerry McSweeney (Oxford: Oxford University Press,2008,), xi.

> [. . .] Becky, Becky Sharp, here's a book for you that my sister – that is I – Johnson's Dixonary, you know; you mustn't leave us without that . . . But, lo! and just as the coach drove off, Miss Sharp put her pale face out of the window and actually flung the book into the garden.[12]

Becky notoriously preferred the education of 'life' experience, although friendships made in the classroom continue through her adult life. Aurora Leigh's education in the social isolation of her father's and then her spinster aunt's homes will be explored as a literary case study in this chapter with a view to examining the tension between traditional and progressive educational ideas and practices as they affected females in Victorian England.

As I have shown in previous chapters, education within and beyond the schoolroom can usefully be explored with reference to popular Victorian novels by Charles Dickens, George Eliot, and Charlotte Brontë, all of which, like Browning's *Aurora Leigh*, were multiply reviewed in the mainstream and minor periodical press. These authors contributed significantly to the discourse on tensions between public, private, traditional and progressive elementary education in Victorian England. Moreover, the periodicals in which their books were reviewed significantly widened the circulation of the views they espoused. In this chapter, I focus on Charlotte Brontë's contribution to debates about elementary education in the Victorian period with specific reference to the role of governesses in the educative process in the private sphere. Following my exploration of popular fiction, as an exceptional example of the influence of a combination of religious fundamentalism and conservatism on home education, Edmund Gosse's autobiographical *Father and Son: A Study of Two Temperaments*, provides a unique insight into a form of education that led Edmund to rebel. [13] Critic, author and poet, Gosse reflects on the extreme religious framework of his own early education in his family's mid-Victorian home. Additionally, a little referenced account, in Charles Dickens's handwriting on the importance of education - the influence of women in the home, which was authored by Angela Burdett-Coutts - provides views on female education which contrast strikingly with Harriet Martineau's position on the subject expressed in her book *Household Education*.[14][15]

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[12] William Makepeace Thackeray, *Vanity Fair* [*1848*], ed. *John Carey (*London: Penguin Publishing., 2003), 13-14.
[13] Edmund Gosse, *Father and Son: A Study of Two Temperaments* [*1907*] ed. James Hepburn (London: OUP, 1974).

The library at Stubbers, North Ockendon: reading in a Victorian country house library

'Education, like charity, should begin at home.'[16]

The Stubbers library, established by four generations of the Russell family, includes among its many books collections of poems by William Cowper and four volumes about education by Jean Jacques Rousseau, demonstrating how Enlightenment arguments about public and private education were still valued in the Victorian period. [17] While we can't be certain that the nineteenth-century occupants of the house read those books, they considered it appropriate to give them shelf room. I suggest their inclusion signifies more than just the family's desire to appear well-read. Illustrated texts on travel, plants, birds, gardens, history and geography were other educational resources available for the home education of the Russell children, many of them featuring lavish, coloured plates alongside explanatory text. Assuming they were given access to the library, the children's geographical knowledge would have been developed by works including a dramatic and excitingly written book on exploration: *A Naval Officer's illustrated account of The Honourable Commodore Byron's Voyage Round The World In His Majesty's Ship The*

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[14] Harriet Martineau, *Household Education* [1849], (Diderot Publishing ,2017).

[15] This two-page account (c.1856) was attributed incorrectly to Charles Dickens. The manuscript was in his handwriting but authored by Angela Burdett-Coutts whose own handwriting was considered almost illegible so Dickens transcribed the text with some amendments.

[16] *The Quiver*, June, 1863, 89.

[17] Stubbers Country House, North Ockendon, Essex, was owned by the Russell family who were landed gentry.

Dolphin.[18] Tales of England's naval history would likely have been enlivened by Lieutenant William Bligh's substantially illustrated version of *The Mutiny on Board His Majesty's Ship Bounty.*[19] Curtis's *Botanical Magazine* contained exquisitely detailed colour prints of plants that could be used as stimulating visual aids to teach children about botany.[20] The variety of texts suggests that the Russell parents were eclectic generalists who might cover a range of subjects with their children. In this domestic context, learning would have been an essentially social process in which conversation played an important part in stimulating children's imaginations and intellectual development.

As their library contained three volumes of Cowper's poetry, the Russell family would have been familiar with his poem *Tirocinium* and its satirical *Advertisement*:

> The history of the following production is briefly this: A lady, fond of blank verse, demanded a poem of that kind from the author, and gave him the SOFA for a subject. He obeyed; and having much leisure, connected another subject with it; and pursuing the train of thought to which his situation and turn of mind led him, brought forth at length, instead of the trifle which he at first intended, a serious affair a Volume.
>
> In the poem on the subject of Education, he would be very sorry to stand suspected of having aimed his censure at any particular school. His objections are such as naturally apply themselves to schools in general.[21]

In a letter to his friend the Rev. William Unwin, Cowper wrote: "you are in every respect qualified for the task of instructing your son, and preparing him for university."[22] The presumption here is that Unwin's son would go to university, and presumably Oxford or Cambridge as the only English universities until the University of London is opened in the 1820s. But Cowper is concerned with an earlier, elementary basis for that education. Given his well-documented hostility towards boarding schools, it is unsurprising that the domestic sphere for him provided a suitable opportunity for an academic education. His distrust of a public sphere dominated by the State was shared by families who regarded the home as the primary site for the education of girls in the eighteenth-century. Home education reasserted parental rights and liberties, emphasised meeting the individual educational needs of the child and confirmed a prevalent view that public education in eighteenth-century England was inadequate and in need of reform. As Sophie Woodley argues, home education "offered parents the opportunity to raise children within a society of their own creation – the family."[23] According to Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, the shortage of formal educational opportunities for girls in the public sphere, a trend that would be reversed in the Victorian period, meant that home education was inextricably associated with gender as well as social class.[24] The home provided a space for an educative process and framework concerned with forms of academic learning that were designed by parents, and invariably led by mothers.

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[18] *Voyage Round The World In His Majesty's Ship The Dolphin By an Officer on Board the said SHIP, MDCCLXVIII, Newberry and Carnan, London.*

[19] Lieutenant William Bligh, *A Narrative of the Mutiny on Board HIS MAJEST's SHIP Bounty,* MDCCXC, George Nicol, London.

[20] Curtis's *Botanical Magazine* or *Flower-Garden Displayed, Vol. XXVII,* Stubbers Library, Russell Collection, University of Essex.

[21] William Cowper, Poems in the Stubbers Library, Russell Collection, University of Essex.

[22] James King and, Charles Ryskamp, eds. *The Letters and Prose Writings of William Cowper*, 5 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press,1979), vol.2., 558.

Cowper's views on public education were shared by Thomas Sheridan, actor and educator, whose essay on the subject is included in a section of the Stubber's library on educational writings. Again, we see evidence of a Victorian interest in educational values put forward by eighteenth-century moralists. Sheridan's polemic on the state of education uses language that condemns "irreligion, immorality, and corruption [that] are visibly increased, and daily gather new strength [arguing that] the only way to bring about a reformation of manners, is to restore wisdom, and knowledge [that] can only be effected by a right system of education."[25]

Essentially, according to Sheridan, education did not sufficiently support religion, neglected the English language which had become standardised in the mid-eighteenth century and failed to equip learners with the knowledge and skills needed to pursue effectively their chosen occupations. Views such as this reinforced the conviction that a home education that privileged virtue was preferable to one in the public sphere associated with vice.

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[23] See note 6, 28.

[24] Leonore Davidoff and, Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class,* 1780-1850, (London: Hutchinson, 1987), 281. In chapters 1 and 2 of this thesis, I examine the development of public education in Victorian England with increasing opportunities for girls to attend schools. The professionalisation of teaching, inspection of schools and an increase in parental choices of establishments created a distinctly different educational landscape from the eighteenth-century that would impact on the home education of girls. This will be discussed subsequently in this chapter.

[25] Thomas Sheridan, A.M. *British Education Or, The Source of the Disorders of Great Britain* (London: R& J Dodsley, 1756), 4-5.

What was meant by 'home education' changed over time in the nineteenth-century so difficulties arise in defining the term. As Christina De Bellaigue argues, home schooling could be used to complement "scholastic routines."[26] In the eighteenth-century, private education, as distinct from the public sphere, was synonymous with education in the home but 'private' assumed a different meaning in the nineteenth-century. Furthermore, new terms emerged during the mid-nineteenth century: self-improvement, self-education and self-help that broadened interpretations of home education and, it could be argued, extended the conceptualisation of non-institutionalised elementary provision to include experiential learning.[27] Middle-class children could experience a range of elementary educational environments and influences that extended along a spectrum from formal, public education to informal and unstructured learning experiences. Given that current scholarship on home education and domestic pedagogies has tended to neglect periodicals as an important primary source for understanding elementary education, the following section will concentrate on an investigation of their role in that phase of education beyond the walls of the schoolroom. The lively circulation of the periodical press and its role in generating discussion makes such an enquiry necessary.

Themes and issues identified in subsequent reviews will be explored further through literary studies within the framework of the following periodicals: the *Quiver*, *Monthly Repository*, the *Athenaeum*, the *Eclectic Review, Household Words*, *Fraser's*

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[26] See note 1, 424.

[27] The term 'self-help' is usually associated with the influential text on the subject of the same name by Samuel Smiles which was published in 1859.

Magazine, the *Quarterly Review, Blackwoods,* the *Edinburgh Review*, the *Dublin Review*, the *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine,* the *Westminster Review* and the *Examiner.*

Periodicals: perspectives on home education in Victorian England in didactic periodicals*:* The *Quiver*

The first issue of the *Quiver* appeared on September 7, 1861. As Simon Nowell-Smith suggests, this seemingly minor periodical "was in fact Protestant, fundamentalist and for the family."[28] Its importance as a periodical intended primarily for the working-classes was drawn to the public's attention in the Sunday newspaper *Bells Weekly Messenger*:

> Mr John Cassell, whose exertions to elevate the condition of the working classes, by supplying them with wholesome mental food at a price within the means of all but the poorest of the poor, are universally known, has commenced the publication of the weekly serial, called the *Quiver* . . .

As an evangelical periodical, Cassell's publication received the approval of the Wesleyan Times:

> The design is to send forth [. . .] a series of shafts of truth – arrows from the Bible sent home to the mind of the reader [. . .] The work will be one of great interest and permanent instruction for the family circle [. . .] The writers are all persons of well-known ability, and the work is free from sectarian bias as the Word of God itself.[29]

The *Quiver* claimed that education in the home would be beneficial in that

> Some of the most perplexing of our social problems would thus be resolved at once. Crime would rapidly diminish; education would be easy; amusements would be safe . . . Our institutions would be strong, grace would flow from the nation's lips, and glory would dwell in our land.[30]

Education as a panacea for social ills had been a familiar, overly simplistic and unrealistic expectation at various times during the Victorian period. However, the significance of the *Quiver* was related to its intended audience - the working classes - and to the educative purposes of its content. It circulated conduct texts intended to develop parenting skills, scriptural explanation, religious texts for contemplation, reports on archaeological discoveries, fiction, chemistry, missionary news and essays about the origin of languages. Essentially, the periodical reflected Cassell's family-orientated editorial strategy that "each member of the household should have something to interest him."[31] However, the primary purpose of the periodical was the promotion of religious and moral values in the home.

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[28] Simon Nowell-Smith, *The House of Cassell:* 1848-1958 (London,: Cassell & Company Ltd., 1958), 59.

[29] The *Quiver,* September 7, 1861,1. These views were used as testimonials to support the publication.

[30] *The Quiver*, September14, 1861,14.

Understandably, given Cassell's membership of The National Temperance Society, the virtues of teetotalism featured in the publication.[32] A warning of the physical consequences of alcohol consumption was published in The *Quiver* in 1861: a mother addressed these words to her sixteen-year old son who was anxious to go to sea:

> Touch not the tempting cup, my boy,
> Touch not the sparkling wine;
> Trust not the pleasures of the bowl,
> The glories of the vine.
> The bloated face, the bloodshot eye,
> Shall tell to you the reason why.[33]

After joining the temperance movement in 1833, Cassell toured the country lecturing on the virtues of temperance. Another of his periodicals, the *Teetotal Times,* began in 1846 and subsequently he published the *Workingman's Friend* in 1850, which was similarly designed to educate the working-classes. Cassell was responsible for a flourishing of cheap, affordable periodicals. He was prominent in lobbying government to reduce taxation on paper and periodicals.

In the local press, the *Devonport and Plymouth Telegraph* articulated Cassell's contribution to the education of the working-classes, likewise emphasising the importance of affordability and, in this instance, of enlisting interest through the adult education institutions that were attracting aspirational working-class members:

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[31] Letter written by John Cassell to Thomas Dixon Galpin, 1864. Reproduced in Simon Nowell-Smith, *The House of Cassell:* 1848-1958, (London: Cassell & Company Ltd., 1958), 61.

[32] In 1862 the Cambridge meeting of the British Association heard that Cassell sold between 25,000,000 and 30,000,000 copies of his penny publications annually" (Richard Altick, *The English Common Reader* (Columbus Ohio: Ohio State University Press, 1998), 303.The *Quiver* (1861-1926); re-launched in 1864 as 'An Illustrated Magazine of Social, Intellectual and Religious Progress': a more liberal magazine than before, and including bold illustrations in black and white" (Simon Cooke, The *Quiver,*< http://www.Victorianweb.org.>).

[33] The *Quiver*, September 14, 1861, 39.

> No man has done more than Mr Cassell to raise the tone of our cheap periodical literature; nor has directed it in such various ways towards the elevation and improvement of the people [. . .] He has laboured in the cause of popular enlightenment side by side with the Mechanic's Institutions, People's Colleges, Reading Rooms, Mutual Improvement Societies, to which the larger sympathies and increased wants of the present age have given birth [. . .][34]

His contribution to working-class education is traceable to a number of publications designed as self-teaching aids. According to Jonathan Rose,

> [He] matched the Chambers' brothers' achievement with his *Popular Educator*, published in penny weekly parts from 1852 to 1854. Early labour politicians (Keir Hardie, Ramsay MacDonald, John Wilson, Robert Smillie) and countless other workingmen used it to teach themselves mathematics, science, English literature, modern languages, Greek and Latin. Cassell's students included two eminent proletarian lexicographers, Joseph Wright and James Murray, who respectively became editors of *The English Dialect Dictionary* and *The Oxford English Dictionary*.[35]

Rose concludes that "all the impressionistic evidence suggests that, fertilized by such publications, autodidact culture flourished in the years leading up to the First World War."[36] The *Quiver* was certainly part of a tradition of periodical literature promoting autodidactism directed specifically at parents who, heeding Cassell's advice, would subsequently educate their children. Richard Altick argues that the considerable circulation figures associated with Cassell's publications

> Was due both to a shrewd sense of popular taste and to the absolute blamelessness of the house's productions. Already associated in the popular mind with tea and temperance, the name Cassell on a penny part or a cheap fireside paper was sufficient guarantee of its fitness for the strictest household.[37]

On October 5, 1861, an unequivocal statement appeared in the *Quiver* committing to an "endeavour to produce a religious journal of a high standard of literary merit [. . .] among all denominations of evangelical Christians."[38] Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall argue that "the evangelical struggle for English hearts and minds was conducted not through the political meeting, the ballot box of the hustings, but through the sermon, the tract, the Sunday school, the auxiliary society and the philanthropic visit."[39]

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[34] Ibid. September 7, 1861, 1.

[35] Jonathan Rose, *The Intellectual Life of The British Working Classes* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2001),188-189.

[36] Ibid.

[37] Richard Altick, The *English Common Reader* (Chicago: University Press of Chicago Press, 1998), 304.

In addition to these strategies, I suggest that evangelical periodicals were particularly important in the "struggle for English hearts." The editors of the *Quiver* were convinced that "the press and the pulpit are kindred powers." [40] The circulation figures of Cassell's publications strengthen the argument for investigating a didactic periodical as an important source for extending our knowledge of home education, domestic pedagogies and, in particular, autodicatism in the Victorian period. The editors of the *Quiver* noted that "the money cost of education [. . .] has been steadily growing less since the invention of printing, and now the materials may be had for next to nothing [. . .] books, and instructive periodicals and newspapers are so cheap as to be within every one's means."[41]

Distribution networks for printed texts benefitted from the connectivity of urban and rural areas and their availability across the social-class spectrum. There had been an increase in subject-specific textbooks advertised in pedagogical periodicals that created further opportunities for self-education.[42] Autodidactism was a recurring theme in the *Quiver*: "I am speaking not about the kind of education to be derived from books. A resolute student may become his own schoolmaster."[43] Importantly, as a counterweight to much of the non-aspirational education of working-class children, reviews raised aspirations by drawing attention to inspirational role models such as Captain Cook (from Cabin Boy to

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[38] The *Quiver,* 5th October, 1861, 48.
[39] See note 24, 95.
[40] The *Quiver,* September 7, 1861, 11.
[41] The *Quiver,* 5th October, 1861, 65.
[42] In particular, the College of Preceptor's periodical, the *Educational Times* was noted for giving prominence to advertisements of that kind. I investigate this important specialist periodical in chapter 1 of the thesis.
[43] The *Quiver*, Iss.89. June 1863: 201-203.

Captain Explorer); Benjamin Franklin (a printer's apprentice); Lord Eldon (later Lord Chancellor), son of a coal merchant.

The periodical's commitment to promoting the importance of home education was given further expression in an article published in June, 1863:

> There is much, in our days, spoken and written on the subject of education; and rightly so, for there can scarcely be conceived a subject of greater importance than that of training the minds of youth, and imbuing them with useful knowledge calculated to make them, in after life, good and useful citizens and men.
>
> [. . .] the vast importance and usefulness of home culture and training has been comparatively overlooked. And yet how incalculable are the results of this, the earliest education that the infant receives. To make our purpose and meaning clear, we would assert that education, like charity, should begin at home; and that parents are really the most important instructors of children and cannot be too careful how they discharge the duties of their great and holy office.
>
> Good example then is the greatest and the best means, united with fervent prayer to God, for the primary education of the infant mind.[44]

According to those views, the moral and religious instruction of children, using the pedagogical resources of a Pictorial Bible, scriptural readings and interpretations published by the *Quiver,* was regarded as a parental responsibility. The article suggested that "good, plain books, illustrated, from the best library for children" should be used to meet children's intellectual needs.[45] In respect of home education, women were regarded as having the leading role in assuming pedagogical and maternal authority. Alan Richardson argues that "as teachers, educational theorists and writers for the young, British women had established a newly prominent social role by the beginning of the nineteenth century." [46] Among those women were Harriet Martineau whose influence extended transatlantically, and Angela Burdett-Coutts.

