

Jane Fairfax and Jane Eyre: *Educating Women*

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IN HER introduction to the Penguin edition of *Jane Eyre*, Q. D. Leavis remarks in a note, "everything necessary to say about the treatment of governesses had already been said in *Emma* via Mrs. Elton and her friends who wanted to employ Jane Fairfax . . . but the governess herself had never spoken out with such bitterness before."¹ The immense difference between the tone of *Emma*, even in the areas concerned with Jane Fairfax and her expectation of becoming a governess, and *Jane Eyre*, where the tone is fixed by the governess-narrator, prevents most readers from recognizing that the minor theme of the earlier novel has been taken up as the major theme of the later. Indeed, it is easy to overlook the degree of Jane Austen's interest in what the middle and later nineteenth century was to call the Woman Question, that enormous bundle of disputes relating to women's social, legal and economic status which had occupied the attention of all major writers of the eighteenth century, at some stage of their careers, from 1711 (to choose a fairly arbitrary date) when the *Spectator* began to appear. The social changes which gave rise to this interest in women and their position have been discussed elsewhere and will not be resummarized here: it is sufficient to notice that Jane Austen's particular interest in this area was in the effect of economic constraints upon women. Charlotte Brontë's strongest focus, though related to economic matters, was not the same: her interest was in the woman denied emotional outlet. Yet despite these obvious differences between the novelists, and despite the thirty years which separated the publication dates of *Emma* (1816) and *Jane Eyre* (1847), a certain kind of comparison between the works is profitable. It is certainly not the most direct

or most literary comparison: although Charlotte Brontë owed almost as much to eighteenth century novelists as did Jane Austen, it is to the minor novelists like Charlotte Smith and Ann Radcliffe that she is mainly indebted — her dislike of Jane Austen's novels, when G. H. Lewes persuaded her to read them, is well known. It is, however, possible to use the interest which both writers felt in the figure of the governess as an index of their interest in the special problems of women, the governess being almost a representative figure of distressed womanhood.

In the case of Jane Austen, we must begin with the proviso that although Jane Fairfax may have provided the clearest indication of her author's feeling about these matters, the novels contain many other figures of women under economic pressure. In *Sense and Sensibility* we are offered Lucy Steele, a woman who has become unscrupulous, in fact completely unfeeling, under the pressures of poverty and lack of economic opportunity: Charlotte Lucas in *Pride and Prejudice* is a disaster of a similar kind. Fanny Price and Anne Elliot, heroines of their respective novels, are illustrative in a different way of their author's preoccupation; they suffer years of deprivation and humiliation, based largely on the fact that they are women and must remain in the households of their relatives, however unsympathetic, yet both survive, stronger and better because of these years.

Jane Austen seems to prefer to place at the centre of her fictions women who struggle successfully, despite their disabilities, and to relegate to the fringes those who allow themselves to become warped by those disabilities. One reason for this may be the comic mode to which she claimed her talents were most suited, but it is also true that the emphasis which she places on the individual's duty to society, evident in all her novels, but especially in *Sense and Sensibility* and *Mansfield Park*, implies a belief that the society is fundamentally benevolent, though it may contain minor imperfections. No such belief emerges from *Jane Eyre*: would-be oppressors emerge and threaten Jane at home, at school and in her adult life, and our sense of her is that she is beset by them on all sides. Her eventual marriage to Rochester does not have the meaning that it would in an Austen novel, of integration with society, for Rochester himself is a social outcast,

though a rich one; we are surely intended to see the married pair as retiring into a life where they are all to each other. But Jane Austen's belief that society is good in intention, though imperfect in its application of principle makes her most interested in cases where individual merit produces, not merely recognition of that merit by another individual, but societal recognition. Elizabeth Bennet, almost portionless, is acceptable not only to Darcy as his wife, but to their society as mistress of Pemberley, and Fanny Price, who is penniless, is eventually welcomed by Sir Thomas and Lady Bertram as their son's wife.