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[44] Ibid.

[45] Ibid.

[46] Alan Richardson, *Literature, Education, And Romanticism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 167.

Harriet Martineau: *Household Education* (1848)[47]

Harriet Martineau (1802-1876):

> Writer and journalist, was born in Norwich on June 12, 1802, the sixth of eight children of Thomas Martineau (1764-1826), cloth manufacturer descended from an old Huguenot family, and his wife, Elizabeth (1770/71-1848), the eldest daughter of Robert Rankin, a sugar refiner in Newcastle upon Tyne.[48]

Martineau was a "populariser of political economy" and is considered to be one of the first important British sociologists.[49] Her writings were published in numerous journals and newspapers. Importantly, for my thesis, she was a leading campaigner for improvements in girls' and women's education. *Household Education* appeared initially as a series of articles in a short-lived periodical, the *People's Journal*, in 1846. The completed version of her views on education and the domestic sphere was published in book form in 1848. Ruth Watts argues that Martineau in her "role . . . as a public educator in the light of her Unitarian upbringing and heritage remained true to the Unitarian emphasis on rational morality, thinking for oneself and questioning cherished assumptions even when she eschewed actual Unitarianism."[50]

Martineau's Unitarian education and background profoundly influenced her progressive views on domestic pedagogies and, in particular, female education. According to Martineau's didactic book, the purpose of education within the home was essentially intended

> For the improvement of the pupils within the context of a broad conceptualisation of household as a space in which every inmate [. . .] – children, servants, apprentices – must have a share of the family plan; or those who make it are despots, and those who are excluded are slaves.**[51]**

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[47] Harriet Martineau, *Household Education* [1849], (Diderot Publishing ,2017).

[48] Martineau, Harriet (1802-1876), R.K.Webb, Dictionary of National Biography, September, 2004. <https://www.doi.org/10.1093/ref.odnb/18228>, 1.

[49] The Martineau Society, <https:// www. martineausociety.co.uk>(accessed August 1, 2019): 1.

[50] Ruth Watts, *Harriet Martineau and the Unitarian tradition in education, Oxford Review of Education*, v. 37, no. 5, (January, 2011). <https://doi:.org. 10.1080/0305985.2011.621682> (accessed August 1-2019): 637.

[51] See note 49, 5.

Home education is conceived as an essentially social process within an inclusive, arguably democratic, domestic framework. Self-improvement is a recurring theme in Martineau's writing with a strong emphasis on *laissez-faire* as a term, in this context, used to differentiate a free-ranging private from a nationally determined public education. Coincidentally, Utilitarian and classical libertarian philosopher John Stuart Mill's *Principles of Political Economy* was published in the same year as *Household Education*. Mill argues that "government must claim no monopoly for its education [. . .] It is not endurable that a government should, either *de jure* or *de facto,* have a complete control over the education of the people."[52] Martineau believed that home education offered individuals and families in Victorian society opportunities to assume greater responsibility for the direction of their lives and, consequently, reinforce the centrality of the voluntary principle consistent with Mill's position.

Martineau recognised the need for a definition of a contested term: 'education as improvement.' In her view, education must "bring out, and strengthen, and exercise all the powers [that have been] given to every human being." The core attributes of such an education are "wisdom and goodness" with Christ situated as the exemplar.[53] The recurring nineteenth-century theme of the moral and religious underpinning of education surfaces in her views on education in the home which were consistent with those expressed in the *Quiver* and denominational periodicals investigated in the previous chapter of this thesis. *Household Education* as an instructional text directed at parents accentuates virtues: "Truthfulness, Integrity, Courage, Purity, Industry, Benevolence, and a spirit of Reverence for sacred things are inexpressibly desirable and excellent."[54]

Gaby Weiner points out that while "the book was deeply rooted in contemporary cultural concerns, it was also challenging and subversive regarding nineteenth-century bourgeois ideals."[55] In particular, Martineau questioned the dominance of patriarchal knowledge in the home: "but every wise parent has occasion to say, now and then, - "I do not know, my dear."[56] She claims an authoritative voice on the subject of education in the home when stating: "I propose to say, in a series of chapters, what I have observed and thought on the subject of Life at Home, during upwards of twenty years' study of domestic life in great variety." [57] Significantly, she addresses her thoughts on education in the home to all classes in Victorian society, argues for equal educational opportunities for females and males, stresses the importance of an intellectual and vocational education and regards elementary education as the foundation for lifelong learning.

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[52] John Stuart Mill, *Principles of Political Economy*(1848) ed. William James Ashley (London: Longman, Green & Co., 1920), 956.
[53] See note 47, 14.
[54] Ibid., 23.

For Martineau, education that nurtured the child needed to be rooted in love and not fear. This emphasis on the importance of love and nurturing might have been influenced by her early years experiences within the home:

> [Her]childhood was, according to her own account, a difficult one, marked by digestive and other physical disorders and more than usual fears and isolation. She admits in her autobiography to having been a difficult child: the degree of blame she places on her mother for her unhappiness may have been unfair, but her younger brother, James Martineau (1805-1900), also noted (in his autobiographical memoranda) Elizabeth's [her mother] reserved and formidable aspect.[58]

Her progressive educational ideas rejected rote learning, corporal punishment and advocated directing the will of the child through "sweet incitements and holy supports."[59] Mothers are the key to modeling desired behaviours that, hopefully, will be emulated by their children. The power of this use of example in education as upbringing represents what Alan Richardson refers to as a "gain in cultural authority" by women "by the beginning of the nineteenth century."[60]

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[55] Gaby Weiner, *Harriet Martineau on Education* (paper presented at Birmingham University, 18 October,2004), 8.
[56] See note 49, 2.
[57] See note 14, 5.
[58] See note 50, 1.
[59] Ibid., 44.

Social inclusivity is a recurring theme throughout the text: "every member of the family above the yearling infant must be a member of the domestic school of mutual instruction, and must know that he is so."[61] Martineau draws attention to "home trained intellects [that] are out of all proportion more numerous than school-trained."[62] Published in 1848, her book reflects the slow growth of accessibility to formal schooling among working-class children. She identifies the preponderance of home education for middle-class and upper-class girls and the limited choices of public schools that she considered to be "risks to both morals and intellect."[63] Martineau deduces that school is an institution governed by formal rules, while home is a space governed by familial love. One advantage of the latter is the moral advantage of an education that is uncontaminated by social experiences of "undesirable" behaviours that could be expected in public schools. The implication of this critical position was that progressive education in the home could be directed at meeting the child's individual needs whereas schools did not consider, in her view, "any particular child."[64]

Martineau's views on education indicate an emerging understanding of child development. She argues that in the early stages of learning "intellectual education lies in varied amusement, without express teaching" and that the development of the "perceptive faculties come first."[65] However, *Household Education* was far from being exclusively a theoretical text on education. Practical pedagogical strategies are suggested; specifically, developing conceptualization through questioning by the child, drawing, and fiction to stimulate the child's imagination. Intellectual stimulation should be encouraged through enquiry, reading, questioning and dreaming which was the antithesis of traditional, fact grubbing and rote learning methods. Martineau was, in effect, arguing for the home as the most effective setting for early years education, which is understandable given her criticism of infant schools as inadequate. Early years education in the home was, for her, a preparatory stage leading to transition to school: a connection between the private sphere (home) and the public sphere (school).

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[60] See note 46, 167.
[61] See note 47, 5.
[62] Harriet Martineau, *Household Education* [1849], (Diderot Publishing ,2017). 96.
[63] Ibid.
[64] Ibid.
[65] Ibid., 101.

According to Martineau "every girl's faculties should be made the most of, as carefully as boys (and) every woman ought to be fitted to take care of herself."[66] At the young person stage, she stresses the importance of reasoning, imagination and reflection in association with moral powers: in effect, a unified system of educational development. Equally important were habits of belief associated with obedience and personal standards; modesty, decency and appropriate behaviours within the family. Martineau was in effect emphasizing the individual's ownership of learning when, towards the end of her treatise, she says "young people must win their own experience."[67]

Contemporary reviews of *Household Education* acknowledged the importance of Martineau's book as revealed in the *Athenaeum* in 1849:

> A portion of essays which compose this work have already been published in the earlier numbers of *The People's Journal.* But the entire series is to be recommended rather than criticized, since Miss Martineau honestly announces the book to be merely a contribution on a subject "so inexhaustible in itself, that I do not see," she continues "how any person whatever can undertake to lecture upon it authoritatively as if it were a matter completely known and entirely settled." Here will be found traces of her well-known aspirations after perfection and progress.[68]

The *American Whig Review* praised the liberality, candidness and fairness of her treatise:

> She destroys nothing without supplying its place with something better; and a book on education has rarely appeared, combining more interesting illustration with real practical utility. [69]

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[66] Ibid., 121.
[67] Ibid., 157.
[68] The *Athenaeum*, Jan. 27, 1849, 89-89.
[69] The *American Whig Review,* June, 1849, 9.18, 618.

> If from her particular position in society she gives in many cases a one-sided view, she is on the other hand careful to present her own opinions without violently or illiberally attacking those of other people; and we are irresistibly led to follow a train of reasoning in which we perceive an earnestness of purpose that will inevitably reach at a truth in some form.[70]

Martineau's radical feminization of educational theories and practices as expressed in *Household Education* reveals a specific agenda: progressive pedagogical methods associated with child-centered learning, equal educational opportunities for females and males, elementary education as the foundation for lifelong learning, the pivotal role of women in education in the home and higher education options for women who wish to pursue occupations and careers. In particular, her subversive and progressive position on education, influenced by Unitarian education and background, challenged the dominant conservative views on female education that prevailed in the mid-nineteenth century. While Martineau was celebrated in Victorian society for her expertise on such subjects as law, political economy and education, Angela Burdett-Coutts was known primarily for her philanthropy. However, both women shared a commitment to promoting the importance of women's influence on education in the home. In the following section, a mystery is solved, and Burdett-Coutts's affinity with Martineau is revealed.

'Women In The Home: An article which Dickens did *not* write.' [71]

While conducting research for my thesis at The Charles Dickens Museum in London, a curator, Frankie Kubicki, drew my attention to a two page untitled manuscript (c.1856) in Dickens's handwriting on the subject of education: the influence of women in the home.

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[70] Ibid., 605.

[71] Keith J. Fielding, 'Women in the Home: an article which Dickens did not write,' The *Dickensian* v.47, (January 1, 1951) <https://www.onlinelibrary.london.ac.uk>

The assumption was that Dickens had also authored the manuscript. My subsequent research showed that the text was rarely, if at all, referenced in secondary sources. Following correspondence with Dickens specialist Michael Slater on the authorship of the manuscript, I was directed by him to Keith J. Fielding's article on the subject. Fielding showed that the manuscript was in fact "part of a preface written by Miss Burdett-Coutts, and revised by Dickens, to a little book that she prepared and published, called *A Summary Account of Prizes for Common Things Offered and Awarded By Miss Burdett-Coutts at the Whitelands Training Institution."*[72]

An anonymous author wrote that "systematic attempts were made by the Baroness to diffuse a knowledge of what are called "Common Things." At Whitelands for many years she gave prizes for papers on such subjects as "Household Work," "Needle Work," "Country Matters," "Thrift" and "Household Management.""[73] Burdett-Coutts encouraged teachers to impart domestic and practical knowledge to working-class children through their direct example on pupil-teachers and subsequently on the children themselves.[74] Burdett-Coutts situated education, and the need for direct example in the home, in its contemporary context:

> At no point in the history of England since the Reformation began its vast changes in the condition of the people, has the question of Education in its bearings on their future habits, assumed so important an aspect as at the present times.
>
> Education [was] among a variety of causes which combine to render the subject of the greatest moment, especially in connexion with Female Training.[75]

Burdett-Coutts criticizes changes in society that she considered had encouraged poor budgeting skills: "extravagant, thoughtless and selfish expenditure, a very poor and bad acknowledgement is rendered for the possession of blessings that should be the source of true thankfulness giving birth to a higher and stronger desire, strenuously to discharge the duties of life.”[76]

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[72] Ibid.

[73] Anonymous, *Baroness Burdett-Coutts: A Sketch of Her Public Life and Work* (1893/2013), Cambridge Library Collection, 44.

[74] Edna Healey,Angela Georgina Burdett -Coutts -, *suo jure* Baroness Burdett-Coutts (1814-1906), philanthropist. The youngest of six children of Sir Francis Burdett (1770-1844), politician, and his wife Sophia (d.1844), the youngest daughter of Thomas Coutts (1735-1822), banker, and his first wife, Susannah Starkey (d.1815). ODNB, 23 September 2004, https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/32175,1.

[75] Angela Burdett-Coutts, *Women in the Home, c. 1856, 1.*

In her view, women should play a pivotal role by ensuring that they model ‘the duties of life’ in the home for the benefit of those around them, including the next generation of women: “the women of a family [have] a quiet but mighty influence.”[77]For Burdett-Coutts, education in the home was essentially concerned with the formation of children’s character and the development of girls’ skills in household management. Ensuring results that were driven by middle-class values such as Burdett-Coutt’s own depended on a chain of pedagogical praxis set by teachers and pupil-teachers and passed on to mothers as the principal educators in the home. A key concern was with an education based on orderly habits and virtues that would be esteemed by employers across a range of professions, from service in the home to office work. Elementary education was part of a process leading to responsible careers, useful occupations and ultimately good citizenship. Though she was essentially conservative in her views about what children should be taught, marking her as different from the more radical Martineau, the pivotal role of women in the educative process in the home was a principal both women shared.

Published in 1839, *The Mother the Best Governess* was an instructional text that advised mothers about choosing and managing governesses but classed mothers as ‘the best governesses’ whose status was above the employed governess.[78] Again, the emphasis here is on the role of mothers as educators not only of their offspring but also of governesses as teachers of their children within the private sphere. I shall now investigate representations of Victorian governesses in print-mediated sources.

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[76] Ibid.

[77] Ibid.

[78] R.T & Mother, *The Mother the Best Governess*. A Practical System For The Education of Young Ladies [London, 1839]. British Library. Shelfmark: 722. C.42.

Print-mediated representations of Victorian governesses

On June 10, 1843 an article in the *Penny Satirist* depicted governesses as victims treated "illiberally by a liberal society:"

> I know not what planet ruled in full malignity when the invention of the Governess took place, an invention purely diabolical. The private governess is an innovation in society, belonging to no class or station, identifying herself with no human creature, being without the pale of public or private sympathies, a something beyond our humanity, an excrescence growing on what she belong to, an anomaly above and beyond those around her . . . She has no opinions, no judgement, no flights of thoughts; she wastes her youth away . . . She hates her occupation, for it is thankless . . . She endures and murmurs. The world rushes on, improvement seizes everything, but she stands still . . . She is ever at the threshold with the children (of the better classes of the herd) who keep her there.[79]

This satirical description captures the extent to which Victorian governesses were a vulnerable and derided class of women. This recurring theme of exploitation, which was common knowledge before the Victorian period, had previously appeared in an article in the *John Bull* newspaper on January 7, 1843:[80]

> *The Times* of yesterday has the following: no subject of a personal and private nature shall be unnecessarily or recklessly introduced into his pages. But there are cases, where, by a rigid adherence to this rule, he (a public journalist in England) would betray the trust reposed in him, and by his silence foster those social plagues which it is his peculiar province to expose, and, by exposing, to destroy . . . It appears that a brutal debauchee . . . has at length resorted to the scheme of replying to the advertisements inserted by governesses who are in want of situations. Our correspondents inform us that the fellow has succeeded in introducing himself to many ladies, under the pretence of engaging them as governesses in his family; but that timely caution which has been given to them, and the enquiries which have been made, effectually foiled his purpose. We know this fellow's address, and If he does not abandon his disgusting machinations against unprotected virtue, we will at our own risk unmask him to the world.

John Bull's reference to *The Times* illustrates the extent to which periodicals engaged in conversation with one another, in this case about sexual exploitation of women working, or aiming to work in home education. Readers are included in that conversation by virtue of their consumption of the publication in question.

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[79] The *Penny Satirist*, June 10, 1843, British Library, Shelfmark: DX1901080791.

[80] In Jane Austen's *Emma*, there is the famous passage on the governess trade. Also, in *Pride and Prejudice* there is the case of Charlotte, who marries Mr. Collins because the alternative – being a governess or a homebound spinster – is a worse fate.

Text accompanying a book illustration in *The Governess; or, the Missing Pencilcase* conveys a different, idealised version of the role of a Victorian governess: "her charge consisted of three children, all under the age of twelve. She found them docile and obedient; so that she experienced the labour of teaching them to be a delightful task."[81]

Fictional representations of governesses as educators of girls and boys in upper-class families and wealthier sections of the middle-classes were common in nineteenth-century literature. As Dinah Birch suggests, there were different categories of governesses, far removed from the idealised depiction above:

> Predatory governesses on the make, like Thackeray's Becky Sharpe in *Vanity Fair* (1848), or Mary Braddon's murderous Lucy Graham in *Lady Audley's Secret* (1862). Occasionally fiction throws up spectacularly malevolent women teachers, like the evil French governess Madame de la Rougierre in Sheridan Le Fanu's *Uncle Silas* (1864), with her 'bleached and sallow skin, her hollow jaws . . . a steady cunning eye, and a stern smile.'[82]

She goes on to argue that

> Not every female teacher or governess saw her work as an oppressive fate brought about by unforeseen disaster in the family, to be avoided if possible, or to be fled at the earliest opportunity. Recent research has shown that large numbers of women consciously chose to prepare themselves for teaching, and significant numbers recorded that they had turned down offers of marriage because of their commitment to working as teachers.[83]

On January 1 1844, Punch *or The London Charival* perpetuated a contemporary view in a fictional letter, composed by the publication's official 'complete letter-writer,' that suggests it was most certainly misfortune or 'unforeseen disaster' that led women to apply for employment as governesses:

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[81] Rev. J.T. Barr, *The Governess; or, the Missing Pencilcase (*London: S.W. Partridge & Co. 1863), 6. The British Library has incorrectly suggested that the book was published c. 1875.

[82] Dinah Birch, *Our Victorian Education*, (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2008), 82.

[83] Ibid.

FROM A YOUNG LADY DESIROUS OF AN ENGAGEMENT AS FAMILY GOVERNESS

MADAM,

> It is, indeed, true that the sudden and total wreck of my father's fortune, renders it necessary for me to earn my own bread; and, unhappily, not mine alone. Your letter, kind madam, came like as sunbeam upon our darkened dwelling. Now, indeed, do I feel grateful – past expression - for the few attainments I possess, for they will enable me to bear with cheerfulness the change prepared for me. They will raise me above the indifference and contempt of the world; and whilst they supply me with the means of honourable existence – and what, indeed, so honourable, so truly lofty, as a life dedicated to the mind of childhood? – they may haply not be deemed wholly useless to others.[84]

According to this satirical letter, being raised 'above the indifference and contempt of the world' was clearly a forlorn and unrealistic hope in pursuit of maintaining her class status. The fictional 'young lady' in *Punch* was in fact representative of the position of many middle-class women in Victorian society as Arlene Young points out:

> At the beginning of the Victorian period, to be a middle-class woman was to be dependent – a daughter, a sister, a wife, a mother. A middle-class woman who had no father, brother, or husband to provide her a home was unfortunate, a castaway doomed to eke out a subsistence working in the household of strangers as a governess or companion.[85]

Punch's 'complete letter-writer' created two characters, The Hon. Mrs Dorothea Flint and Lady Honoria Asphalt, who exchange correspondence on the choice and management of governesses. Mrs Flint assumes the role of expert on the latter subject: "firmness, dear madam, firmness is essential – young governesses are as difficult to break as horses; but it is to be done . . . Now I have never engaged unless she had acquired French, German and Italian . . . "[86]

Clearly, Honoria fails to 'break' her governess, Miss Sinclair, who leaves her employment

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[84] *Punch or The London Charival,* January 1, 1844, 165.

[85] Arlene Young, *From Spinster to Career Woman: Middle-Class Women and Work in Victorian England (*Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2019), 3.

[86] See note 84.

> In the most shameful and ungrateful manner . . . Although I have been but a day unprovided, I feel worn to death by the children. What's worse – but then she is only a child – Emmeline has been crying all day about the creature, and moreover says she loves her. The principles she might have instilled into that dear babe's mind I shudder to think of! However, we are happily rid of her. If you can recommend a really useful, well-behaved person – you know the kind of individual I want - you will confer a favour on me.[87]

In this satirical representation of despairing motherhood, the mother is far from being the best governess. She is, instead, depicted as incapable of effectively parenting her own children. As Kathryn Hughes argues, the governess was a surrogate mother who experienced social, psychological and emotional tensions within a domestic framework in which she was neither a servant nor equal in status with her employers.[88] The fictional governess depicted by *Punch's* 'complete letter-writer' feared the erosion of her social status. According to Hughes, anxiety about class status was one factor that led middle-class women to choose the role of governess. Importantly, for my thesis, that role was primarily concerned with the moral and intellectual education of children within the home that offered a private alternative to education in the public sphere.

Governesses: home educators

According to Mary Hilton and Jill Shefrin, "because the study of . . . domestic education is heavily dependent on manuscript sources, it is necessary to study the gentry and aristocracy to get at women's ideas and pedagogies."[89] I argue that periodicals provide additional perspectives on domestic education that supplement a reliance exclusively on 'manuscript sources' and, thereby, extend our understanding of education in the private sphere. Importantly, as I have shown previously in discussing the contribution of the

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[87] See note 84, 149.

[88] Kathryn Hughes, *The Victorian Governess,* (London: Hambledon Press, 1993).

[89] Mary Hilton and Jill Shefrin, *Educating the Child in Enlightenment* Britain (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing, 2009), 9.

Quiver to the home education of the working-classes, periodicals can take forward our knowledge of domestic pedagogies among people who were neither gentry nor aristocracy. As Alan Richardson argues, "education is particularly promising [as] a conceptual space where politics, social history, ideology and literary representations of all kinds meet, interpenetrate, and collide."[90] That 'conceptual space' was penetrated, enriched and expanded by reviews and 'literary representations' as I show in the following examination of the educative role of governesses.

In February 1861, *Fraser's Magazine For Town and Country* published an autobiographical account, *My Last Governess*, in which the following advertisement appeared:

> The wife of a clergyman is desirous of recommending, as a governess in a gentleman's family, a young lady who has for some years had the education of her own children. She is admirably qualified to give instruction in music and drawing, and would teach French and Italian if required.[91]

While governesses were expected to teach reading, writing and arithmetic to the youngest in a family, an ability to offer a variety of subjects as indicated in the above advertisement meant she could also educate older teens. As Hughes points out, governesses could be expected to instruct the latter in "key 'accomplishments' such as drawing, playing piano, dancing and deportment . . . all designed to attract an eligible suitor in a very crowded marriage market."[92] Hilton and Shefrin argue that this breadth of subjects shows that "numbers of elite and middling girls acquired broad and intellectually sophisticated educations at home throughout the early modern period."[93] Problems arise in evidencing the effectiveness of this 'broad' curriculum provision within the home. However, *My Last Governess* provides an insight into the learning outcomes for the girls of one family:

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[90] Alan Richardson, *Literature, Education and Romanticism: Reading as Social Practice,* 1780-1830 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 2.

[91] *Fraser's Magazine For Town and Country*, 1830-1869; Feb 1861; 63, 374; 235.

[92] Kathryn Hughes, *The figure of the governess,* British Library: <http:/www/bl.uk./ 15 May, 2014> (accessed, November, 2018,)1.

[93] See note 88, 10.

> She was, I am bound to confess, an admirable instructress. My girls improved wonderfully under her tuition. It was not only that they played and drew better than before, but their taste and feeling for art were educated and improved by her to an extent which I regarded with almost as much surprise as pleasure.[94]

This governess's employer was assiduous in ascertaining some of her competencies at the interview stage as the following shows:

> Will you kindly play your minor scales? I asked; I should be more satisfied with those. She played them through with exquisite smoothness and precision.
>
> If you would indulge me with a few bars of this, I said, placing before her an andante of Beethoven. She complied readily. The first few notes were sufficient to assure me of her skill as a musician . . .
>
> I have one more request to make, Miss Morton. It may seem a strange one; but will you read aloud to me a page out of this book – it is in English.
>
> She took up the book with perfect *sang froid,* and read with good pronunciation and considerable expression the passage to which I pointed. It is a lamentable fact that few English girls can read or write. I had always determined that mine should do both, and chosen their teachers accordingly.[95]

Contrasting experiences of the role of the governess appeared in *Household Words* on May 7, 1859.[96] This aspiring day-governess placed an advertisement which was

> Inserted conspicuously after "Required a Family's Washing" – I suppose washing is a higher art than teaching. Mine stated that a lady of good education and manners, would be happy to devote several hours a day to the cultivation and improvement of others.
>
> A widow next replied to my advertisement. She wished me to take charge of two little girls, aged respectively ten and twelve. She scarcely inquired from me my qualifications for the office of teacher.[97]

There was an expectation that the governess should not only be responsible for the intellectual and moral training of these children as a private governess but also "attending to their clothing; for managing the house and servants, and economising tradesmen's bills;

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[94] See note 90, 237.

[95] Ibid., 235-236.

[96] *Only* A Governess in *Household Words*, conducted by Charles Dickens, May 7, 1859; 19, 476, 546.

[97] Harriet Martineau differentiates between "four orders of female teachers: schoolmistresses, private governesses, daily-governesses, and teachers of music, drawing, dancing and other arts:" *The Governess in Harriet Once a Week;* Sep 1, 1860.

for, in short, relieving this erratic widow of every responsibility as a mother and mistress, I was offered the sum of ten pounds a-year and my board."[98]

The offer was declined. Interestingly, replies to the advertisement provide different perspectives on the various roles of the governess: reading to the elderly, a lady's companion and teacher of adults. In all cases, a derisory remuneration was offered. The review concluded that the governesses has

> Feelings like the rest of humanity: why, then, should those feelings be so carelessly outraged as they often are, and that she feel that she is a being quite apart from the rest of the world – a kind of Pariah? Why should she be so often spoken of contemptuously as "only a Governess." [99]

'Only a Governess' was not only suggestive of low or indeterminate status but also of a misleading view of women as sub-standard educators. Christina de Bellaigue argues that "a closer examination of the work of middle-class schoolmistresses in the first part of the nineteenth-century reveals that the image of the amateurish governess was in part a fiction, which concealed the commitment and expertise of many women teachers."[100]

As I go on to show, the status of governesses, and their pedagogical knowledge and skills as home educators were enhanced when teaching as a profession for women developed from the mid-nineteenth century onwards.

Teaching: towards a learned profession

An article "*On The Social Position of Governesses*" appeared in *Fraser's Magazine* in April 1848:

> Education is a great cause. The public think so; they talk of it, at least, as such! The progress of society permits no one now to *say*, whatever he may *think,* that ours is a

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[98] See note 95, 546.

[99] Ibid., 549.

[100] Christina de Bellaigue, "The development of teaching as a profession for women before 1870. "*Historical Journal,* v.44, Issue 4 (2002), 963-998; 963.

> degrading occupation. We have essays on education, essays on educators; how the tone of the one and the character of the other may be raised. Can the tone of education, or the character of educators, be raised while society continues to offer to the members of this profession for their services – the wages and social position of a domestic, and for their distresses and old age – the provision of a pauper.[101]

The above quotation illustrates the rhetoric of a new discourse on the status of governesses and women teachers as professionals. As far as de Bellaigue is concerned, professionalism by the nineteenth-century was associated with an aspiration to "prestige, the ideals of autonomy and independence, and the intellectual clout associated with the learned professions."[102]

The College of Preceptors or Society of Teachers established a Ladies Department within its organisation,[103] "this collateral institution, established to promote the greater efficiency of schoolmistresses and governesses, and to protect their interests, is now in operation."[104] On February 20, 1847, a letter was published in College of Preceptors' periodical, the *Educational Times,* on the importance of a 'collateral institution' for girls. Significantly, given that the educational views of the publication were overwhelmingly male-orientated, the writer was a female educator, Alison C. Carmichael, from Jersey. She argued:

> Much as this [i.e. the raising of teaching standards] is required for boys . . . it is doubly required for girls. The standard of mothers, with a few exceptions, is, as regards practical religious education, deplorably low. All solid learning, useful knowledge, and habits of prudence and economy, are to say the least, matters taken for granted.[105]

Her criticisms extended to "unintellectual, but showy female governesses; their manners as artificial as their made-up persons" and "quack educators and parents [who] would not send their girls/daughters to school."[106] In her view, education in the public sphere was far superior to a private alternative that failed to ensure the moral and intellectual education of girls in England. Carmichael's views on governesses were supported by a review in the *Educational Times* on March 1, 1848; girls' education was regarded as "desultory, vague [and] aimless; the cause of the woman's comparative weakness and incapacity for meeting the more serious duties of life.[107]

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[101] *On the Social Position of Governess,* By The Author of 'Woman's Mission', *Fraser's magazine for town nad country,* 1830-1869; Apr 1848; 37, 220; British Periodicals, 411.

[102] See note 99, 963.

[103] The contribution of the College of Preceptors and the importance of the organisation's periodical, the *Educational Times,* are discussed in more detail in chapter 2 of this thesis.

[104] The *Educational Times,* October 2, 1847, 5.

[105] Alison C. Carmichael, letter to *The Educational Times,* Feb. 20, 1847, 7.

Governesses were singled out for criticism as they offered an irrelevant curriculum of languages, singing, music and dance which "in ninety-nine cases out a hundred is to fit her to attract."[108] For this reviewer, "domestic duties . . . are the natural destiny of women" which was indicative of an anachronistic, gendered construct of female education. Carmichael is one of the less well-known mid nineteenth-century educational reformers who argued for the professionalisation of teaching to include women, raise their status and counter the contempt directed at "lady teachers."[109] In her view,

> The tone of female education has been all excitement and feeling; and we begin to suffer from it. Young women . . . are too often admired for their very weakness. [Teaching is] the most important of all occupations; religion and morality must be the root of all, or we shall fail.[110]

While advocating a progressive approach to raising teaching standards, she continued to promote morality and religion as the bedrock of a sound and worthwhile education. The College of Preceptors provided the professional examinations and qualifications that enabled women teachers such as Carmichael to be included in a learned profession. The mid nineteenth-century witnessed a paradigm shift in educational discourse, as education itself became an academic subject concerned primarily with advancing knowledge of pedagogical theories and practices. I go on to investigate fictional representations of the function of learning and teaching beyond the schoolroom in Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre.*

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[106] Ibid.,7.

[107] *The Educational Times*, March 1, 1848, Vol. 1, No.6, 124.

[108] Ibid.

[109] Alison C. Carmichael, letter to *The Educational Times*, Jan. 23, 1848, 126.

[110] Ibid., 127.

Literary Case Studies:

Education as potent self-worth and self-fulfilment: The Governess, Charlotte Brontë, and *Jane Eyre*.

In a much earlier period in English history, the potential dangers of radicalism, and the implied benefits of conformity to conservative principles and dominant cultural values are expressed by Hilary Mantel, who stated "there cannot be new things in England. There can only be old things freshly presented, or new things that pretend to be old. To be trusted, new men must forge themselves an ancient pedigree . . . Don't try to go it alone, or they'll think you're pirates."[111]

According to Mary Povey, by the mid nineteenth-century governesses were bulwarks against the perceived erosion of middle-class values.[112]Home education was conceived as social stability and the upholding of domestic ideals through the agency of governesses. Unsurprisingly, given its radical departure from 'conservative principles and dominant cultural values,' *Jayne Eyre* was vilified by Elizabeth Rigby in her lengthy article in the *Quarterly Review* of December, 1848:

> Jane Eyre, in spite of some grand things about her, is being totally uncongenial to our feelings from beginning to end . . . the impression she leaves on our mind is that of a decidedly vulgar-minded woman – one whom we should not care for as an acquaintance, whom we should not seek as a friend, whom we should not desire for a relation, and whom we should scrupulously avoid for a governess.[113]

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[111] Hilary Mantel, *Wolf Hall* (London: Fourth Estate, Harper Collins, 2009), 118. Although Mantel is referring to the sixteenth-century, how society ought to be ordered along similar lines persisted into the nineteenth-century. Gender bias that was prevalent in the sixteenth-century threaded its way into the nineteenth-century as references to 'man' or 'men' were privileged above 'girls' or 'women.'

[112] Mary Povey, *Making A Social Body: British Cultural Formation,* 1830-1864 (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press,1994).

[113] Elizabeth Rigby, unsigned review, *Vanity Fair* – And *Jane Eyre, The Quarterly Review*, Vol. 84, Iss. 167, December, 1848, 174.

In Claire Harman's view, "Elizabeth Rigby was hardly wrong in noticing *Jane Eyre's* revolutionary bent, however much Charlotte remained in denial about it."**[114]** 1848 was a revolutionary year in Europe, providing critics with an ideal opportunity to characterise the novel as subversive. Rigby was among a few dissenting voices but the balance of critical opinion was favourable. In December 1847, George Henry Lewes's review of *Jayne Eyre* was published in *Fraser's Magazine of Town and Country*:[115]

> [. . .] the earlier parts – all relating to Jane's childhood and her residence at Lowood, with much of the strange love story – are written with remarkable beauty and truth.
>
> We have spoken of the reality stamped upon almost every part; and that reality is not confined to the characters and incidents, but is also striking in the various aspects of Nature [. . .] [116]

Lewes considered the novel's realism as most potent in its representation of the governess which is "not only accurate but accurate in being represented from the governess point of view."[117] Lewes was convinced, unlike Rigby, that the author was a woman. A review in the *Era* published on 14 November, 1847, insisted that the author must be a man, revealing the deep-rooted gendered and stereotypical attitudes towards women in mid nineteenth-century England. The review's striking opening sentence placed the novel outside of the mainstream of familiar, contemporary fiction:

> This is an extraordinary book. Although a work of fiction, it is no mere novel, for there is nothing but nature and truth about it, and its interest is entirely domestic; neither is it like your familiar writings, that are too close to reality.
>
> Although ladies have written histories, and travels, and warlike novels, to say nothing of books upon the different arts and sciences, no woman *could have* [reviewer's italics] penned the "Autobiography of Jane Eyre."[118]

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[114] Claire Harman, *Charlotte* Brontë*: A Life (*London: Penguin Books, 2016) , 278.

[115] George Henry Lewes (1817-1878) was "a critic for many of the leading periodicals and briefly editor of the *Fortnightly Review*, (who) also wrote works on philosophical problems as well as an acclaimed *Life of Goethe.* In 1854 Lewes formed a lifelong relationship with the novelist George Eliot (Mary Ann Evans), but was unable to obtain a divorce." Lewes was a "sitter in 9 portraits" as referenced on the National Portrait Gallery website from which these brief biographical details are drawn. <http:// www.npg.org.uk,>(accessed August 2, 2019). 1.

[116] Unsigned but later the author was identified, in Charlotte Brontë correspondence, as George Henry Lewes, author and critic, in *Fraser's Magazine of Town and Country,* December 1847, 692.

[117] Ibid., 692.

[118] The *Era,* November 14, 1847, 9.