Jane Austen, however, does not ignore or minimize the willingness of her society to place women at an economic disadvantage: her interest in the damage done to women by the loss they suffer through the entail of property on the male line has often been remarked on, and in *Mansfield Park* she deplores the fact that public opinion tolerates the presence of an adulterer but excludes an adultress. Her confidence in her society is by no means a matter of blind optimism; she is very willing to point out its flaws and frequently portrays individuals to whom that society allows considerable power, who champion privilege and grind down the underprivileged as far as they can. Lady Catherine de Bourgh is such a character as are Mrs. Norris and Mrs. Elton, the exploiter of Jane Fairfax in *Emma*.

It is a commonplace of criticism to remark that behind the brilliant comedy of *Emma* lies a much darker novel which was never written, the story of Jane Fairfax, intelligent, beautiful, a gentleman's daughter, who grew up surrounded by love, yet under the shadow of the necessity of earning her bread. During the period of the novel, she is visiting her aunt and grandmother in Highbury and is unhappy because of the inner conflict between her love for Frank Churchill, to whom she has agreed to become secretly engaged, and her guilty feeling that she ought not to marry him, or even to commit herself so far as an engagement with no apparent prospect of fulfilment. But the alternative is to surrender herself to the fate that society considers proper for well educated but impoverished daughters of gentlemen — life as a governess. Her view of this kind of life is naturally a bitter one

since it presents itself as an alternative to marital love and material comfort:

When I am quite determined as to the time, I am not at all afraid of being long unemployed. There are places in town, offices, where inquiry would soon produce something — Offices for the sale — not quite of human flesh — but of human intellect.

'Oh! my dear, human flesh! You quite shock me; if you mean a fling at the slave-trade, I assure you Mr. Suckling was always rather a friend to the abolition.'

'I did not mean, I was not thinking of the slave-trade,' replied Jane; 'governess-trade, I assure you, was all that I had in view; widely different certainly as to the guilt of those who carry it on; but as to the greater misery of the victims, I do not know where it lies.' (pp. 300-01)

Clearly implied here in the equation which she makes between the status of a slave and that of a governess is the expectation that she will be exploited and insulted, and although her language is over-dramatic, the behaviour of Mrs. Elton to her suggests that her expectation is a fair one. From the moment that she understands Jane's position, Mrs. Elton appropriates her as a kind of unpaid lady-in-waiting and obliges her to receive a kind of patronage which emphasizes the difference in their status. Her habit of using Jane's Christian name, whereas Jane will address her formally as "Mrs. Elton," is the mark of this: both Emma and Frank Churchill notice it with indignation. A more important point is the fact that Jane's considerable talents and accomplishments, her excellent manners and great beauty cannot preserve her from humiliation at Mrs. Elton's hands: the single fact that she will be forced to accept employment is enough to force her to submit. Antagonistic to Jane though Emma is, she speaks of her situation with indignation:

I have no faith in Mrs. Elton's acknowledging herself the inferior in thought, word, or deed; or in her being under any restraint beyond her own scanty rule of good-breeding. I cannot imagine that she will not be continually insulting her visitor with praise, encouragement, and offers of service; that she will not be continually detailing her magnificent intentions, from the procuring her a permanent situation to the including her in those delightful exploring parties which are to take place in the barouche-landau.

(pp. 228-29)

Mrs. Elton certainly does not represent any kind of norm of behaviour or attitude, yet though her will to exploit is extreme, her social ambitions keep her, not just within the bounds of acceptable behaviour, but within the *forms* of kindness to an inferior. These forms force upon Jane, whose status in Highbury has been high as an extremely accomplished young woman and the relative of respected residents, the recognition that another kind of treatment is to be expected in the future — “Wax candles in the schoolroom! One may imagine how desirable!” cries Mrs. Elton, overcome by the generosity which does not expect a governess to resign herself to evenings dimly and smellily lit by tallow dips. “Your musical knowledge alone would entitle you to name your own terms, have as many rooms as you like, mix in the family as much as you chose; — that is — I do not know — if you knew the harp, you might do all that, I am very sure . . .” (pp. 300-01).