I now explore the relationship between the public and private spheres of education in Brontë's autobiographical narrative, *Jane Eyre.*

Charlotte Brontë had access to a full range of literary heritage in the library of her home in Haworth. A selection of books in the collection include George Allan's *Life of Sir Walter Scott,* John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, George Gordon, Lord Byron's *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage,* Homer's *The Iliad*, John Milton's *Paradise Lost,* Hannah More's *Moral Sketches of Opinions and Manners,* Sir Walter Scott's *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, and *The Vision of Don Roderick & Rokeby*.[119] Also given shelf room were her father's published texts: *Cottage Poems* and *The Maid of Killarney; or Albion and Flora.* The Brontës were immersed in a literary culture which also included access to newspapers and periodicals, such as *Blackwoods* and *Fraser's Town and Country.* Intellect and thought were valued within this domestic environment in which Charlotte's father played an important role as home educator, particularly in the elementary education of his family. In *Jayne Eyre*, the absence of a positive experience of an elementary education in the private sphere contrasts markedly with the reality of Charlotte's intellectual development within a domestic setting.

According to Laura Morgan Green,

> From the outset, intellectual ability and ambition are the traits that distinguish Jane within her surroundings of deprivation, and *Jane Eyre* poses for its protagonist a series of alternative pedagogies by which to achieve that ambition. Schematically, these alternatives are the radical self-sufficiency of the autodidact; the intellectual and familial companionship of homosocial community; and the intellectual and erotic fulfilment of the heterosexual dyad.[120]

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[119] George Allan, *Life of Sir Walter Scott*, 1834, Edinburgh: Thomas Ireland, Jnr. bb90
John Bunyan, *Pilgrim's Progress,* title page missing. bb13.
Lord George Gordon Byron, *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage,*1827, Paris. bb15. Inscription on flyleaf: 'P.B. Brontë/Liverpool/Saturday/May 30th/1835.'
Homer, *The Illiad,* London. bb 207, Bonnell35 a.n.s Patrick Brontë: 'My prize for having always kept in the first class at St. John's College, Cambridge. P. Brontë, A.B. To be retained semper.'
John Milton, *Paradise Lost . . . a poem in twelve books,* Edinburgh: printed for J. Robinson & J.Gillies, Glasgow, 1797. bb39, a.s. C. Brontë & marked passages in her own hand.
Hannah More, Moral sketches of opinions and manner [. . .], London: Cadell&Davies, *1819.* bb59 annotated by Patrick Brontë.
Sir Walter Scott, *The Lay of the Last Minstrel,* London: Longman, & c., 1806. bb54 inscribed by Patrick Brontë.
Sir Walter Scott, *The Vision of Don Roderick,* 1811 & *Rokeby*: two poems, Edinburgh: John Ballantyne & Co., 1811 & 1813. bb214, Bonnell 42. Presented to Charlotte Brontë by Miss Wooler.
Patrick Brontë, *Cottage Poems,* Halifax: P.K. Holden, 1811. bb193. Presented by Patrick Brontë to Martha Brown.
Patrick Brontë, *The Maid of Killarney; or Albion and Flora*, London: Baldwin, Cradock & Joy, 1818. bb194.

[120] Laura Morgan Green, *Educating Women*: Cultural Conflict and Victorian Literature, (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2001), 25.

The ‘alternative pedagogies’ suggested by Green and “the potential for fulfilment through education” that Birch associates with the novels of Charlotte Brontë are traceable to the author’s educational experiences in the private and public spheres.[121] Claire Harman argues that Charlotte had “a seething sense of injustice towards the staff bullies at Cowan Bridge” and that school “remains hard to separate from its fictional counterpart.” [122] In Charlotte’s experience, elementary education in the private sphere provided a domestic context free from the psychological and physical effects of either witnessing or being a victim of excessive punishments. As Harman goes on to argue, in Branwell Brontë’s case, home education had a significant disadvantage:

> The intense tutelage Branwell had at home did him irreparable harm, depriving him of a peer group to measure himself against and engage with. The only person to be measured against was his awe-inspiring parent, and those long hours in the study alone with papa must have been quelling to Branwell’s childish spirits.[123]

The tension between an education in the public or private sphere was not always expressed in terms of curriculum or meeting children’s individual learning needs.[124] Home education could be criticised for isolating and insulating children from socialising with their peers and, thereby, depriving them of an important, formative period in the maturation process. Charlotte’s own educational experiences as student, pupil-teacher and governess created in her what Birch refers to as “pedagogic self-sufficiency.”[125] I argue that those experiences, and especially a passionate commitment to autodidactism, developed in her a “fierce, subversive intelligence” that was exemplified by Jane Eyre.[126] Harman draws our attention to Charlotte’s Romantic commitment to an education of the heart and imagination that would probably have been stimulated by reading “anthologies of contemporary poetry" and, especially, Byron's poems.[127] William Cowper's poetry was also given shelf room in her home, so it is likely that she was familiar with his views on education in the public sphere and its private alternative. Individuality in learning, the cultivation of the imagination and, in David Halpin's view, an "escalation sometimes, of a person's knowledge and understanding – of themselves, of other people and of things in general" are integral to an understanding of the progressive educational ideas of Romanticism.[128] In terms of its pedagogical function, *Jane Eyre* reflects a radical, progressive approach to education, and challenges the anathematized and stereotypical versions of the governess.

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[121] Dinah Birch, *Our Victorian Education* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing , 2008), 89.
[122] See note 113, 43. The Clergy Daughter’s School at Cowan Bridge.
[123] Ibid., 52.
[124] See Harriet Martineau’s position on this subject in this chapter of the thesis.
[125] See note 79, 95. Birch uses this striking term in relation to the character Lucy Snowe in Charlotte Brontë’s novel, *Villette*. In my view, the fictional character of Lucy and Charlotte are the same.
[126] Stephen Greenblatt refers to one of Falstaff’s qualities as “fierce, subversive intelligence” in *Will in the World*: *How Shakespeare Became Shakespeare,* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2004), 22. The description seemed an apt one in relation to Charlotte Brontë.

Jayne Eyre was published when the self-improvement movement, epitomised by Patrick Brontë's own education, was gaining momentum in Victorian England. Also, as Laura Morgan Green points out, its publication coincided with the beginning of "the movement for the reform of women's education: at a moment when attempts to address the problems posed by the figure of ill-trained and ill-paid governesses began to introduce the idea of reforming the higher education of women."[129]

Marianne Thormählen argues that Charlotte's critical position on education differed from that of her father. However, given Patrick Brontë's own learning journey, his importance as an inspirational role model who was passionate about education should not be underestimated. The Brontë family debated the relative merits of rote learning, probably a feature of Branwell's experience of the classics under his father's tutelage, and progressive ideas associated with cultivating the mind.[130] Significantly, Jane Eyre represents the governess as an intellectual, assertive woman in her own right. In doing so, Charlotte Brontë was privileging education as self-actualisation and fulfilment over the ethical priorities expected of Victorian governesses. Jane Eyre represented a radical challenge to the dominant cultural construct of governesses in Victorian England.

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[127] Claire Harman, *Charlotte* Brontë*: A Life* (London: Penguin Books,2015), 53.

[128] David Halpin, *Romanticism and Education: Love, Heroism and Imagination in Pedagogy (*London Continuum, 2007), 9.

[129] See note 119, 24.

[130] Marianne Thormählen, T*he Brontës and Education* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

Elizabeth Barrett Browning: *Aurora Leigh*

Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world.[131]

On November 29, 1856 a review of *Aurora Leigh* was published in the *Examiner*:

> The poem is a philosophical love story, the details of which we need not relate, since they are by this time known to the greater of our readers; at the same time it is the direct and full expression of a single thought. Its doctrine sets out with the assertion that there are in life two kinds of effort to do good; one of them that of the philanthropist, or say the Christian socialist . . .The other kind of effort, that of the artist – say the poetess - . . . She also, as a Christian, for the love of God, devotes all energy to the task of elevating those about her to a higher sense of life. Now says the poem of *Aurora Leigh,* each of these anxious labourers errs in accepting only half a truth, and then again errs, over and above all that, in being anxious. God is over all.[132]

Aurora Leigh was more than 'a philosophical love story' as described in the above quotation. I argue that Elizabeth Barrett Browning's nine-book novel in blank verse form is fundamentally expressive of the poet as teacher. The pedagogical function of poetry was expressed by William Wordsworth: "every great poet is a teacher, I wish either to be considered as a teacher or as nothing."[133]

In Simon Avery's opinion,"Elizabeth Barrett Browning inherited her ideas about what poetry could do principally from the Romantic period – in particular William Wordsworth, Percy Bysshe Shelley, and her great love, George Gordon, Lord Byron."[134] Barrett Browning's position on women in society had also been influenced by Mary

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[131] Percy Bysshe Shelley, *A Defence of Poetry,* 1821. Published posthumously: 1840 in Edward Moxon, *Essays, Letters from Abroad, Translations and Fragments*, London.

[132] *Aurora Leigh,* The *Examiner*, Nov. 29, 1856; 2458, 756.

[133] William Wordsworth, letter to Sir George Beaumont, 1807.

[134] Simon Avery, *Elizabeth Barrett Browning: social and political issues: Discovering Literature: Romantics and Victorians,* British Library:<http://www.bl.uk,>/15 May, 2014,1.

Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* (1792).[135] Browning's was not a unique position on the potential for fulfilment through education for girls and women. She was an important voice in the developing tradition of a feminised discourse on education which originated in the eighteenth-century. In *Aurora Leigh,* she expresses that position in relation to female education, a commitment to autodidactism and a distrust of educational institutions. Also, Aurora Leigh personifies education as interiority or self-actualisation and learning as the pursuit of individuality and identity. *Aurora Leigh* is, in part, a gendered discourse on educational ideas and practices that challenges a conventional education for girls and women. The dominant cultural values of preparedness for domestic duties and wifely virtues were associated with that latter mode of education. Essentially, this was a male-imposed female identity: polite, mannered but ultimately a form of enslavement; women were subservient, obedient, controlled and emotionally repressed in a patriarchal society.

Aurora Leigh was multiply reviewed in the periodical press. Leading periodicals published opposing views on what Barrett Browning described as a "poem of a new class," "a romance-poem" and "a poetic art-novel."[136] *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* published a review of *Aurora Leigh* in January, 1857, which acknowledged the "strong effect upon the character of Aurora" of a home education under the tutelage of her father who died when Aurora was thirteen years of age.[137] Her subsequent conventional education "in such things as are usually taught to English girls" represented "an intellectual regime which excited the profoundest disgust in Aurora."[138] The first half of the review presents the reader with a straightforward, narrative account of the characters, relationships and plot of the poem. Until that point in the review, there was nothing to suggest what would follow:

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[135] Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Women,*(1792), London: Penguin Classics. 2004)

[136] Described by Elizabeth Barrett Browning in her letters; see Sandra Donaldson, Rita Patteson, Marjorie Stone, and Beverley Taylor, eds. The *Works of Elizabeth Barrett Browning*, (London: Routledge, 2010), vii.

[137] *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine,* Vol. 81, Iss 495, Jan 1857, 25

[138] Ibid., 26.

> Such is the story, which no admirer of Mrs Browning's genius ought in prudence to defend. In our opinion it is fantastic, unnatural, exaggerated; and all the worse, because it professes to be a tale of our own times. No one who understands of how much value probability is to a tale, can read the foregoing sketch, or indeed peruse the poem, without a painful feeling that Mrs Browning has been perpetrating, in essentials, an extravaganza or caricature, instead of giving to the public a real life picture . . .[139]

Another negative review was published in the *National Review* in April, 1857, stating that "the result, we cannot help thinking a very unsatisfactory one; and when, in this semi-verse, semi-prose, the matter of the author comes couched in the most daring and far fetched metaphor, it makes the reading difficult and wearisome."[140]

The 'unsatisfactory' result mentioned in the above quotation was compounded by a gendered, stereotypical and dismissive view of women as poets in the *Saturday Review* on December 27, 1856:

> The negative experience of centuries seems to prove that a woman cannot be a great poet. Those who are curious in intellectual physiology may find, in *Aurora Leigh,* some materials for the feminine misadventures in art . . . *Aurora Leigh* is wholly and obviously a fiction. The characters are few and unreal – the incidents, though scanty, are almost inconceivable – and the heroine and autobiographer, as a professed poetess, has tastes and occupations which are, beyond all others, incapable of poetical treatment.[141]

This review was unsurprising given The *Saturday Review's* hostile position on the "woman question." Negative commentaries on the poem also appeared in the *Athenaeum* which described the work as "in its argument unnatural, and in its form infelicitous.[142] Contrasting reviews appeared in other leading periodicals, such as the *British Quarterly Review*:

> [. . .] The poem has many wise and large-minded thoughts, vigorously expressed in felicitous and glowing language. Our generation scarcely numbers more than one or two among its master minds from whom we could have looked for a production at all to rival this in comprehensiveness - a poem with so much genuine depth and so free from obscurity [. . .] Men and women are introduced who learn philosophy by actual life,

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[139] Ibid., 32.

[140] The *National Review*, Iss. 8, (Apr 1857), 241. (Wellesley attribution: Roscoe William Caldwell, poet, essayist; ed. *Prospective Review. Dictionary of National Biography).*

[141] The *Saturday Review,* December 27, 1857.

[142] The *Athenaeum,* Iss. 1517, (Nov, 1856), 1425.

> instead of those fair but hazy phantoms which allure and disappoint us in many of the philosophical poems of Schiller.[143]

The *Dublin Review* described *Aurora Leigh* as "a great and a true poem. Grave as its defects may be, its excellencies more than restore the balance in its favour. It exhibits a powerful but controlled imagination [. . .]" [144]

Unlike other reviews, this one was alert to the significance of the poem's representation of "society in the nineteenth century, . . . its wants and sufferings, its social inequalities, the separation of classes, their mutual hatred and suspicion, the noble but futile attempts to reconcile deep-seated evils, and to bridge over, by the use of inadequate means, almost impassable gulfs."[145]

The prestigious *Edinburgh Review* published a mixed review that recognised that "*Aurora Leigh* contains evidence of originality and power but as a romance . . . It is utterly bad, and only redeemed from ridicule by the occasional bursts of impassioned diction which it contains."[146]

According to Kerry McSweeney, "the major complaints of reviewers concerned the poem's style and formlessness" which she argues were "largely justified."[147] Conversely, a letter from Leigh Hunt to Robert Browning praised the work as "a unique, wonderful and immortal poem" and "its being an exponent of its age, and a prophetic teacher of it."[148] Hunt was alert to the importance of *Aurora Leigh* as a pedagogical poem which was often overlooked by reviews that were preoccupied with style and characterisation. Aurora's subversive intelligence rejected a middle-class education that was described in the *Cornhill Magazine*: "the daughters were prepared to be what their mothers had been before them;

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[143] The *British Quarterly Review,* Vol. 25, Iss.49. (Jan 1857), 265-266.

[144] The *Dublin* Review, Vol. 49, Iss.98 (Feb 1861), 540, (Wellesley attribution: Purcell, Edmund Sheridan, 1823-1899, journalist, biographer. Gillow).

[145] Ibid.

[146] The *Edinburgh Review,*Vol. 114, Iss 232, (Oct 1861), 531. (Wellesley attribution: Stigand or Stigant, William, 1825-1915, journalist in consular service. Venn.).

[147] Elizabeth Barrett Browning , *Aurora Leigh (1856),* ed. Kerry McSweeney (Oxford: Oxford World Classics, 2008), xxiii.

[148] Leigh Hunt, Letter to Robert Browning (1856/1857) published *in* The *Cornhill Magazine,* Dec. 1897, 3, 18; BP, pg. 738.

and the children therefore learned early and thoroughly what their mothers could teach them . . . They [the children] were rarely accomplished except in the arts of the needle."[149]

Aurora Leigh's oppositional stance to her aunt's imposition of a conventional middle-class education and stereotyping of a woman's role - "women to be womanly" - had anticipated the views expressed in the above quotation:[150]

The works of women are symbolical
We sew, sew, prick our fingers, dull our sight,
Producing what? A pair of slippers, sir.[151]

In a striking phrase, Stephen Greenblatt describes Shakespeare's Hamlet as "the prince of inward insurrection."[152] In part, Aurora Leigh represents learning as first and foremost a process that originates in an 'inward insurrection' against the imposed, conventional model of female education. Aurora expresses the educational benefits of an elementary home education under the tutelage of her father:

- out of books
He taught me all the ignorance of men
And how God laughs in Heaven when any man
Says "here I am learned; this I understand."[153]

Aurora's reference in the poem to her "meditative childhood" represents progressive ideas about the value of arriving at coherency, understanding and meaningfulness from reflection.[154] Analysis, synthesis and the development of creative imagination are considered essential features of an autodidactism nourished by valuing books that are "moral", "genial", "merry" and "melancholy."[155] I argue that *Aurora Leigh* captures and explores significant features of the tensions between traditional and progressive educational ideas and practices in Victorian society. The poem is an important contribution to the discourse on the advantages of a progressive home education as opposed to a traditional version that Aurora experiences as grinding her down.[156] Her aunt is characterised by Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar "as patriarchy's agent in 'breeding' young ladies for decorous domesticity."[157] In rejecting her aunt's agency, Aurora is thereby rejecting the old order that her relative represents. Her subversive intelligence, untrammelled by an education designed to create a mirror image of her aunt's and, thereby, society's image of girls and women, is grounded in her belief that "the inner life informed the outer life."[158]

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[149] *Middle-Class Education in England*, The *Cornhill* Magazine, Nov. 1864; 10, 59, BP, 549-550.
[150] *Aurora* Leigh (156), Book 1: l. 443, 17.
[151] Ibid., ll. 456-458.
[152] Stephen Greenblatt, *Will in the World: How Shakespeare became Shakespeare*(2004),(London: Jonathan Cape,2004), 303.
[153] *Aurora Leigh*, Book 1, ll. 189-192,10.
[154] Ibid., l. 170,9.
[155] Ibid., ll. 785-788,27.