Behind Mrs. Elton’s list of privileges lies the knowledge of the whole community that governesses are paid a wretched salary, and that their position, between yet apart from family and servants, is likely to be painfully lonely. A part of their loneliness — the separation from their families — was inevitable: “I must not hope to be situated as you are, in the midst of every dearest connection,” Jane Fairfax tells Mr. John Knightley. Gainful employment in the army or navy would mean the same at first for a man, but the status of such employment was high, and the financial rewards, if, like Jane Austen’s brothers, he was successful, more than sufficient to allow the establishment and support of a family, whereas a governess’s chances of marriage were slight.

Mrs. Weston, who as Miss Taylor was Emma’s governess and companion until just before the novel’s action begins, has not suffered in this way. “Intelligent, well-informed, useful, gentle,” she has been Emma’s invaluable friend, and has been rewarded by equal membership of the Woodhouse family, or so it appears from Emma’s sorrow and Mr. Woodhouse’s gentle resentment when she leaves them to marry Mr. Weston. She continues as Emma’s only real confidante throughout the novel.

It is by examining attitudes to Mrs. Weston, the governess who does marry, that we become aware of an important difference

between our own view of employed women and that shared by Jane Austen and Charlotte Brontë. It is hard to imagine that the duties of Mrs. Weston, then Miss Taylor, were more onerous when Emma was a child than those of a well-to-do mother of a family — much less so, for example, than those of Elizabeth Austen-Knight, Jane Austen's sister-in-law, rich, and the mistress of a great household, but the teacher as well as the mother of her many young children. Once Emma was grown up, she may perhaps have delegated some small share of domestic organization to her friend, and there is reference to Mr. Woodhouse's expectation that she would keep him company in the evening if Emma were absent. All this amounts to considerably less responsibility than a married woman of the period would be expected to carry. The fact that she continued to live at Hartfield for four years after Emma's formal education was complete, and Mr. Woodhouse's resentment at her marriage makes it clear that both regarded her as a permanent member of the family, yet Mr. Knightley insists that she is better off materially because she has married: "I have a great regard for you and Emma; but when it comes to the question of dependence or independence!" (p. 10). Later, speaking of Emma's attitude to her friend's marriage, he declares: "she knows how very acceptable it must be at Miss Taylor's time of life to be settled in a home of her own, and how important to her to be secure of a comfortable provision. . . . Every friend of Miss Taylor must be glad to have her so happily married" (p. 11). Emma acquiesces, though her father claims that there is no advantage in her having a house of her own, since his, in which she would otherwise have passed her life, is three times as large. Mr. Woodhouse has not grasped Mr. Knightley's main point, which is the "dependence — independence" matter, but he is right that Mrs. Weston's life does not contain more material comfort now that she is married. Mr. Knightley's description of employment as a governess as "dependence" and marriage as "independence" is most interesting as a key to nineteenth-century attitudes in that it reverses the twentieth-century's assessment of the positions available to women. Paid employment — the support of oneself by the sale of one's labour — has long been held to constitute independence for women, whereas a penniless woman who mar-

ried a comparatively affluent man would not now be considered to have achieved independence. The nineteenth-century usage must refer to the married woman's irrefutable and permanent right to her husband's support, or, after his death, to provision from his estate, as opposed to the employed woman's — we may say, the governess's — dependence on the good will of her employer to continue her in his service. There is no doubt that the sense of a governess's position as a subjugated one, and of her employers as being possessed of enormous powers over her, is one that is central to the sympathy for Jane Fairfax and Jane Eyre which their authors evoke from us.