Education as interiority is a recurring theme in *Aurora Leigh.* As Carolyn Steedman observes, "interiority is a term quite widely used in modern literary and cultural history and in literary criticism to describe an interiorised subjectivity, a sense of the self *within* – a quite richly detailed self."[159] Defined as such, interiority is eminently compatible with Aurora Leigh's belief that "life develops from within" with books as indispensable to her education in the home.[160] Education in the public sphere is regarded negatively by Elizabeth Barrett Browning who, according to Birch,

> Distrusted educational institutions, but this was not because she believed that the deflection of women's creative energies into formal learning might annul their sexuality, as Dickens feared. She considered that the promised rewards were not always worth the price demanded, and wanted to affirm the authority of women outside the regulated world of school and college.[161]

Importantly, for my thesis, *Aurora Leigh* captures important features of progressive educational ideas in the Romantic tradition: child-centred learning, the development of creative imagination, a pedagogy that privileges learning over teaching, enquiry, reflection and self-fulfilment. In drawing our attention to these features of progressive education, *Aurora Leigh* made a significant contribution to debates on education in Victorian England. The extensive circulation of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's ideas on education would not have been possible without the periodical press. Print-mediated interpretations and representations of elementary education contributed significantly to a new discourse on the subject which Victorians regarded as 'the question of the day.' That 'question' persisted throughout the nineteenth-century, featuring prominently and constantly in periodicals intended for an adult reading audience and those directed at children.

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[156] Ibid., l.1040,34.
[157] Sandra M. Gilbert and, Susan Gubar, *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination,* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2000), 575.
[158] See note 153, l. 1057.
[159] Carolyn Steedman, *Strange Dislocations: Childhood and the Idea of Human Interiority,* 1780-1930 (London: Virago Press, 1995),4.
[160] *Aurora Leigh* Bk. 2: l.485, 52.
[161] See note 120, 119.

The progressive educational ideas delineated in *Aurora Leigh* were in stark contrast to the educational experiences recalled by the son of the eminent Victorian zoologist, Philip Henry Gosse.[162]

Edmund Gosse (1849-1928): *Father and Son: A Study of Two Temperaments*[163]

In January, 1908, the *Athenaeum* published a positive review of Edmund Gosse's *Father and Son: A Study of Two Temperaments*:

> One may say that if the writer should achieve anything like lasting remembrance, it will be due to this work rather than to any of the studies, essays, or verse in which his learning and versatility have won praise. This book is unique. It is at once a profound and illuminating study in the concrete development of a child's mind, and also an historical document of great value. At least its value will be great for the age, not so far distant, to which Puritanism, Plymouth Bretheren and pre-Darwinian science will seem as prehistoric as the "fossils" which men like "Mr. G." believed to have been stuck in the rocks in order to try men's faith.[164]

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[162] Philip Henry Gosse FRS "(1810-1888), zoologist and religious writer, was born on 6 April at the High Street, Worcester, the second of four children of Thomas Gosse (1765-1844) a mezzotint engraver and itinerant painter of miniature portraits, and Hannah Best (1780-1860), who before her marriage had been a domestic servant" (L.R. Croft, ODNB: https://www.doi.org/10.1093/ref.odnb/1114. He was one of the leading marine zoologists in nineteenth century England.

[163] Edmund Gosse, *Father and Son: A Study of Two Temperaments* , [*1907*], ed. James Hepburn (London: OUP, 1974).

[164] The *Athenaeum*; London Iss. 4148, (Jan 4,1908), 6.

Edmund Gosse's autobiography has been described by Kathy Rees as marking a transition "from traditional Victorian biography to modern life-writing."[165] In her view, Gosse's writings were a radical reaction to the constraints placed on his childhood by his parents. Rees comments that "Gosse's reputation, both during his lifetime and thereafter, was compromised by his propensity for error, a trait that Henry James famously described as a 'genius for inaccuracy' [. . .] Much of his biographical and critical writing justifies this criticism [. . .]"[166]

In his preface to *Father and Son*, Gosse rejects any suggestion of factual inaccuracies: "at the present hour, when fiction takes forms so ingenious and so specious, it is perhaps necessary to say that the following narrative, in all its parts, and so far as the punctilios [sic] attention of the writer has been able to keep it so, is scrupulously true." Michael Newton interprets the text "as an unmatched social document, preserving for us the whole of experience of childhood in a Protestant sect in the Victorian period . . . Above all, it is one of our best accounts of adolescence, particularly for those who endured [. . .] a religious upbringing."[167] Ann Thwaite offers a more critical interpretation of the veracity of Gosse's writings as she concentrates on debunking Gosse's depiction of his father as a tyrant. She draws attention to Philip Henry Gosse's personality as gentle, thoughtful and as a man of "delicacy and inner warmth." [168] The aforementioned scholarly perspectives and interpretations suggest that *Father and Son* can be read as a work of creative imagination, factual recollections and a childhood distorted through the lens of time. It remains problematic and debatable whether Gosse engaged ethically and wholly accurately in his interpretation of his early years.

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[165] Kathy Rees, *Life Writing By The Gosse Family: Family Portraits in Science, Evangelicalism and Auto/biographical Discourses: Journal of Life Writing – Issue 2 – Writing Lives Together – Romantic and Victorian Auto/biography*, v.14, Issue 2, 3 April, 2017. https//www. doi.org/10.1080/14484528.2017.

[166] Kathy Rees, *Reading Gosse's Reading: A Study of Allusion In The Work of Edmund Gosse*. Anglia Ruskin University: unpublished PhD Thesis, 2014. <http://www. arro.anglia.ac.uk/552643/1/Thesis%20Kathy%Rees.pdf.>

[167] Michael Newton, *Edmund Gosse, Father and Son* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), x-xi.

[168] Ann Thwaite, *Glimpses of the Wonderful: The Life of Philip Henry Gosse, 1810-1888*, (London: Faber and Faber,2002).

According to Kathy Rees, Philip Henry Gosse formulated an idealised version of his son who listened attentively to his religious sermonising while his mother, Emily, depicted Edmund as obedient to Christian discipline. Both parents were members of the Plymouth Brethren.[169] Insights into Philip's fundamentalist religious convictions can be garnered from his attitude towards traditional Christian practices as recalled by his son:

> On the subject of all feasts of the Church he held views of an almost grotesque peculiarity. He looked upon each of them as nugatory and worthless, but the keeping of Christmas appeared to him by far the most hateful, and nothing less than an act of idolatry. 'The very word is Popish,' he used to exclaim, 'Christ's Mass!' pursing up his lips with the gesture of one who tastes asafoetida by accident [. . .] He would denounce the horrors of Christmas until it almost made me blush to look at a holly-berry.[170]

Gosse's early home education was experienced within an extreme religious framework. Situated in the broader historical context of home education in Victorian England, his early experiences represent an example of the dominance of traditional instructional methods over progressive educational ideas. He writes that

> It must have been my father who taught me my letters. To my mother, as I have said, it was distasteful to teach, though she was so prompt and skilful to learn [. .] My father also taught me the simple rules of arithmetic, a little natural history, and the elements of drawing; and he laboured long and unsuccessfully to make me learn by heart hymns, psalms and chapters of scripture, in which I always failed ignominiously and with tears . [. . .] All this sketch of an education began, I believe, in my fourth year, and was not advanced or modified during the rest of my Mother's life.[171]

Alan Richardson observes that Gosse would eventually overcome "a cloistered religious upbringing as devoid of fiction and 'sympathetic imagination' as Mill's utilitarian one had been."[172] Gosse's parents were determined to insulate and isolate their son from the contamination of what they perceived as irreligious fiction. He described himself as a child of "cultivated parents" who never at bedtime heard "Once upon a time."[173] This represented a rigorously restricted approach to education in which imagination was subordinated to a set of doctrinal facts. There are instructive parallels between Edmund Gosse's and Branwell Brontë's home education. At an early age, both were deprived of social interactions with their peers. Gosse bemoaned the fact that he "continued to have no companions, or even acquaintances of my own age, I am unable to recollect exchanging two words with another child till after my Mother's death." Education was regarded by his mother as training him for heaven. Religious instruction was "incessant, and . . . founded on the close inspection of the Bible" as his father "fed me with theological meat."[174] The educative practice pursued by his parents is entirely antithetical to progressive educational ideas that stressed, among other features, the importance of individual enquiry. This absence of individual identity was expressed strikingly by Gosse: "so long as I was a mere part of them, without individual existence. And swept on, a satellite, in their atmosphere, I was mirthful when they were mirthful, and grave when they were grave."[175]

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[169] The Plymouth Bretheren were described by Owen Chadwick as "another small but not quite small and much more separatist, English millennial denomination . . . They began first as a little extreme group in Dublin . . . " Owen Chadwick, *The Victorian Church* Part One 1929-1859 (London: SMC Press Ltd., 1974), 36. Essentially the Plymouth Bretheren were a conservative evangelical religious group.

[170] See note 161, 109.

[171] Ibid., 15.

[172] Alan Richardson, *Literature, Education And Romanticism (*Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 266.

[173] See note 161, 17.

Matters did not improve with the arrival of his governess, Miss Marks, whom he recalls warning him that "children who sniffed would not go to heaven."[176] Gosse would later be reminded of her when he came across the character Mrs Pipchin in Charles Dickens's *Dombey and Son.*

Gosse experienced a different educational experience when visiting his cousins at Clifton in Bristol. He describes feeling "a total absence of all intensity and compulsion of our religious life in Islington."[177] Gosse attributes his conscious appreciation of nature when he was aged nine and his education of the imagination to

> Reading and re-reading *Tom Cringle's Log* [which] did more than anything else, in this critical eleventh year of my life, to give fortitude to my individuality, which was in great

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[174] Ibid., 51.
[175] Ibid., 19.
[176] Ibid., 54.
[177] Ibid., 45.

> danger – as I know see – of succumbing to the pressure my father brought to bear upon from all sides.

Secular fiction rather than just stories from the Bible, and more particularly the growing area of children's literature, is shown here to provide an alternative education, working like a telescope or window on life through which he could for the first time experiment and form his own views and interpretations. This critical stage in forming an identity through an auto-didactic process was integral to the growing culture of self-improvement in the Victorian period. Stories provided Gosse with an alternative world view to one imposed on him by his parents. Children's fiction was also important within the broader context of education and Victorian society. It established a space for thought that could inspire alternative interpretations of reality enabling a critique of a dominant cultural view that there were two intellectually distinct classes - thinkers and workers – in England. The 'thinkers' determined how workers should see and act within society according to their moral, religious and socio-cultural values.

Increasing levels of literacy during the nineteenth-century, and access to different genres of literature stimulated radical opposition to these dominant cultural features. Literature could fulfil oppositional roles, be divisive subversive and counter-cultural. Gosse recalls how his "mental horizon widened" and "there gushed forth through my veins like a wine the determination to rebel." [178] That rebelliousness expressed itself in his continuing rejection of religious indoctrination when he writes:

> After long experience, after my patience and forbearance, I have surely the right to protest the untruth . . . that evangelical religion, or any religion in a violent form, is a wholesome or valuable adjunct to human life. It divides heart from heart. It sets up a vain, chimeral idea, in the barren pursuit of which all the tender, indulgent affections, all the genial play of life, all the exquisite pleasures and soft resignations of the body, all that enlarges and calms the soul, are exchanged for what is harsh and void and negative.[179]

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[178] Ibid., 134 -137.
[179] Ibid., 175-176.

Gosse's early educational experiences convinced him to take "a human being's privilege to fashion his inner life for himself."[180] Irrespective of whatever genres are realised in *Father and Son,* the autobiography is an important contribution to our understanding of the psychological effects on a child of a particular form of home education.

English children and their periodicals

I now go on to explore the following question: what were the educational functions of periodicals intended for children? According to Kirsten Drotner,

> The history of the British juvenile magazines has not been told in full before. And it is, indeed, a formidable task. With a total output of more than 450 titles, many of which appeared as sixteen-page weeklies and one which ran for 108 years (the *Child's Companion; or, Sunday School's Reward,* 1824-1932), it is impossible to cover all details of the voluminous magazine story.[181]

My criteria for selecting specific periodicals intended for children are based on circulation figures, leading publications as determined by scholarly consensus and, above all, literature intended to facilitate education in the home.[182] By establishing these parameters, I aim to explore the educational content in these periodicals as an important contribution to self-improvement in Victorian England.

Much has been written on children's periodicals since Drotner's comprehensive study of publications for boys and girls.[183] The pedagogic content of those periodicals developed throughout the nineteenth-century. Articles on science appeared in the *Boys Own Magazine* [184] and, subsequently, in juvenile magazines in the late-Victorian period.

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[180] Ibid., 178.

[181] Kirsten Drotner, *English Children and Their Magazines: 1751-1945* (New Haven and London: Yale University,1988) 7.

[182] Circulation figures are problematic in terms of statistical accuracy. Circulation and sales were not always the same thing. I am mainly relying on figures cited in secondary sources while remaining aware of issues of inaccuracy.

[183] Kirsten Drotner analysed some sixty periodicals for boys and girls.

[184] *Boys Own Magazine; An Illustrated Journal of Fact, Fiction, History and Adventure*. Launched by Samuel Orchard Beeton and intended to stimulate boys' interest in fact, fiction, history, science and adventure." *The Boys Own Magazine* began in 1855. A new series began in 1863. The annual compilations of the magazine went by a variety of names, usually with "Beeton's" or *"Boys Own Volume"* in the name. It

Fairy tales stimulated an education of the imagination in periodicals such as *Aunt Judy's Magazine,*[185] *Good Words for the Young*[186] *and* the *Monthly Packet*[187] whose editor, Charlotte Yonge,[188] regarded its primary purpose as contributing to "the most important part of education, namely self-education."[189] Yonge's editorial strategy was influenced by her commitment to Tractarianism and conservative principles expressed "in many uplifting stories in which feminine restraint and a Christian conscience were carefully nurtured within domestic surroundings."[190] Her periodical was committed to promoting home education for middle-class children through an early form of distance learning. Kristine Moruzi points out the *Monthly Packet's* interest in supporting reading and writing among its readership "in ways which were consistent with their High Anglican beliefs and would never cause them to question their faith."[191] Yonge's editorial strategy may have been influenced by her own experience of home tuition by her father who

> Required a diligence and accuracy that were utterly alien to me. He thundered at me so that nobody could bear to hear it, and often reduced me to tears, but his approbation was so delightful that it was delicious stimulus . . . I believe, in spite of all breezes over my innate slovenliness, it would have broken our hearts to leave off working together. And we went on till I was some years past twenty."[192]

On March 8, 1851, the *Literary Gazette* published a scathing review of the first number of the *Monthly Packet*:

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stopped publication in 1874. A *"Beeton's Boys Own Magazine"* later ran from 1888 or 1899 to 1890." Onlinebooks.library.upenn.edu, accessed August 6, 2019, 1.

[185] *Aunt Judy's Magazine* was published from1866-1885 and aspired to high literary standards. The *Magazine was* founded by Mrs. Alfred Gatty who was the editor until 1873. According to Kirsten Drotner, "the appeal of *Aunt Judy* was restricted to the vicarage and the university lodge." Aunt Judy's Magazine was intended for a younger audience than the *Monthly Packet.* See note 180, 70.

[186] "Alexander Strahan's sixpenny monthly [. . .] edited by Norman Macleod from 1868 to 1870 and by George MacDonald from 1870 to 1872, blended a broad Christian outlook with a keen interest in fairy tales" *Good Words for the Young* was also intended for a younger audience. Ibid, 68.

[187] The *Monthly* Packet (1851-1898) was "edited by Charlotte Yonge until 1893 [. . .]The main audience were "rector's and professor's elder daughters." This periodical was Intended for readers aged 15-25. Circulation figures were estimated at between 1500 to 2000 . Ibid, 118,

[188] Charlotte M Yonge (1823-1901) was an "English novelist who dedicated her talents as a writer to the service of the church. Her books helped to spread the influence of the Oxford Movement [. . .] She also edited [. . .] *The Monthly Packet,* for which she wrote historical cameos, and composed religious tracts." Amy Tikkanen, Britannica.com. accessed 6-8-19, 1.

[189] See note 174, 118.

[190] Ibid.

[191] Kristine Moruzi, "*Never Read Anything That Can At All That Can Unsettle Your Religious Faith*": *Reading And Writing In The Monthly Packet*, (2010), Women's Writing, 17:2, 288-304, DOI: 10.1080/096990810037550, https://www.doi.org/10.1080/0969908/003755086,1.

[192] Christobel Coleridge, *Charlotte Mary Yonge: Her Life and Letters* (London: Macmillan and Company, 1903), 147.

> This little Magazine is designed for young female members of the English church, between the ages of fifteen and twenty-five. Some of the articles of the first number contain interesting information; but we cannot commend the work for the object it professes to serve, 'as a help to self-education.' Its scope is limited, and its tendencies medieval. And if the Introductory Letter to the readers may be taken as a specimen of editorial ability, we doubt whether the magazine can be profitably conducted by any one who exhibits so much bad taste and bad grammar in three brief pages.[193]

There are discrepancies between some of the serialized stories in the *Monthly Packet* and Yonge's religious convictions and conservative principles. Elizabeth Fox points out "subversive serialised stories" in the publication that

> Included "My Three Aunts" (1857), a story in which a girl disobeys her parents and teachers by running away from school but arrives home to find that her mother is dying and that her "own misconduct" has [proved] the answer to my mother's prayers; bringing comfort to her, and to me unspeakable mercy and blessing.[194]

Fox challenges views expressed by "Kirsten Drotner . . . that girls' stories integrated "moral messages . . . into [their] plot structures," while Mary Cadogan and Patricia Craig argue that they served as a "medium for the reinforcement of social prohibitions and expectations."[195] Fox argues that these analyses "are based on the study of short stories, rather than the lengthy serialized narratives that allowed more room for imaginative development and subversive characterization."[196] The pedagogical functions of the girls' periodicals cited by Fox signify some of the tensions between traditional and progressive educational ideas in the Victorian period. The former advocated obedience to parents, duty, moral imperatives and good citizenship which were features of dominant cultural values in Victorian society. While the latter promoted an education of the imagination, the right to youthful autonomy and alternative ways of thinking and behaving which represented features of an emergent cultural landscape.[197] Periodicals had emerged as a "central component" of Victorian culture."[198]

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[193] The *Literary Gazette: A weekly Journal of literature, science, and the fine arts;* London Iss. 1781, (Mar 8, 1851): 188-188.

[194] Elizabeth Fox, *Victorian Girls' Periodicals and the Challenge of Adolescent Autonomy*, *Victorian Periodicals Review*, v. 51, no. 1 (Spring 2018) :48-69 (Article), Johns Hopkins University Press DOI: https://www.doi.org/10.1353/vpr.2018.0002.Fox refers to "four different girls' periodicals over the second half of the nineteenth-century. Charlotte Yonge's long-running *Monthly Packet of Evening readings for Younger Members of the English Church* (1851-98) [. . .] The short-lived *English Girls' Journal and Ladies Magazine* (1863-65) (which) was an entirely secular magazine [. . .] *The Girls Own paper* (1880-1956) [. . .] aimed at middle – and lower-middle-class girls , it was produced by the Religious Tract Society [. . .] (and the *Girls Realm (*1898-1915) [. . .] focused on [. . .] the "modern girl."

[195] Ibid., 53.

[196] Ibid.

Children's tales written by popular authors such as Hans Christian Andersen, Charles Kingsley and George MacDonald, were published in *Good Words for the Young*. Andersen's stories were also serialised in *Aunt Judy's Magazine.[199]* I argue that the legacy of Romanticism's advocacy of an education of the imagination found expression in such literary contributions to children's periodicals. Religious periodicals, the forerunners of these publications, were concerned with an heterogeneous range of subjects including fiction, history, science, sport and adventure.

Leading religious periodicals included the *Child's Companion; or Sunday Scholar's Reward*[200] and the *Children's Friend[201]* which were evangelical publications aimed initially at economically-disadvantaged working-class children but, as Drotner argues, "the religious zeal suffusing them had a deeper influence on juveniles from artisan or middle-class homes."[202] Both periodicals contributed to a didactic literary tradition promoting moral and religious education in the home as children, according to Philip Ariès, were "fragile creatures of God who needed to be safeguarded and reformed."[203] The *Child's Companion; or Sunday Scholar's Reward* and the *Children's Friend* published a mixture of fiction and "articles on geography, history and botany" which represented, in the course of the nineteenth-century, a shift from a dominant didactic strategy to one that sought to entertain a young readership.[204]

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[197] The theoretical basis for this interpretation draws on Raymond William's work on cultural materialism. See, for example, Raymond Williams, *Culture and Society*,(London: Pelican Books, 1982) and Raymond Williams, *From Base and Superstructure in Marxist Cultural Theory, Problems in Materialism and Culture* in *New Historicism And Cultural Materialism: A Reader,* ed. Kiernan Ryan (London: Arnold, 1996), 22-28.

[198] Lyn Pyket,''*Reading the Periodical Press: Text and Context,'' Victorian Periodicals Review, v.*22, no.3 (1989): 100-108, 102.

[199] See note 180.

[200] The *Child's Companion; or Sunday School's Reward* (1824-1844), then *Child's Companion and Juvenile Instructor* (1846-1921). Set up by George Stokes and launched by the Evangelical Religious Tract Society who established the London Missionary Society (1795) and the British and Foreign Bible society (1804). Circulation reached 20,000 in 1828 (Margaret N. Cutt, *Ministering Angels: A Study of Nineteenth-Century Evangelical Writings for Children* (Wormley: Five Owls Press,1979), 31.

[201] The *Children's Friend* (1824-1869), new ser. (1861-1930). Founded by Rev. William Carus Wilson (1791-1859). Monthly circulation figures reached 50,000 in 1850. (Thomas W. Lacqueur, *Religion and Respectability: Sunday Schools and Working-Class Culture, 1780-1850,* (1976) New Haven, Yale University Press.

[202] See note 179, 27.

[203] Philip Ariès, *Centuries of Childhood: A Social History of Family Life* , trans. R. Baldick (New York: Vintage Books, 1962),132 - 133.

The founder of the *Children's Friend* (1824-1860), the Rev. William Carus Wilson, explained the rationale for his publication:

> For the last five years, I have set out a monthly penny tract, called 'The Friendly Visitor." It was meant for young readers, as well as old ones; and I know it has found its way very much into Sunday-schools, and into young hands in other places. But in the space of twelve pages, I have not found it easy, always to give what would suit all ages. Hence many friends have wished me to double the size and the price of the Friendly Visitor. But I have thought it better to keep it as it is; and to publish a new work wholly for the young, which I call "THE CHILDREN'S FRIEND."[205]

Wilson's editorial strategy was concerned with extending the direct influence of religion in the home. His periodical continued an eighteenth-century tradition of conduct books associated with, among others, Hester Chapone,[206] Hannah More,[207] and Mary Wollstonecraft.[208] While these books were aimed primarily at the home education of girls, the *Children's Friend* was intended for both sexes. As Diana Dixon argues, fiction in children's periodicals was designed to illustrate the triumph of good over evil. The periodical was seen by such publishers as Houlston, Nisbet and Stoneman as an ideal publication for influencing young minds through devotional literature.[209] I argue that more attention needs to be given to the influence of an evangelical children's book, *The History of the Fairchild Family,* as a template for the genre of children's periodicals designed to encourage socially acceptable behaviour, religious principles, moral and, specifically for girls, domestic virtues.[210] The *Children's Friend* and The *Child's Companion; or Sunday*

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[204] See note 179, 49.

[205] William Carus Wilson, "Address to the Readers." The *Children's Friend* January, 1824, 1 (1): 1-2. Drotner refers to "Charlotte Bronte's portrayal of him as the harsh 'Mr Brocklebank' [sic] in *Jane Eyre.'* That should have been referenced correctly as 'Mr Brocklehurst.'

[206] Hester Chapone, *Letters on the Improvement of the Mind* (1773) (London: John Sharpe,1829). She advocated a home education for girls "based on reading the Bible and the study of history and literature (book-keeping, household management, botany, geology and astronomy were also useful)" : Naomi Clifford @ http://.www.naomiclifford.com., *Love, life and death in the Georgian era. 2* November, 2013. (accessed December 17, 2008).

[207] Hannah More, *Strictures on the Modern System of Education*, (London: T.Cadell Jun. and W.Davies, 1799).

[208] Mary Wollstonecraft, *Thoughts on the Education of Daughters* (London: J.Johnson, 1787).

[209] Diana Dixon, '*Children's Periodicals'. Nineteenth Century Periodicals* (Detroit: Gale, 2008).

[210] Mary Martha Sherwood, *The History of the Fairchild Family*, 3 vols. 1818, 1842, 1847. Vol. 1 was published by John Hatchard in Piccadilly.

Scholar's Reward reflected the moral imperatives found in that book. According to George Orwell,

> The doctrine of 'breaking the child's spirit' was in full vigour, and *The Fairchild Family* was a standard book for children till late into the century. This evil book is now issued in pretty-pretty expurgated editions, but it is well worth reading in the original version. It gives one some idea of the lengths to which child-discipline was sometimes carried. Mr. Fairchild, for instance, when he catches his children quarrelling, first thrashes them, reciting Dr. Watts's 'Let dogs delight to bark and bite' between blows of the cane, and then takes them to spend the afternoon beneath a gibbet where the rotting corpse of a murderer is hanging.[211]

The home education of the *Fairchild* children represented an evangelical view of an ethically and morally superior education from which middle-class boys and girls benefitted from "mental hardening [that] strengthened children against worldly temptation."[212] The Puritan roots of evangelicalism conceived children as inherently evil, predisposed to sinful behaviours and needing strict religious and moral guidance. In January, 1862, the *Child's Companion* and *Juvenile Instructor* sermonised on the debts owed by children:

> Every child has debts to pay on New-Year's-day, debts which are too often forgotten; but then they are growing, growing, year by year, though you never think of them . . . How many wrong and sinful things have you done (this) one whole year! For all these sins you are in debt; but Christ Jesus has died for the sins of men . . . You may begin the new year with no sin laid up against you and forgiven.[213]

Drotner argues that religious periodicals "operated on several psychological levels and their influence varied decisively according to the reader's class and gender experience."[214] While the didactic function of fiction in the *Child's Companion* and *Juvenile Instructor* was overtly moral and religious, Elizabeth Fox argues that fiction was also used "to undermine conservative articles [that] became a defining feature of the middle-class girls' periodical."[215] In a departure from a strictly religious and moral editorial strategy, The

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[211] George Orwell, *Inside the Whale and Other Essays* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1940) Part 1, 1.

[212] Michael Newton, ed. *Edmund Gosse, Father and Son* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 37.

[213] The *Child's Companion and Juvenile Instructor*, January, 1862, London: The Religious Tract Society, Instituted 1799. Depositories, 56, Paternoster Rowe; 65 St. Paul's Churchyard; And, Piccadilly: Sold by The Booksellers, 1-2.

[214] See note 168, 60.

[215] Elizabeth Fox, '*Victorian Girls' - Periodicals and the Challenge of Adolescent Autonomy,' Victorian Periodicals Review*, v. 51, no. 1 (Spring 2018): 48-69, 52.

Religious Tract Society published the *Girls Own Paper (*1880-1956) which, according to Fox, "featured little overt religious instruction, focusing instead on entertaining texts that appealed to young people and claimed to reinforce approved social values." [216] Advertisements for sixpenny monthly periodicals endorsed the social and individual benefits of the *Girls Own Paper* which was aimed at middle-class and lower middle-class girls:

> Should the readers lay to heart the instructions as to housekeeping and cooking, many a husband in embryo will owe a debt of gratitude to the conductors. – *The Times*
>
> To girls we may commend it as a most comprehensive and valuable magazine for instruction and recreation. – *Queen.*[217]

Ironically, the *Girls Own Paper* would provide young readers with an outlet for views opposed to 'approved social values' as expressed in correspondence to the periodical. Fox draws attention to "a girl named Louisa [who] wrote to the *Girls Own Paper* to ask "at what age you are at liberty to do exactly as you like." This was not an exceptional case. Other teenage girls wrote to magazines during the second half of the nineteenth-century claiming the right to "exercise her own judgement"; "to be independent and self-reliant" and "know our own minds."[218] Magazine editors "responded to these voices with consistent and definitive dismissals."[219] However, as Fox subsequently argues, editors used the

> Imaginative portion of their magazines – serialized fiction – to validate young readers' arguments, using each story's plot and characters to endorse the idea of adolescent freedom from adult control. In contrast to nonfiction, which advocated duty and submission, serialized stories routinely depicted adolescents as superior to adults and toward adults.[220]

There was an eclectic amalgam of non-fiction articles in the *Girls Own Paper* designed to appeal to different interests and ages. These included art, architecture, history, household management, geology, personal relationships, science, mathematics and philosophy. Authors who contributed to the fiction sections of the periodical included Noel Streatfield, Rosa Nouchette Carey, Angela Brazil, Richmal Crompton and Baroness Orczy.[221] The *Girls Own Paper* was part of a publishing tradition that responded to increasing literacy levels in Victorian England, the growth of education in the public sphere and the expansion of its intended readership, the middle-classes. Periodicals for boys far outnumbered publications for girls who, in some cases, resorted to reading boys' magazines.[222] Foremost among periodicals for boys were Samuel Orchart Beeton's *Boys Own Magazine* (1855 -1874) [223] and E. J. Brett's *Boys of England* (1866 – 1899).[224]

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[216] Ibid., 53.

[217] Ibid.

[217] Advert for some 19th century periodicals: *Sixpenny Magazines for Every Home,* London, 56 Paternoster Row, AND OF ALL NEWSAGENTS, 1880, Evanion Collection of Ephemera, British Library.

[218] See note 215, 51.

[219] Ibid.

[220] Ibid.

The *Boys Own Magazine*, describing itself as "an illustrated journal of fact, fiction, history and adventure" was aimed at a middle-class readership. In 1857, the Preface to Volume 3 set out the periodical's programme for the year which would contain "a rich repast of literary and artistic matter." An education of the imagination, appealing to the intellect and emotions, would be supplied by

> "Pym's Narrative" (which) stands in the foremost rank, as a tale of mutiny, shipwreck, and suffering. "The Deadly Snake, "too, is a story of great talent and exceeding excitement. The Adventures detailed in the following pages will be read with delight by all who love correct and wholesome excitement. We must not omit to mention, with high praise, of the papers entitled "The World of Insects." We believe many boys have been led by these most delightful articles, and . . . illustrations, to search into the wonders of the minute creation which surrounds us on every side. In the Historical and Biographical Sketches will be found much that will inform and instruct the careful peruser.[225]

In contrast to the *Literary Gazette's* critical review of the *Monthly Packet,*[226] the *Literary Times* of 1863 lauded the *Boys Own Magazine*:

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[221] The *Girls Own Paper* Index, Lutterworth Press, Lutterworth.com

[222] See note 197.

[223] "The annual compilations of the magazine went by a variety of names, usually with "Beeton's" or "Boys Own Volume" in the name. It stopped publication in 1874. A " Beeton's Boys Own Magazine" later ran from 1888 or 1889 to 1890. Catalog. Babel.Hathitrust.org.

[224] "The Boys of England was a Victorian boys' periodical. It was published weekly by Edwin J. Brett from 1866to 1899.." Christopher Mark Banham argues that the periodical "engaged closely with the lives of its readership, comprised mainly of boys from the 'respectable' working-classes." See Christopher Mark Banham*, Boys of England and Edwin J.Brett, 1866-1899*, unpublished PhD thesis, University of Leeds (2010)<http://.www uk.bl.ethos.431946,>(accessed August 2, 2019): 1.

[225] The *Boys Own Magazine* An Illustrated Journal of *fact, fiction, history and adventure.* Vol.III, 1857, London: S.O. Beeton, 18 Bouvereie Street, Fleet Street.

[226] See note 192.

> Mr Beeton has done the same service to boys in this excellent work as he has already rendered to ladies in his 'Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine.' The Boy's Magazine is equal in every respect to its fair contemporary and we think we can give it no higher praise.
>
> 'Boys' with imaginative tastes will find ample food for their desires in the tales of 'Cressy and Poieters,' by Mr. J. G. Edgar; the 'Young Norseman,' by Mr. W.B. Rands; the 'Adventures of Reuben Davidger,' and other stories of minor importance. 'Boys' attached to 'manly games' will be delighted by the Rev. James Pycroft's account of a "match he was in,' and a description of 'Squirrels and Squirrel Hunting,' by Captain Drayton . . . The number is completed by puzzle pages, occasional poetry, and amusing answers to correspondents. The illustrations are capitally executed, and even in this age of cheap literature Mr Beeton's magazine is a marvel of economical production.[227]

The *Boys Own Magazine* represented a watershed in the publication history of children's periodicals in Victorian England. Samuel Orchart Beeton (1831-1877) was the pioneering spirit behind this secular magazine that signalled a cultural, literary and social shift away from the dominant position of children's religious periodicals.[228] As Drotner argues, "the magazine marked the beginning of a change in juvenile papers from the religious didacticism or secular rationalism toward moral entertainment where an extrovert, imperial manliness mattered more than an introspective piety or dry memorizing."[229]

Beeton was present at The Royal Geographical Society meeting in 1860 when papers were read on 'Communication with the south-west provinces of China from Rangoon in British Pegu' and "On the Various Lines of Overland Communication between India and China." The Society's library and map room included recent acquisitions: Maury's "Physical Geography of the Sea," "Den sidste Franklin-Expedition med Fox" and "various photographs of Burmah" and illustrated diagram . . . of the route from Rangoon to Esmok in China were exhibited."[230] Unsurprisingly, part of Beeton's editorial strategy was possibly influenced by the geographical and scientific knowledge that he acquired from such meetings. The eclectic content of *Boys Own Magazine* included sections on 'Facts, Fancies and Phenomena,' 'Natural History,' 'Tales and Adventures' and 'Scientific Amusements.' In 1861, Beeton's *Dictionary of Universal Information* was published.[231] Geography was prominent among the subjects in the book. Examples of the possible influence of discoveries by the Royal Geographical Society can be seen in articles in the *Boys Own Magazine*: *Life in China, Snake Plants of South America, African Animals, Desert Wilds and Indian Encounter.* Beeton was a Fellow of The Royal Geographical Society with access to information on the most recent explorations and discoveries by its members. His geographical knowledge acquired as an adult learner found expression in a more elementary form for children in the *Boys Own Magazine*.

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[227] The *Literary Times,* London Iss 8 (May 2, 1863): 99-99.

[228] "Publisher and journalist, born on 2 March 1831 at 39 Milk Street in Cheapside, London, the only son of Samuel Powell Beeton (1804-1854), warehouseman and publican, and his first wife, Helen (d. 1831), daughter of Thomas Orchart" (ODNB: https://doi.org/ref:odnb/45481). Husband of Mrs Isabella Mary Beeton. Published her *Book of Household Management* in 1861.

[229] See note 180, 67.

[230] The *Literary Gazette*: A weekly journal of literature, science, and the fine arts; London Vol. 5, Iss 129, (Dec 15, 1860), 521-521.

The magazine's emergence and importance in the mid nineteenth-century needs to be understood within its wider historical context. Britain was the leading industrial nation in the world, the dominant colonial power with an extensive empire. The middle-classes had expanded more than any other social group in the country. Beeton's editorial strategy was unashamedly directed at forming "the taste and influence [of] the mind of youth; whose glorious heritage it is to possess the Empire their fathers have founded and preserved and whose duty it will be to hold that Empire, handing it down greater, more prosperous, to future generations."[232]

Adventure stories were designed not only to stimulate the imagination but also to educate a readership through a romanticised version of colonialism and, thereby, lead them to an uncritical acceptance of the virtues of Empire. The periodical extended opportunities for home education among middle-class and lower middle-class children through a variety of genres designed to educate and entertain. As Drotner points out,

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[231] Samuel Orchart Beeton, *Beeton's Dictionary of Universal Information* (London: W. Kent and Co. ,1861). Apart from Geography, other subjects comprised History, Biography, Mythology, Bible Knowledge and Chronology.