The striking point about *Emma*, in connection with Jane Fairfax's search for employment, is that everyone who speaks of employed women sees them as pitiable, perhaps as degraded. Jane Fairfax's own attitudes we have already surveyed: the narrator endorses to some extent her dark view of a governess's life when discussing the prospects ahead of her when she finally leaves the Campbells:

With the fortitude of a devoted novice, she had resolved at one and twenty to complete the sacrifice and retire from all the pleasures of life, of rational intercourse, equal society, peace and hope, to penance and mortification forever. (p. 165)

The language here, with its suggestions of religious renunciation, may contain a hint that Jane Austen thinks that Jane is overestimating the magnitude of her sacrifice, yet it registers too that the change, from foster-daughter of a wealthy family to governess, will be immense. Emma herself remarks that she can think of nothing worse than being a teacher in a school — her attachment to her own governess and the happiness of their years together prevents her from seeing the governess in a private family as being equally to be pitied.

It seems likely, however, from the evidence of all Jane Austen's novels, that either her own circumstances or the social climate of her day prevented her from envisaging any transformation of the governess's role. Two of her heroines, Elizabeth Bennet and Fanny Price, are so poorly dowered as to make their future, if they remain unmarried, a matter of doubt, but Jane Austen's

thinking here seems to be that by their moral excellence and their talents they will achieve, through marriage, the position which they deserve. Marriage, in high comedy such as Jane Austen's, has metaphoric as well as literal meaning: it is the seal set upon maturity, the social recognition of merit, the accurate placing of the individual. In her own life, although her literary earnings eventually supplemented the family income, her brothers contributed to the maintenance of her mother, her sister and herself, in modest comfort. There can be no doubt that the four Austen brothers considered their donations as obligatory recognition of their sisters' activity in the family: Jane and Cassandra made their brothers' clothes, cared for nieces and nephews, looked after their mother, were frequently the companions and housekeepers of the brothers, who, if Henry Austen, in his memoir of his sister Jane, is to be believed, were devoted to their sisters. What seems to have emerged from this, in Jane Austen's thinking about impoverished middle-class women, was a sense that it is possible for an able and deserving woman to prevail upon the male world to reward her as she deserves. All-important here is her conviction, discussed earlier, of the ultimate benevolence of society.

Charlotte Brontë's sense of the world (the autobiographical element in *Jane Eyre* is strong enough for us to consider it as expressing its author's sense of the world) is very different: she sees it as a cruel place, where the helpless are always likely to suffer oppression. High points of the novel are Jane's confrontations with people who insist on her inferiority, because she is poor, and try to force her to accept the low status which they offer her. The highest point of all, of course, is her reunion with Mr. Rochester, to whom she is supremely lovable and admirable, even when she is poor and he unmaimed. When they are reunited, Jane, by virtue of an inheritance from a male relative, has become independent as both Charlotte Brontë and Jane Austen defined independence. Her independence, however, is in a sense irrelevant to her union with Rochester, though it has plot significance in that it frees her to leave the village school where she has been teaching and gives her the mobility which allows her to return to her lover.

Despite the device of Jane's inheritance, which changes her economic position, it is possible to see the novel as a series of rejections by Jane, of identities which various individuals, to some extent representative of areas of public opinion, offer her, and the achievement of an identity acceptable to her, that of Rochester's wife. John Reed, for example, her cousin, the most odious member of his odious family, has absorbed an attitude towards Jane which emanates from his mother :

You have no business to take our books; you are a dependant, mamma says; you have no money; your father left you none; you ought to beg, and not to live here with gentlemen's children like us, and eat the same meals as we do, and wear clothes at our mamma's expense. (p. 42)

Jane's infancy and early childhood in the Reed household have been spent in mute rebellion against this sense of her position, which is held by every member of the household, even the maid Bessie, who is fond of her and would like to convince her that acceptance of inferiority would make her life much happier.