[232] Hyde Harford M., *Mr and Mrs Beeton*, (London: Harrap, 1951), 50 -53. According to Hyde, the magazine had over forty thousand readers by 1862.

> The *Boy's Own Magazine* was created at a time when English children's books entered a golden age in which new genres were being adopted for different age groups. Thus, the adventure story was introduced by Captain Marryat's *Mr. Midshipman Easy* (1836); Charles Kingsley's *Westward Ho!* (1855) popularized the historical romance; Thomas Hughes inaugurated the school story with *Tom Brown's Schooldays* (1856), and, to crown them all, Lewis Caroll's (Charles L. Dodgson's) *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865) gave fantasy pre-eminence in the nursery. With their well-balanced commercial morality, Beeton's magazines conveyed this proliferation of genres in a periodical version.[233]

The reading audience of 'this proliferation of genres in a periodical version' as stated in the above quotation, was reflective of a gendered and class bias. Home education opportunities for middle-class and lower middle-class children advantaged them over their working-class peers. Social and economic disadvantage in Victorian England was synonymous with educational disadvantage. Periodical literature for the working-classes is associated with cheap sensational fiction found in *Penny Dreadfuls.*[234] In the mid to late Victorian period, Edwin J. Brett's *Boys of England* (1866-1899) periodical attracted a reading audience from among the 'respectable' working-classes.[235] As Christopher Banham argues, "the BOE should rightly be considered an important indigenous component of working-class society and culture in the mid to late Victorian Britain."[236] The periodical's weekly sales reached 150,000 in 1866 and 250,000 in the 1870s.[237] *Boys of England* was the leading boys' periodical of the Victorian period.

Brett published exciting, adventurous fiction such as *The Phantom Knell; or, the Ghost of Wentworth Hall; Bicycle Bob by the author of "Giles Evergreen," "Nobody's Dog" and*

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[233] Kirsten Drotner, *English Children and Their Magazines: 1751-1945* (New Haven and London: Yale University,1988), 68.

[234] *Penny Dreadfuls*: "cheap, sensational (and) highly illustrated stories so popular with the Victorian public" (Introduction: Judith Flanders, *Penny Dreadfuls* (15 May, 2014). https://www.bl.uk.

[235] Edwin John Brett (1828-1895). "Founder of the Newsagents Publishing Company, which specialized in sensational fiction. In 1866, he launched a penny weekly, the *Boys of England; A Magazine of Sport, Sensation, Fun, and Instruction* [. . .] Charles Stevens, the editor of the first nine issues until Brett himself took over the editorship, promised in his initial reader address "to enthral you by wild and wonderful, but healthy fiction" (*Boys of England* 1, no. 1. 24 November 1866).

[236] Christopher Mark Banham, *Boys of England and Edwin J. Brett,* 1866-99, (2006) PhD thesis, University of Leeds, etheses. whiterose.ac.uk.

[237] Christopher Mark Banham, "*England and America Against The World": Empire and the USA in Edwin J. Brett's Boys of England, 1866-1899,* Victorian Periodicals Review, v.40, no. 2, (Summer 2007): 151-171, 151. Published by Johns Hopkins University Press, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1353/vpr.2007.0027.>

"Fred Frolic" and *The Night Guard; or, The Secret of The Five Masks*."[238] The periodical's pages included non-fiction that praised England's navy, described historical developments in, for example, Scotland, France and Africa and related stories of monarchy in various European countries. Replies were published to correspondence from children on diverse subjects such as technological innovations, music, examination requirements for the merchant service, biographical information and the weather. The questions posed by readers in the correspondence columns of *Boys of England* suggest that these pages were, in embryo, a nineteenth-century version of the modern *Google* search engine.

In recent years, scholarly opinion has challenged previous interpretations of the relationship between *Boys of England* and Empire.[239] As Banham points out, "traditionally, scholarly opinion has not deemed empire to have been a particularly significant factor within *Boys of England*, not within most boys' papers published in the 1860s, 1870s and 1880s."[240] Beeton's *Boys Own Magazine* was clearly an exception, given its unequivocal support for colonial expansion and the values of the British Empire. Banham goes on to argue that *Boys of England "*was more sensitive to the contemporary spirit of imperialism than has hitherto been acknowledged."[241] I argue that illustrations in *Boys of England* reveal an editorial strategy designed to depict white Europeans as the civilising influence on indigenous peoples. For example, front page illustrations show white men as the pursued and not the pursuers in foreign lands. In a recurring illustrated theme, spear wielding natives are defeated by the rifles of a single white man who personifies the virtuous colonizers. One of the principal educative functions of Brett's periodical was concerned with convincing readers of the righteousness of imperialism.

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[238] *Boys of England,* Jan. 1, 1870, Vol. VII, No. 161.

[239] Kelly Boyd, *Manliness and the Boys Story Paper: a Cultural History, 1855-1940*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2003).

[240] See note 226, 151.

[241] Ibid., 152.

Foremost among boys' periodicals that supported Empire was The Religious Tract Society's *Boys Own Paper* (1879-1967) whose primary purpose was moral and religious instruction at home and conversion to Christianity abroad. [242] In 1880, The Religious Tract Society published the first number of *Girl's Own* Paper. Kirsten Drotner draws attention to "the express aim of the editor, Charles Peters (1852-1907), to cater not only to the young lady of the leisured classes, but also to girls of a less High position who would receive instruction in economical cookery, plain needlework, home education and health."[243]

The Religious Tract Society was also concerned with the spread of religion as a civilising influence throughout Britain's colonial possessions. Unsurprisingly, the *Boys Own Paper* provided The Religious Tract Societ*y* with a medium through which it could educate its reading audience on the validity, justifiability and moral authority of the British Empire. Moreover, colonial expansion was an opportunity to extend the Society's missionary work among 'heathen' populations.[244]

As I have shown, periodicals were at the forefront of promoting and facilitating domestic pedagogies and household education as an alternative to formal, institutionalised education. The periodical press ensured that the nature and purpose of elementary education within English society persisted as 'the question of the day' and a 'link in the great chain of consequence' throughout the Victorian period. Regulating society through the development of institutions was seen as one means to achieve an ordered and well-regulated country. Public institutions such as prisons, law courts, workhouses, schools, libraries, sewage works, crematoriums and mental hospitals had become tangible expressions of the social, political, economic and cultural framework of a modern Britain. Conversely, home education can be interpreted on one level as a form of opposition to institutionalisation, characterised by parental insistence on choice, individual rights and liberties in the face of increasing State involvement in forming and shaping a national and compulsory elementary education system. Middle-class parents were creating their own vision and version of society within the home in a way that was consistent with the persistence and pervasiveness of the voluntary principle in Victorian England.

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[242] "Published under the formal auspices of Dr James Macaulay (1817-1902), the first issue of the *Boys Own Paper* was given away at some schools in order to boost circulation [. . .] However, the magazine soon reached near institutional status with middle-class parents." Kirsten Drotner, *English Children and Their Magazines: 1751-1945* (New Haven and London: Yale University, 1988), 123.

[243] Ibid., 115.

[244] 'Heathen' is a pejorative word which also, in the nineteenth-century, suggested uncivilized people.

The gradual professionalisation of teaching from the 1840s, the expansion of elementary schools and the raising of educational standards through inspection were some of the defining characteristics of progress in elementary education in Victorian England. Home education, especially for girls, continued as an alternative to one in the public sphere. However, education in the private sphere was increasingly seen by middle-class parents as a preparation for transition to school. In contrast to the dearth of adequate schools in eighteenth-century England, the mid and late Victorian period witnessed a growth in provision which meant greater parental choice.

The preference for an education in the private sphere as an alternative to formal schooling is closely associated with the Victorian doctrine of self-improvement. As an integral part of that doctrine, autodidactism was promoted through periodicals, libraries and the increasing number of textbooks available to the public. Progressive ideas such as an education of the imagination were stimulated by the fiction and non-fiction found in children's periodicals and novels. In 1877, the *Examiner* published an article about the staggering growth of children's literature:

> The number of books for children published in each year is becoming portentous. There seems to be a magic mill at work on their production –a magic mill like that salt mill which, in consequence of no one knowing the spell for stopping it, went on grinding out salt long after it had ground too much [. . .] Book upon book, hundreds upon hundreds - the children's book mill has been set off and who shall stop or slacken it? [. . .] The market for the ware is inexhaustible.[245]

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[245] The *Examiner,* August 4, 1877, 973.

Home education also provided opportunities for parents to reject gendered approaches to education as shown in this extract from *Our Family Picture* published in *Household Words* in 1857:

> In pursuance of his crotchet that girls ought to receive precisely the same education as boys, my father inducted Philip, Neville, and Ruth into the mysteries of the Latin grammar at the same time, and taught them together, as if they were one person, till they were about fourteen years old.[246]

Home education in the Victorian period represented a distinct educational alternative in an increasingly institutionalised society in which a plurality of provision was one of the defining features of England as a democratic nation.

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[246] *Household Words*, conducted by Charles Dickens; Oct 3, 1857; 16, 393; British Periodicals, pg. 326.

Conclusion

This thesis has investigated debates about elementary education in English periodicals from 1833 to 1880. The conclusions that my research has produced do not, and are not intended to, cover the entire conversation about elementary education in the Victorian period. The focus of the research has been confined to the role of periodicals as a medium, as evidenced by their content. I have explored different kinds of periodical, ranging from the major quarterly reviews to specialist journals aimed at teachers. For that reason, in this conclusion, I acknowledge some further areas of enquiry that did not fall within the scope of the present 80,000 word thesis. I shall reflect critically on whether my initial understanding of the gaps in knowledge that I set out to address has changed or remained the same during the research process. Before doing so, it will help to re-establish the context and parameters of the research, revisit my research questions, and consider what answers the thesis brings together. I will then move on to provide a critical summary of my findings and suggest how the research could be taken forward into a future project. I go on to venture that having addressed the gaps in knowledge that I anticipated, I have contributed in some helpful way to the existing body of scholarship by extending our understanding of the social and cultural history of elementary education from 1833 to 1880.

Scholarly consensus has confirmed the importance, reach and circulation of the periodical press in nineteenth-century England. In the introduction to this thesis, I identified a number of contributors to an extensive body of literature on the periodical press in Victorian England. In particular, Joanne Shattock draws our attention to "the representative power of the press; it reflected the views of a far broader cross section of society than Parliament, given the limits of the franchise."[1] Her views are shared by Jon Klancher who emphasises the diverse reading audiences and reach of the periodical press in the early decades of the nineteenth-century.[2] However, in the main, debates about elementary education in the periodical press represented a discourse among members of the literate middle-class. The working-classes were excluded from participation in discussions about the nature and purpose of elementary education that featured so prominently and persistently in those texts. Periodicals were the main intellectual engine that drove debates about social, political, economic, cultural and religious issues that concerned the Victorians. Following extensive engagement with literature on periodical culture from the late-Regency period to the late nineteenth-century, I arrived at the same conclusion expressed by Janice Schroeder that education, including the teachers' press, has tended to be neglected in Victorian periodical studies.[3] This represented the first gap in knowledge that I wanted to address by investigating non-fiction discourses and fictional representations of elementary education in periodicals from 1833 to 1880.

I also identified domestic pedagogies and household education as topics for investigation because research on those subject is currently viewed as requiring further scholarly attention.[4] Moreover, I discovered that the role of periodicals in promoting and facilitating education in the home was not considered as an evidence source in six historical papers that constituted a 2015 special edition of the *Oxford Review of Education.*[5] That omission is evident in Christina de Bellaigue's introduction to the *Oxford Review* as she informs us that the contributors "draw on evidence from fiction, from book history, from advice literature, from prison records, memoirs, letters and diaries, to offer studies which shed new light on home education from 1750-1900." de Bellaigue, in common with other scholars including Brian Simon, draws attention to the significant research on formal, institutionalised education compared with how little we know about education in working-class and middle-class households.[6] I thereby identified the second gap in knowledge that I addressed in my research.

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[1] Joanne Shattock, ed. *Journalism and the Periodical Press in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Cambridge*:* Cambridge University Press, 2017), 2.

[2] Jon P. Klancher, *The Making of English Reading Audiences,1790-1832* (Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1987), 50.

[3] See note 1, Introduction. I have not relied solely on Janice Schroeder's conclusion that research has tended to neglect the relationship between the periodical press and elementary education in the Victorian period. I have confirmed her analysis by reference to a body of scholarship that has not given focused attention to the latter.

[4] In the introduction and chapter 3, I provide a justification for investigating education beyond the schoolroom.

[5] Christina de Bellaigue *et* al., *Home Education 1750-1900*: *domestic pedagogies in England and Wales in historical perspective. Oxford Review of Education, Special Edition*, v. 41, Issue 4 (March, 2015), 421-548; 421.

From reading histories of elementary education and religion in nineteenth-century England, I became aware of the important relationship between those aspects of Victorian life. [7] So, I decided to examine the role of religious periodicals as organs of denominational positions that were expressed by Protestantism, and specifically Anglicanism as the Established Church of England, Roman Catholicism and Methodism on the nature and purpose of elementary education. In doing so, I wanted to address a third gap in knowledge: the influence of religious periodicals in debates about elementary education from the middle to late decades in nineteenth-century England.

Some examples will help to illustrate how the parameters remained unchanged or altered during the course of the research. I had originally intended to devote more attention to writing about periodicals and elementary education in the Regency period. A review of that intention led me instead to focus on linking debates on elementary education in the late-Regency period with those in the early Victorian age. The aim was to explore how tensions between traditional and progressive educational ideas and practices were taken forward from an immediately earlier time.[8] In this way, I began the process of addressing how and why periodicals shaped and developed debates about elementary education into a coherent and meaningful movement from 1833 to 1880.

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[6] See reference to Brian Simon in chapter 3, page 163.

[7] See chapter 2 which is devoted to religion and elementary education.

[8] In chapter 1, I investigated links between the late-Regency period by focusing specifically on Lord Henry Brougham's important contribution to the elementary education debates, and how the issues he raised were taken forward in the early Victorian age.

Writing in 1982, Walter Houghton observed that

> Only recently have we come to realize that the Victorians published not only over 25,000 journals of all kinds including newspapers, but also - at a guess - several hundred reviews, magazines, and weeklies that could claim to be 'literature' because they published literary genres (fiction, poetry, familiar essays) . . . [9]

In light of evidence from the *Waterloo Directory of English Newspapers and periodicals (1800-1900)*, Houghton's estimates have been revised upwards because some "125,000 titles are expected to be identified, located and described."[10] At first, my choice of secular periodicals was determined by their importance as mainstream publications that reflected diverse political positions on elementary education. As the research developed, I included minor periodicals in order to discover further breath and depth to debates about educational issues.

In each of chapter of the thesis, I have investigated the importance of a range of Victorian novels that brought to the public's attention educational issues and, thereby, contributed to national debates about elementary education. By 1860, literary texts had become very important in raising the profile of discourses about elementary education in Victorian England. The printed word was not the only medium through which opinions were expressed about the elementary education of the nation's children, but this thesis does not allow for a sufficiently detailed analysis of illustrations, print cartoons, or other visual materials. Those constitute a topic for further research.

Chapter 1 explored how and why debates about elementary education took shape and developed into a coherent and meaningful movement from 1833 to 1880 by focusing on representations and interpretations of schools, pedagogies and teachers in periodicals. I argued that the reach, circulation and diverse reading audiences of the periodical press created a new cultural space in which discourses on elementary education featured prominently and constantly. Initially, do ‘coarse hands’ need heads was a fundamental question debated in periodicals as a consequence of Lord Henry Brougham politicising the elementary education of working-class children in the late-Regency period.[11] Therefore, the subsequent sustained debates about elementary education from the middle to the late nineteenth-century in England originated in the late-Regency period.

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[9] Walter E. Houghton, *Periodical literature and the articulate classes,* in *The Victorian Periodical Press: Samplings and Soundings, eds.* Joanne Shattock and Michael Wolff (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1982), 3.

[10] The *Waterloo Directory of English Newspapers and periodicals (1800-1900)* <http://www.victorianperiodicals.com./2001. (accessed September 17,2019): 1.

I have shown that secular and religious periodicals reacted either favourably or critically to Lord Brougham’s criticisms of religion as a reactionary force impeding progressive educational change and his preference for a secular version of elementary education directed and controlled by the State.[12] The attention given to elementary education by the two best selling periodicals in Britain, the *Edinburgh* and *Quarterly Reviews*, ensured that the issues raised by Lord Brougham reached across the spectrum of the literate British reading audience. As I have argued, the outreach and opposing political positions of these hugely influential publications meant that elementary education received prominent and continuing attention in the periodical press. [13]

Periodicals focused on matters relating to the extension and State funding of elementary education for working-class children, which in itself represented a progressive measure. However, an increasing number of periodicals gave prominence to a variety of issues about the nature and purpose of elementary education that highlighted tensions between progressive and traditional educational ideas. Consequently, the defining characteristics of debates about elementary education were being shaped by new discourses in a print-mediated cultural space.[14] I suggested that these new discourses signalled a paradigm shift in how education was conceptualised by contributors to secular, religious and teachers' periodicals as they promoted progressive pedagogies for working-class and middle-class children.[15] By publishing both traditional and progressive positions on elementary education, periodicals were at the forefront of the developing and changing discourses on the subject that formed and informed public opinion across the social spectrum. In particular, the periodical press provided a new cultural space for teaching associations to establish professional knowledge networks and promote teaching as a profession for women and men. Teachers' periodicals emerged as an integral component of a print culture that gave meaning, prominence and coherence to a movement for the professionalisation of teaching.[16]

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[11] See note 31, page 15, in the introduction to the thesis.

[12] I investigated these issues in chapter 1.

[13] See chapter 1. In particular, I would draw attention to how the politicisation of elementary education generated the origins of the debates on elementary education.