When Mrs. Reed sends Jane to Lowood School, her intention is more positive than that of ridding herself of the child's presence in her house. Her acquaintance with Mr. Brocklehurst, the governor of the school, has made her aware that the whole system on which the school runs — every detail of diet, clothing and conduct prescribed for the children — has the purpose of emphasizing to them their low status. The scene in which Mr. Brocklehurst reprimands Miss Temple, the Headmistress, in the presence of the schoolgirls, makes this point very clearly.

'Madam,' he pursued, 'I have a Master to serve whose kingdom is one of this world: my mission is to mortify in these girls the lusts of the flesh, to teach them to clothe themselves with shamefacedness and sobriety, not with braided hair and costly apparel; and each of the young persons before us has a string of hair twisted in plaits which vanity itself might have woven: these, I repeat, must be cut off; think of the time wasted, of —'

Mr. Brocklehurst was here interrupted; three other visitors, ladies, now entered the room. They ought to have come a little sooner to have heard his lecture on dress, for they were splendidly attired in velvet, silk, and furs. The two younger of the trio (fine girls of sixteen and seventeen) had gray beaver hats, then in

fashion, shaded with ostrich plumes, and from under the brim of this graceful headdress fell a profusion of light tresses, elaborately curled: the elder lady was enveloped in a costly velvet shawl, trimmed with ermine, and she wore a false front of French curls.

These ladies were deferentially received by Miss Temple, as Mrs. and the Misses Brocklehurst, and conducted to seats of honour at the top of the room. (pp. 96-97)

The point is not that Mr. Brocklehurst thinks a sober appearance proper for young girls because of his Evangelical views: it is only necessary for these girls, who, because they are at least partly supported by charitable donations, must be poorly clothed, eat insufficient and badly-cooked food, and suffer from the cold and from harsh treatment at the hands of their teachers. Their lives, in fact, are designed as a realistic preparation for their futures as governesses or teachers in schools.

We are aware throughout the novel that Charlotte Brontë's spirit of rebellion is equal to Jane Eyre's — John Reed and Mr. Brocklehurst appear as monsters of cruelty, sadistic and perverse. Nevertheless, a comparison between Jane Eyre as a young adult and Jane Fairfax suggests that Lowood, rationally reorganized as it is after the typhus epidemic, "by those who knew how to combine reason with strictness, comfort with economy, compassion with uprightness," might well have been a better preparation for the life which Jane Fairfax had to expect, than the Campbells' affectionate and luxurious family life. An upbringing entirely in the family circle is likely to fit one only for family life: when Emma thinks of Mrs. Weston's baby girl as likely to remain at home and be educated by her mother, she sees this arrangement as a happy one because women, other than those forced out by poverty, are destined to spend their adult lives in a similar setting.

Charlotte Brontë's view of a normal woman's expectation is less clear: three other admirable women in the novel are teachers, and eventually marry — Miss Temple and Diana and Mary Rivers. Undoubtedly influenced by her family life as Jane Austen was by hers, she saw teaching as a hard necessity for women without private means, but not necessarily as an extremity. Her rebellion is chiefly against a theory about governesses held by very differing people within the novel, amongst others, the Ingrams,

especially Blanche Ingram, and St. John Rivers. These hold, in their different ways, that a governess or schoolmistress has not the feelings common or the rights due to other humans. Blanche Ingram's account of how she and her brother tormented the governess, whom she describes as "a poor, sickly thing, lachrymose and low-spirited, not worth the trouble of vanquishing" (p. 206) is far from being the best part of the novel: Charlotte Brontë's indignation has caused her to lose control of her involvement with Jane and with the position of governesses in general. But when Jane is proposed to and rejects St. John Rivers we understand very clearly the restricted, half-human life which she refuses, even though it is offered in its most appealing form. St. John is on the point of leaving for India to work as a missionary and wants her to accompany him as his help-mate. He is in love with Rosamond Oliver, the pretty and somewhat spoilt daughter of a local land-owner, but will not marry her because she is obviously incapable of living as a missionary's wife. His proposal makes it clear how he sees Jane:

"God and nature intended you for a missionary's wife. It is not personal, but mental endowments they have given you: you are formed for labour, not for love. A missionary's wife you must — shall be. You shall be mine: I claim you — not for my pleasure but for my Sovereign's service." (p. 428)

He intends her to be "a conductress of Indian schools and a helper among Indian women" (p. 429) and relates his choice of her to her earlier willingness to accept the post of village schoolmistress and her efficient conduct of the school — proof of the humility and industry which he assumes to be innate, but which Jane knows she learnt at Lowood. If she were to accept the role he offers her, at this moment when financial independence (she has just inherited her uncle's fortune) allows her to choose, she would be assenting to society's view that, born poor and dependent, educated to be a teacher, she is rightly cut off from the mainstream of life and fixed in a service capacity to her fellow men. St. John's offer would allow her to understand this role, which in the past has been imposed on her, as toilsome only in this world and carrying with it the promise of eternal glory after

death. The idea of such a marriage is loathsome to Jane, though she reluctantly offers to accompany him unmarried. Propriety forces him to refuse her offer and insist on marriage: this hardens the resolve which has been forming in her to return to Rochester and see if there is any place for her in his life.

Both Jane Austen and Charlotte Brontë see marriage as the happiest ending to a governess's career: both feel strongly that the life of such a woman, however well-intentioned her employers, must be one of self-repression, and that it must be unnatural in ways other than celibacy, though of course *Jane Eyre* created a sensation because it insists on the fact that its heroine is from first to last a passionate creature. In fact, Jane Fairfax's fears about her future career are very close to Jane Eyre's resentments about hers. Jane Fairfax's bitter comparison between the life of a governess and that of a slave reminds us of Jane Eyre's moment of decision to leave Lowood where she has taught for two years.

I had had no communication by letter or message with the outer world. School rules, school duties, school habits and notions, and voices, and faces, and phrases, and costumes, and preferences, and antipathies: such was what I knew of existence. And now I felt it was not enough. I was tired of the routine of eight years in one afternoon. I desired liberty; for liberty I gasped; for liberty I uttered a prayer; it seemed scattered on the wind then faintly blowing. I abandoned it and framed a humbler supplication. For change, stimulus. That petition, too, seemed swept off into vague space. 'Then,' I cried, half desperate, 'grant me at least a new servitude!' (p. 117)

This passage allows the reader to ask if there has been any change of attitude between 1816, the publication date of *Emma* and 1847, when *Jane Eyre* first appeared. I have implied in this essay that I consider Jane Austen's concern for the poor young woman who is forced to seek employment to be as real as Charlotte Brontë's: neither seems able to look forward consciously to such a radical change in the position of women that they can seek employment without being deprived of family and social life, and without being helpless in the hands of their employers. The positive side of Jane Austen's sense of a governess is her ability to conceive of a household where, as in the Woodhouses', the gover-

ness is valued in terms of her merits, not her role. But we cannot be unaware that much of Mrs. Weston's special position in the family depends on the fact that Emma's mother is dead, leaving an empty space to be filled in the Hartfield family. Jane Austen depicts in *Emma*, besides Mrs. Weston, a headmistress or rather, the proprietress of a school, Mrs. Goddard, whose school is described as "a real honest, old-fashioned Boarding-school, where a reasonable quantity of accomplishments were sold at a reasonable price, and where the girls might be sent to be out of the way and scramble themselves into a little education, without any danger of coming back prodigies. . . . She was a plain, motherly kind of woman, who had worked hard in her youth and now thought herself entitled to the occasional holiday of a tea visit" (p. 22).