[14] Throughout the thesis, I make reference to numerous secular, religious and teachers’ periodicals that fuelled and shaped debates about elementary education.

Chapter 1 included a case study of the College of Preceptor's periodical, the *Educational Times* which, as I showed, was considered one of the most important teachers' publications in nineteenth-century England. [17] I suggest that further enquiries are needed on the contribution of the College of Preceptors and the *Educational Times* to the development of professional learning networks and teaching as a profession for women. During the research, I also extended the scope of my investigation of teachers' periodicals by including the *Schoolmaster* which was the principal publication of the National Union of Elementary Teachers, and the *English Journal of Education.* In doing so, alternative perspectives and new understandings were revealed about the debates on transforming teaching from a 'trade' or 'service' to a learned profession.

I showed that reviews, letters to the editors and literary works serialised in periodicals revealed the complexities and multiple perspectives associated with the nature and purpose of elementary education. When George Combe criticised the extent of uniformed opinion on the education of the nation in 1840, he missed an important point: the significant growth in interest shown by contemporaries in what should be taught, how it should be taught and the ultimate purpose of elementary education.[18] The Victorians viewed elementary education as serving multiple functions and priorities. Industrialists and commercial interests tended to consider education as human capital. Prominent literary figures including Charles Dickens, George Eliot, Charlotte Brontë and Elizabeth Barrett Browning regarded education as humanizing and liberating individuals, while religion believed that education was fundamentally and unequivocally salvific. From a middle-class perspective, education was also conceived as the formation of good citizens and social investment which was designed to achieve a consistently stable and orderly society in Victorian England.

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[15] I undertook a detailed and comprehensive investigation of the tensions between traditional and progressive educational ideas and practices which appear in each chapter of this thesis.

[16] In chapter 1, I argue for the importance of the College of Preceptor's, their periodical the *Educational Times* and other influential teachers' periodicals that provided coherency and meaning to the movement for the professionalisation of teaching.

[17] In chapter 1, I argue that the *Educational Times* played a pivotal in the advancing teaching as a profession, and enhanced the quality of discourse on a range of educational topics.

Contemporaries considered elementary education as "a link in the great chain of consequence" and "the chief battleground" for opposing religious preferences.[19] Education was both a social and cultural question whose importance was addressed, fuelled and sustained throughout the nineteenth-century by the periodical press. For example, I drew attention to Charles Dickens's periodical *Household Words* in which one thousand references were made to education during the lifetime of the publication from 1850 to 1859.[20] By researching elementary education within periodical culture, I concluded that *Household Words* was not an exceptional case because educational issues featured prominently and on an on-going basis in the majority of English periodicals in the Victorian period. During the nineteenth-century periodicals were the catalyst for coalescing interpretations and fictional representations of educational issues.[21] Consequently, periodicals made possible the democratisation of knowledge and debates on elementary education which were now no longer the exclusive possession of an élite in English society.[22] Debates about elementary education in the periodical press reflected both dominant cultural values associated with traditional pedagogies and also progressive ideas that rejected orthodoxy. Alan Richardson has argued that "education is particularly promising [as] a conceptual space where politics, social history, ideology and literary representations of all kinds meet, interpenetrate, and collide."[23] My research has shown that the periodical press was a cultural space in which those diverse opinions identified by Richardson were shaped and transformed into a coherent and meaningful movement in Victorian England.

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[18] George Combe's views on the subject can be found in chapter 1, page 42.

[19] The *Examiner,* General Education; 681. (Jan.1821), 33-35 . *Dublin Review*, Vol. 18, Iss. 36, Ap. 1872; 409-440 (Wellesley attribution: Ward, William Geary, 1812-1882; RC Theologian; ed. *Dublin Review*. DNB.

[20] *Household Words* features prominently in chapter 1.

Chapter 2 addressed two interrelated questions. First, what was the significance of the relationship between religion, specifically Anglicanism, Methodism and Roman Catholicism, and elementary education? Secondly, how did religion further, inhibit or redefine 'progressive' or 'liberal' early education. Religious periodicals were, like their secular counterparts, initially concerned with responding to the question: do 'coarse hands' need heads. Anglicanism, Methodism and Roman Catholicism used periodicals to express a consensus on the importance of early education as privileging the salvific, supernatural and metaphysical above the natural world. Researching religious periodicals confirmed Joshua King's conclusion that these publications evolved as the primary source for 'communication and, propaganda.'[24] Conversely, findings from religious periodicals challenge Dinah Birch's assertion that the relationship between doctrinal issues and education were relatively unimportant. The nineteenth-century witnessed an evolving denominational periodical culture that attracted specific reading audiences whose religious allegiances were generally aligned with the views expressed in such publications. As I showed, elementary education featured prominently and regularly in religious periodicals to the extent that press, pulpit and classroom were considered by religious denominations as an important triad for evangelising and proselytising. Periodicals provided a space for a competitive public discourse on elementary education which opposing religious bodies 'exploited' to circulate their ideas, values and beliefs.

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[21] For example, I contrast journalism and fictional prose on the subject of elementary education in my case study of *Household Words* and a selection of Charles Dickens's novels.

[22] See, for example, Joanne Shattocks observations on the 'representative power ' of the periodical press and the extent to which that media reflected diverse views across the whole spectrum of English society.

[23] See chapter 3, note 89, 187.

[24] See page 96, note 1.

Since the beginning of the nineteenth-century, Protestantism, and specifically Anglicanism as the Established Church of England, had controlled and directed the elementary education of what was a relatively small proportion of working-class children. The *Monthly Paper* was the principal periodical of the National Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church. Evidence from the *Monthly Paper* suggested that the National Society was committed to maintaining and consolidating control of the elementary education of children from economically-disadvantaged backgrounds. The National Society supported the extension of formal, institutionalised early education but, as we learned from the *Monthly Paper,* a system of national education must, in the Society's opinion, be identified with the Established Church of England. This increasingly entrenched position that was taken by the National Society deepened sectarian divisions on the direction and defining characteristics of elementary education which, in William Ward Geary's opinion, had become 'the chief battle ground' for opposing denominational preferences on the subject. [25]

Methodist, Roman Catholic and Anglican periodicals promoted a view of elementary education as a space for the evangelisation of children which meant that religion was extremely important in shaping educational ideas and practices in Victorian England. Each denomination supported the extension of elementary education as confirmed by views expressed in their respective periodicals.[26] Furthermore, these religious bodies promoted pedagogies of faith based on moral and religious instruction; Anglicanism and Roman Catholicism tended towards a traditional, non-aspirational and procrustean education. The Catholic hierarchy's critical reaction to Monsignor William Petre's educational ideas showed how that religion was committed to inhibiting a progressive early education. Monsignor Petre emerges as the only Catholic that I could identify who challenged the widely accepted traditional educational values of the Church, and through his writings generated debates and discussion on that subject in the press.[27] While Petre was redefining a 'liberal' Catholic education at Woburn School, the forces of traditionalism continued to dominate Catholicism's pedagogies of faith.

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[25] See note 20.

As I showed in my analysis of Methodist periodicals, we see the green shoots of progressive educational ideas and practices that initially found expression in their Sunday and Infant schools. Methodism was socially progressive, promoting gender equality in education and an aspirational learning culture. As far as a middle-class elementary education was concerned, Methodism initiated a redefinition of a 'liberal' education by challenging cultural orthodoxy that declared that the classics were a non-negotiable part of that curriculum. I identified connections between Methodism's progressive educational ideas and Romanticism: each shared common ground on individuality in learning, creative imagination, reflection and critical thinking. [28] Moreover, Methodist periodicals articulated a position on elementary education that rejected a prevailing cultural norm that social class determined the curriculum.

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[26] See chapter 2 for a detailed and comprehensive account of each religions' position on the extension of elementary education for working-class children.

[27] The case study on Monsignor William Joseph Petre appears in chapter 2, pages 141-148.

[28] A discussion of the pedagogical connections between Methodism and Romanticism can be found in chapter 2, pages 125-130.

I acknowledged that Unitarianism, a belief system that preceded Methodism, was immensely influential in advancing and implementing progressive educational ideas and practices. However, an in-depth investigation of Unitarianism's influence on education does not fall within the scope allowed by this thesis. A further enquiry into that area would extend the field of knowledge.

Religious periodicals were important in creating a cultural space for diverse opinions on the relationship between religion, elementary education, society, culture and science. These publications reveal the extent to which religion valued a print-mediated resource through which they could engage in debates about elementary education.

Conclusions reached in the two previous chapters focused on formal, institutionalised elementary education in the public sphere. I now turn to conclusions drawn from an alternative version of education in the private sphere by addressing the question: how important were domestic pedagogies as an alternative to formal, institutionalised elementary education?

Within the context of the rapid growth of institutions in the Victorian period, there were middle-class parents for whom home education was preferable to a version in the public sphere.[29] During my investigation of domestic pedagogies and home education, I found periodicals - intended for adults and children - whose primary function was didactic. While conducting research at the British Library, I examined the contribution to home education of a little-known, evangelical periodical, the *Quiver* which emphasised the home as an educative space.[30] Researching education beyond the schoolroom was particularly instructive because I was aware that the subject, in comparison with extensive studies on public education, required much more scholarly attention. The *Quiver* was intended for literate working-class households. Given the intended audience, John Cassell's periodical was a watershed moment in the development of home education among the working-classes that provided domestic society with opportunities for forms of academic learning. The *Quiver* aimed to educate parents who would subsequently be the educators of their children; not only a moral and religious education but also access to a variety of general subjects. I inferred from the content of the *Quiver* that working-class households were being encouraged to acquire auto-didactic knowledge and skills which were entirely compatible with Victorian ideals of self-help and self-improvement.

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[29] At the beginning of chapter 3, I reference Christina de Bellaigue's scholarship on the subject of home education. I then go on to discuss additional studies on domestic pedagogies.

[30] See my case study on the *Quiver* which can be found in chapter 3, pages 171-176.

There were also children's periodicals that stimulated an education of the imagination by publishing fairy tales, scientific subjects, non-fiction, stories and exciting accounts of perilous adventures in distant lands. Edwin J. Brett's periodical, *Boys of England*, not only presented working-class children with an heterogeneous range of subjects but engaged that readership in interactive exchanges with the publication on topics generated by the children themselves.[31] *Boys of England* represented a radical departure from a children's periodical culture that had previously appealed exclusively to a middle-class reading audience.

A form of colonial education was apparent in Samuel Beeton's *Boys Own Magazine* which unashamedly sought to instruct its readership in the virtues of Empire.[32] I showed that from the mid-nineteenth century onwards, Beeton's *Boys Own Magazine* represented a radical social, literary and cultural shift from the dominant position of children's religious publications to an exclusively secular version of a didactic and entertaining periodical. Articles in the *Boys Own Magazine* stimulated the imagination, intellect and emotions which establishes a connection with progressive educational ideas associated with the Romantics.

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[31] See Christopher Mark Banham's interpretations of the social and cultural importance of *Boys of England* for the working-class in chapter 3, 63-64.

[32] I discuss Samuel Beeton's contribution to children's periodicals in chapter 3, pages 217-219.

The emergence of periodicals for girls signalled a further shift in the changing landscape of children's periodicals. A selection of these publications revealed a cultural space in which subversive views were expressed and challenged adult authority. [33] This was indicative of a rejection of such dominant cultural values as obedience, good citizenship and the stereotypical behaviours expected of girls and women. The *Girls Own Paper* included a broad selection of subject areas that constituted a 'liberal' curriculum; encouraged and sympathised with subversive correspondence from its readership which challenges Elizabeth Fox's initial view that the periodical existed to reinforce social values.[34]

In this chapter I referred to Mary Hilton and Jill Shefrin who argue that "because the study of [. . .]domestic education is heavily dependent on manuscript sources, it is necessary to study the gentry and aristocracy to get at women's ideas and pedagogies."[35] I argued that periodicals provided additional perspectives on domestic education that supplement a reliance exclusively on 'manuscript sources' and, thereby, extend our understanding of education in the private sphere. Moreover, periodicals provide us with a spectrum of views that are not restricted to the 'gentry and aristocracy' so that the evidence base is widened and extends beyond élites in English society.

Research on home education and domestic pedagogies prompted a question: what specific differences did periodicals make to the debates about the role of governesses in children's early education in the home? *Household Words* and *Fraser's Magazine* challenged the stereotypical, contemptuous views of governesses that were prevalent in Victorian society by initiating a new discourse on the need to professionalise their educative role. My case study on *Jane Eyre* revealed a rebellious governess whose intellectual attainments, assertiveness and pedagogical skills represented a radically new representation of a governess. *Jane Eyre* was reviewed in periodicals that gave prominence to a changing discourse on perceptions of the governess in Victorian society.[36] Charlotte Brontë provided an alternative depiction of the governess which was the antithesis of the familiar version of a woman as a servant who was far down in a family's hierarchical order. By publishing reviews of *Jane Eyre*, the periodical press ensured that the issues raised in the novel circulated among a wide and diverse reading audience. At the same time, periodicals were giving prominence to the feminization of education which formed an integral part of the on-going debates on the status of women teachers within the public and private spheres.

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[33] The publication of the first issue *Girls Own Paper* in 1880 just falls within the period of this thesis. I discuss the publication in chapter 3, pages 215-216.

[34] Ibid.

[35] Mary Hilton and Jill Shefrin, *Educating the Child in Enlightenment* Britain, (Surrey : Ashgate Publishing: 2009), 9.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning's *Aurora Leigh* carried forward debates on domestic pedagogies, auto-didactism, the concept of education as interiority and the rejection of a male construct of what constituted an appropriate education for girls and women. Again, reviews of *Aurora Leigh* in the periodical press brought versions of a progressive education in the private sphere to the forefront of debates about educational issues in Victorian England. [37]

Home education in Edmund Gosse's autobiographical account, *Father and Son: A Study of Two Temperaments*, revealed an extreme example of the psychologically damaging effects of a repressive instructional version of education within a strict religious context. There was a striking contrast between Gosse's parents depriving him of access to children's fiction as part of his home 'education' and his sense of awe, wonder and liberation when he read stories for the first time. This suggested the importance of fiction as a stimulus for the development of creative imagination, independent thought and alternative world-views.

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[36] My case study on Charlotte Brontë and *Jane Eyre* is included in chapter 3, pages 193-198.
[37] See the case study on *Aurora Leigh* in chapter 3,pages 198-204.

Gosse's reflections on his experiences of home education raised questions about the extent to which his account was accurate, distorted or illusory.[38]

Harriet Martineau's instructional text, *Household Education*, was favourably reviewed in the periodical press and made an important contribution to debates about the nature and purpose of an early education in the home. Martineau promoted the democratisation of knowledge by insisting that everyone within the household, including servants, should benefit from education. That was a radical challenge to the social and cultural values of the middle-class. She was undoubtedly influenced by her own Unitarian educational and family backgrounds which account for the independent and free thinking attitudes that underpin her educational philosophy. Martineau was socially progressive and committed to advancing equal educational opportunities for girls and women. Also, she demonstrated a nascent understanding of the stages of child development that are so important in effective pedagogical practices.[39]

By drawing on evidence from secular, religious, teachers' and children's periodicals, I showed how and why debates about elementary education took shape into a coherent and meaningful movement from 1833 to 1880. Investigating religious periodicals revealed new insights into tensions between traditional and progressive educational ideas and practices which can extend our understanding of elementary education as a space in which sectarian preferences converged. Scholarly consensus suggests that domestic pedagogies and home education require further enquiries which my research has begun to address through a combination of literary works and the periodicals in which they were serialised and multiply reviewed. As a result of the research presented in this thesis, I have at least attempted to expand our knowledge of how didactic periodicals actively promoted and facilitated a moral, religious and intellectual education for children in middle-class and working-class households across England.

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[38] For example, see references Kathy Rees's studies on Edmund Gosse in chapter 3, note 165, page 205.

[39] See my case study on Harriet Martineau and *Household Words* in chapter 3, pages 176-181.

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Periodicals

- **Secular:**

All The Year Round	(1859-1895)
The *American Whig Review*	(1844-1852)
The *Analyst*	(1834-1840)
The *Athenaeum*	(1828-1921)
Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine	(1817-1980)
The *British Magazine*	(1832-1849)
The *Eclectic Review*	(1805-1868)
The *Edinburgh Journal*	(1832-1853)
The Edinburgh Review	(1802-1900)
The Examiner	(1808-1886)
Fraser's Magazine	(1830-1882)
Household Words	(1850-1859)
The *London Magazine*	(1732-Present)
Penny Satirist	(1837-1846)
Punch Magazine	(1841-1992)
Tait's Edinburgh Magazine	(1832-1855)
The Quarterly Review	(1809-1967)
The *Republican*	(1819-1826)
The *Westminster Review*	(1824-1914)

- **Religious**

Anglican:

The *British Magazine*	(1832-1849)
The *Christian Remembrancer*	(1819-1868)
The *Church Quarterly Review*	(1875-1968)
The *Church Times*	(1863-Present)
The *Monthly Paper*	(1846-1875)
The *Monthly Repository*	(1806-1838)
The *Record.*	(1828-1949)
The *Quiver*	(1861-1926)

Methodist:

The *Christian Ambassador*	(1854-1862)
The *Primitive Methodist Magazine*	(1820-1898)
The *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine.*	(1778-1969)

Catholic:

The *Dublin Review*	(1836-1900)
The *Rambler*	(1848-1862)
The *Tablet*	(1840-Present)

Teachers':

The *Educational Times*	(1847-1923)
The *Edinburgh Educational News*	(1876-1902)
The *National Schoolmaster*	(1872-1925)
The *School Guardian*	(1876-1937)
The *Sunday School Record and Teachers' Assistant*	(1877)

Children’s:

Aunt Judy’s Magazine	(1866-1885)
The Boys of England	(1866-1899)
The *Boys Own Magazine*	(1855-1874)
The *Children’s Companion and Juvenile Instructor*	(1846-1921)
The *Girls Own Paper*	(1880-1908)
The *Monthly Packet*	(1851-1899)