Again, the emphasis is on the service role and the low expectations from life. And in *Jane Eyre*, the heroine says of Miss Temple, the kind and understanding headmistress of Lowood, "she had stood me in the stead of mother, governess, and latterly, companion" (p. 116). The phrases remind us at once of the way in which Mrs. Weston is described as standing in a maternal relationship to Emma, and the adjective "motherly" applied in praise to Mrs. Goddard reveals to us that in 1847, as in 1816, the governess or even teacher was still the hireling mother-substitute, of higher status than a nurse, because education was a necessary qualification, but by no means a human being entitled to separate professional and social areas in her life. So long as the concept of the mother as the only proper instructor of her daughters endured, then governessing could not be regarded as a profession, but as an inferior substitute for maternal care. On the same principle, the mother-substitute would be required to live in the same household as her charges, and interests outside it must be subordinated to her employer's interests.

Jane Austen's compassion struggles in vain to accommodate itself to this concept of education: it is because of this that part of her happy ending to *Emma* is Mrs. Weston and her baby girl — "no-one could doubt that a daughter would be most to her; and it would be quite a pity that any one who so well knew how to teach should not have their powers exercised again!" (p. 461). The happiness of Jane Fairfax remains doubtful, given the char-

acter of Frank Churchill, but having posed as one of the minor questions of her novel the proper relationship of a poor but well educated woman to her group, Jane Austen wishes to give us the best answer to it.

Despite the birth of a child to Jane and Rochester in the last chapter, *Jane Eyre* has not equal emphasis on the role of the mother as educator — Jane's unhappiness at Lowood arises from the fact that she never leaves it for a family holiday, not that school mistresses are poor substitutes for mothers, and Lowood is an unsatisfactory substitute *world*, not a school to her. But she is grateful to the professionalism of her teachers — she speaks excellent French, draws and paints well, and her description of the reformed Lowood gives a good sense of the opportunities for self-development that a school could offer. Adèle, Rochester's ward, is sent to a nearby school, where she can visit home often, and is "very happy there" and makes "fair progress in her studies," so that she emerges "docile, goodtempered and well principled" (p. 475). The idea of the high stuated, professional woman teacher is close at hand, though Charlotte Brontë has not yet consciously realized it. Perhaps it was not so far away, one might think, when *Emma* was published: Mrs. Goddard's boarding-school, where the girls were sent to be out of the way and where they scrambled themselves into a little education, is admitted by Jane Austen to be old-fashioned, though she contrasts it favourably with more pretentious establishments "which professed, in long sentences of refined nonsense, to combine liberal acquirements with elegant morality upon new principles and new systems. . . ." Mrs. Goddard's merits are that "she had an ample house and garden, gave the children plenty of wholesome food, let them run about a great deal in the summer and in winter, dressed their chilblains with her own hands" (p. 22) — the substitute mother, once more, in fact, and as far as possible from the professional instructor. Jane Austen's knowledge of the necessarily limited purpose of a school headed by such a woman is exact — her phrase about the girls having been sent there to be out of the way acknowledges that maternal interest is lacking, or they would be at home. No doubt the schools which advertised more ambitious curricula were unwilling to see themselves as under an

obligation to care for their pupils in this way, and preferred to conceive of their pupils as in need only of formal instruction. The need, however, for a school of Mrs. Goddard's variety had not passed away in Jane Eyre's day; she goes to Lowood more in need of loving care than of education, and is fortunate that in Miss Temple she finds both. But whilst *Emma* can only show us education properly balanced between the emotional and the intellectual as occurring in the home — Emma herself receives it from Mrs. Weston, and Anna Weston will in her turn receive it — in *Jane Eyre* the figure of Miss Temple, the usefulness, limited though it is, of the reformed Lowood, and Jane's own sense at the end of the novel that Adèle can receive an academic education at school and an emotional one at home, foreshadow a new era, not only for the teacher but for women's education.

NOTE

- ¹ Q. D. Leavis, ed., *Jane Eyre* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1966). All citations are from this edition. All citations from *Emma* are from volume IV of the five volume *Oxford Illustrated Jane Austen*, ed. R. W. Chapman (Oxford: OUP, 1960).